CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Dealing with social development entails an inter-disciplinary approach to understand it from different possible angles as a social phenomena - the domain of sociology.

Development, as generally understood, is nothing but an incremental metamorphosis characterized by both material and non-material change. Therefore, for the conceptual analysis of social development, the process of social change will have to be defined and co-related.

In the recent decades, there have been attempts to analyse social change in terms of specific models which are based on the experience of change in particular societies. Attempts are being made to construct these models within a broader theoretical framework. Sociologists are focusing on questions relating to change, the direction and rate of change and the factors in social change.
Social change is looked at as an alteration in social structures (including the alteration in the size of a society) or in particular social institutions or in the relationship between institutions.

The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (IESS 1972) looks at change as “the important alterations that occur in the social structure, or in the pattern of action and interaction in societies. Alterations may occur in norms, values, cultural products and symbols in a society. Other definitions of social change also point out that it implies, above all other things, alteration in the structure and function of all social system.”

In order to understand the manner, direction and rate of social change, sociologists have tried to seek historical description and interpretation. Comparisons between societies cannot be made unless each societies have been understood in terms of its historical linkages and internal processes.

It has become a popular observation that there is an acceleration of social and cultural change in modern

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times. Ogburn was one of the first sociologists who systematically examined rate of change specially in the sphere of technological inventions. There is a gap between the rapid rate of advancement of technology and the slower rate of change in familial, political and other institutions and in beliefs and attitudes: a distinction between material and non-material culture. The situation where changes in the non-material culture do not synchronise exactly with the change in material culture has been described by the concept of culture change in modern times. Ogburn was one of the first sociologists who systematically examined rate of change specially in the sphere of technological inventions. There is a gap between the rapid rate of advancement of technological and the slower rate of change in familial, political and other institutions and in beliefs and attitudes: a distinction between material and non-material cultures. The situation where change in the non-material cultures do not synchronise exactly with the change in material culture has been described by the concept of cultural lag.

Sociological studies have focused on changes caused by industrialisation, specially the disharmonies in the transitional period and the adaptation of the individual
to rapid social changes. In the technologically and industrially advanced societies studies have focused on changes in the family, social stratification, law, moral and religious ideas attitudes the social problems stimulated by rapid economic advancement.

"Regarding the factors influencing social change, it is increasingly being emphasised that social change is brought about due to the cumulative impact of a host of interrelated factors, such as, conquest, demographic, technological geographical factor, decisions and actions of individuals etc."  

There may be various factors which bring about social change, and these may be categorised as those inherent in social system; those related to impact the social environment on the social system; and those arising from the impact of the external environment."  

"A change from one source may lead to a sequence of changes. Technological, agricultural, industrial and ecological changes tend to affect the social structure. The consequences are structural differentiation, integration

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or establishment of new coordinative structure and social disturbances."³

"From these and other definitions of social change we derive the following propositions:

i) Social change is essentially a process of alteration with no reference to the quality to change.

ii) Changes in a society are related/linked to changes in culture, so that it would be sometimes useful to talk about 'socio-cultural change. Some sociologists, however, differentiate between social change and cultural change. Social change is defined as alterations in the social structure, (including the change in the size of society) or in particular social institutions, or in the relationship between institutions. They feel that social change refers mainly to actual human behaviour. Cultural change, on the other hand, refers to variations in cultural phenomena such as knowledge and ideas, art, religion, moral doctrines, values, beliefs, symbol system and so on. This distinction is abstract, because in many

situations it is difficult, or nearly impossible to decide which type of change is occurring. For instance, growth of modern technology as part of the culture, has been closely associated with alternations in the economic structure, on important part of the society.

iii) Social change can vary in its scope and in speed. We can talk of small scale or large scale changes. Change can take a cyclical pattern, e.g. when there is the recurrence of centralisation and decentralisation in administrative organisation, it can also be revolutionary. Revolutionary change can be seen when there is an overthrow of government in a particular nation. Change can also include short-term changes (e.g. in migration rates) as well as long-term changes in economic structures. We can include a social change, both growth and decline in membership and size of social institutions. Change may include continuous processes like specialisations. Change may include continuous processes like specialisation, bureaucratization, and also include discontinuous
processes such as a particular technical or social invention which appears at some point of time."

Change also varies in scope, in that it may influence many aspects of a society and disrupt the whole social system. The process of industrialization has affected many aspects of society. In contrast, the substitution of matches for rubbing sticks to start a fire had a relatively limited scope.

Some changes occur rapidly but others take a long time. Many of the Western nations took many decades to become industrialized, but developing nations are trying to do it more quickly. They do this by borrowing or adapting from those nations which have already achieved it.

"Today most sociologists assume that change is a natural inevitable, ever present part of life in every society. When we are looking at social change, we are focusing not in change in the experiences of an

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individual, but on variation in social structure, institutions and social relationship." 5

Structural functionalists believe that society, like human body, is a balanced system. Each institution serves a function in maintaining society. When events outside or inside the society, disrupt the social institutions make adjustment to restore stability.

"It is very difficult to determine where and how change originates. Some sociologists have offered a distinction between endogenous change (change originating from within) and exogenous change (change entering from outside). In practice, the origin of change can only rarely be assigned wholly to one or the other category. It can be argued that wars and conquest (exogenous origin) have played an active part in bringing about major social changes in societies across the world. Again it could be said that in the modern world, the changes taking place in the developing countries have been stimulated to a large extent by Western technology which was introduced in most cases following colonial rule. But in the societies, including those in which the initial impetus has come from

5 Sorokin, P.A., 1937, Social and Culture Dynamics, (Free
outside, social change has depended to a great extent upon
the activities of various social groups within the
society. A major part of sociological analysis consists
in identifying the spheres and groups, that are
principally affected, and the ways in which innovations
are diffused from one sphere to another."

This leads on to another problem in social change,
namely acceptance of and resistance to social change.
Innovations (inventions and discovery are together termed
as innovation) are rarely accepted totally. The specific
attitudes and values of the society in question, the
manifest usefulness of the innovations, the compatibility
of the innovations with the existing culture, vested
interests, and the role of change agents are some of the
important factors that effect the degree of acceptance of
and resistance to a social change.

"Social change has two important aspects : direction
and rate, the factors that affect the direction and rate
of change in society are :-

i) Geography, Population and Ecology

These factors are seen to bring about sudden changes or set a limit on social change. Climatic conditions, natural resources, physical location of a country, natural disaster like floods may destroy entire population, force people to migrate to another place, or make them rebuild their community all over again. Similarly, increase and decrease in the size of human population through birth, death or migration can pose a serious challenge to economic, and political institutions. Today, many geographical alterations and natural disasters are induced by the activities of the inhabitants of a region. Soil erosion, water and air pollution may become severe enough to trigger off new norms and laws regarding how to use resources and dispose waste products.

ii) Technology

Technology is recognised as one of the most crucial factors in social change. The modern factory, means of transportation, medicine, surgery, mass media of communication, space and computers technology etc. have affected the attitudes, values and behaviour of people across societies. To take a simple example, automobiles

and other means of modern transportation have spread culture, by increasing interaction among people who live far way from each other. The technological feats in the area of transport and communication have altered leisure activities, helped in maintaining social, networks and stipulated the formulation of new social relationships.

**iii) Values and Beliefs**

iv) It has been pointed out that the contribution by men of genius and leaders to social change is important. The "great men" faced a set of circumstance, and their influence arose in part from their ability to draught persuasively the latent aspirations, anxieties and fears of large numbers of people. They were also charismatic leaders. These leaders owned their positions to personal qualities, and left upon events the mark of their own convictions."

There are many factors that can be discussed while dealing with the questions why, how and at what rate change occurs. No single theory or factor can explain the origin, direction, manner or consequences of social change.


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change. Change is such a compiled process, that it is difficult to explain its causes, limits and consequences in a definitive specific manner. Sociological research studies in recent years have concentrated on specific process of social change, and its effect on society.

Though, sociologists say that they are trying to look at change in an objective manner, the idea of progress is still very much present in modern social thought. According to Bottomore it is evident in the serious commitment to economic growth in the industrial countries, and subsequently in the countries of the Third World. More recently, he feels, it has provided the impetus for critical evaluation of unlimited and uncontrolled economic growth. The effects of technology on the environment has animated powerful ecology movements, in most of the industrial and industrialising countries. There are debates about mooing of a "good society" in relation to the rapid advance of science and technology and unrestrained consumerism.⁸

The erstwhile Soviet union which was regarded as the socialist fatherland had the longest history of socialist development. The former Soviet leader Gorbachev sought to reform the socialist system to overcome the weaknesses that had developed in the last seven decades since the October revolution in 1917. He staked his survival on the success of radical reforms.

Soon after assuming power in March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev introduced and implemented a whole series of socio-economic reforms in the Soviet Union under the twin policies of Perestroika and Glasnost. The reforms were introduced with a view of transforming the Soviet Union into a truly Socialist State. The very need for Gorbachev's reforms arose in view of the fact that over the year 'socialism' as practised in the USSR had deviated from the Leninist principles. The new party programme adopted in 1986 repudiated Khrushchev's platform for direct and rapid transition to communism in the USSR, and also sharply reduced the importance of the most important concept introduced into Soviet ideology under Leonid Brezhnev—the concept of developed socialism. As early as in 1959, Khrushchev had declared that the Soviet Union had entered an era.
A socialist state cannot be said to have come to exist if it does not effectively ensure a rule of law. It should ensure protection of citizens’ rights and “not a single government body, official collective, party organisation or individual can be exempt from abiding by law” 9 said Gorbachev in his address to the 19th All Union Party Conference on June 28, 1988. Addressing the 43rd session of the UN General Assembly in December 1988, Gorbachev declared if “We have plunged ourselves into constructing a socialist state based on the role of law and that a whole series of new laws have been enacted or were on the anvil, which will fully fit the highest standards from the point of view ensuring human rights.” 10 He was confident that “the Soviet Union will then develop a sound legal basis. Amendments to the Soviet Constitution and the laws are also keeping the fact in view that the Soviet Union is a multi-ethnic society; multi-lingual and multi-religious. The new law governing the believers allows them much more religious freedom than


before. Discussion of religions was no longer a taboo nor religion prevented a Soviet Citizen from being elected as a Deputy to the People's Deputies.

Insofar as the nationalities question is concerned, the same is being given a fresh look. Instances of injustice meted out to non-Russian nationalities are being accepted while conceding that "today we are reaping the fruits of lawlessness in the preceding decades...the deportation of whole people from their lands and burying oblivion of the national interest of small ethnic groups"\textsuperscript{11}, as Gorbachev stated on the national T.V. on July 1, 1989. What Gorbachev aims to see is that "every one, regardless of nationality, should feel as equal citizens in any part of the country and have a possibility to exercise all the rights guaranteed by the USSR Constitution. This calls for an end to authoritarianism by former Central agencies and curbing Russian Chauvinism."\textsuperscript{12}

With a view, therefore, to ensuring all the necessary prerequisite for economic and social progress, for a free

\textsuperscript{11} John P. Hardt and Donnal L. Gold, "Economic Reform" Soviet Style from Brezhnev to Gorbachev: Domestic.
development of the language and culture and to be sensitive and responsive to all legitimate ethnic demands and aspirations, a separate law was proposed to be enacted to give greater autonomy to the Republic within the framework of the Soviet Constitution.

The World is currently undergoing a great economic and social transformation. In essence, this transformation is in the commitment of man to a new way of life. Throughout history most of mankind has been committed to a constant way of life, even though particular ways have varied from one place to another and, to a much lesser extent, from one time to another. Commitment to a constant way of life seems to be the natural state of man.

The current period of history is distinguished from all others, however, by the immensity of the process of destroying old commitments, no matter how constant they may have been, and by the world-wide uniformity of the new commitment. Men everywhere are transferring themselves fully and finally into the industrial way of life. Great uniformity is developing out of great diversity.

Industrialization, itself, is the significant new form of social affiliation.

The Idea of Development

Developing countries are today faced with a dilemma. The liberal capitalist solution poses the problems of inequity. The Marxian socialist requires coercion. Nevertheless no country gives up the idea of development. Development embodies hope. Aristotle saw it long ago as the realization of potentiality. Each individual has within him or her qualities which can be realized in an appropriate political setting. The better the politics, the more likely is individual potentiality to be achieved. That Aristotelian idea, combined with the notion of distributive justice, remains the foundation of all development politics. The best polity maximizes growth with equity; it effects the proper balancing of individual wants and needs against the collective good. Growth plus equity therefore equals fulfillment. This was also the ideal of the Enlightenment. The Industrial Revolution opened up the vision of unlimited possibilities.

Today's basic goals are the same, but modern political practice involves more realistic trade-offs between growth and equity. Development foreshadows economic or political
inequality. Others prefer political inequality and more controls over economic growth. A communist state with a firm hand, represses political liberties in favour of creating more industrial capacity, justifying its methods with the argument that it promotes an infrastructure of growth; there is gain for all as well as some loss for all.

Next there is conflict between remnants of the old elite, the survivors of old colonial forms, and those who wish to rid society of the past and start afresh. The conditions of rule are precarious. Either the new government succumbs to other contenders, or it becomes highly coercive, and possibly imprisons or eradicates its opposition. This is the period of single-party jurisdiction. Then, as the use of the police and military as peacekeepers draws the armies into politics, the extant government becomes vulnerable to overthrow.

Finally, there is the search for a solution among various alternatives to military rule: corporatist, radical socialist, liberal capitalist, or some other combination. One is the period of contact and control; two of reaction and emancipation; three of contradiction; and the fourth represents a search for a new generative solution. Marxists have particular difficulty solving the equation. Marx argued that each society would go through the bourgeois phases of
development preliminary to the socialist state. But even in the first stage of a socialist society, the dictatorship of the proletariat exists in a dying state. Reverse the order of development and the dictatorship becomes dictatorship in earnest, one (like Stalinism or neo-Stalinism) relying on forced methods of economic growth, heavy industrialisation, and peasant collectivization as the way to accumulate funds for investment. In all fairness, however, proponents of democracy confront problems equally entangled because the democratic state is, under similar circumstances, prone to corruption, payoffs from foreign investors, disorganization, inefficiency, instability, and short-run solution designed to placate the demands of the market place rather than instill in the society the discipline for sacrifice which today's developmental needs require.

Is political development independent of the syndrome of modernization? Political criteria for modernization include the assertion of the ideology of nationalism to the extent that groups begin to act on their own behalf to mobilize toward independence. Political development is reflected in a growth rate of successful transactions - flows of exchange: economic, social, cultural - both within and between nations. Therefore developmentalists emphasize the operation of public institutions within the framework of the nation-
state thus associating political development not with stages but with institutions of government.

Whatever the particular form of an ideology, it should aim at using the population as a resource and simultaneously advancing both social and economic development.

Political Development

The idea that there should be such things as theories of development at all has helped a great deal to overcome the parochialism of individual studies of societies and has helped to relate out conceptual apparatus to the real world. Interest in theories of development was due simultaneously to policy requirements on the part of governments and international organisations, and to the interest taken by academics in the countries newly inducted, somewhat naked and bereft, into the international system. Moreover, the study of development has brought political scientists, sociologists and economists somewhat closer by differentiating between their respective autonomies and contributions.\(^{13}\)

The concept of political development was spoken about first by the statesmen and policy-makers and then by the scholars of economic and sociology and has a very important
place in the field of comparative politics in spite of the fact that there "is still considerable ambiguity and imprecision in the use of this term".\(^\text{14}\) What prompted the modern political scientists, particularly those belonging to the United States, is the emergence of large number of independent nation-states in the Afro-Asian and Latin American regions that showed change room one position to another in a very rapid manner and thus informed them to refashion their tools of social investigation. The new generation of political scientists came to realise that the non-Western political processes, even though they were different from the Western political processes, could be successfully studied by them against the socio-economic and cultural background they themselves had inherited throughout the centuries in the West and under the influence of which they had been operating now. The fact that these were different from the Western political processes being rooted in and drawing their sustenance from different cultural backgrounds, "induced them to widen their studies to the total context of the cultural and historical settings of the developing states".\(^\text{15}\) The result was that the new approach in


the study of comparative politics was so expanded as to include, besides the analysis of political institutions and structures, a "wide range of ecological forces".16

The term 'political development' lacks a precise and standard definition the reason of which should be traced in the abundant studies made from the inter-disciplinary point of view all impinging on the subject of 'growth', 'modernisation' and 'development' of the new and existing states. The names of Lucian W. Pye, G.A. Almond and a host of other social theorists may be referred to in this connection. They have made vast empirical studies of the 'nations of the Third World in particular from economic, social, psychological, anthropological and political standpoints in order to describe the process of change. What is, however, especially noticeable about such a massive literature on the subject of political development is that it "illuminates a situation of semantic confusion"17 and that behind this confusion there "does seem to be a certain more solid basis of agreement".18

Lucian Pye should be regarded as one of the leading writers to analyse the concept of development in depth, and

16 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
has kept on evolving his ideas on the subject, and has left an abiding impression on the entire literature of political development. Pye virtually set the pace in 1963 when he thought of political development in terms of cultural diffusion, and of adapting, fusing, and adjusting old patterns of life to new demands. He emphasized that "the first step towards political development was the evolution of the nation-state system" which he treated as a "basic concept supporting the gradual diffusion throughout all societies of what might be called a world culture". He opined that "the signs of political development could be traced at three different levels - with respect to the population as a whole, with respect to the level of governmental and general systemic performance, and with respect to the organization of the policy".

Lucian Pye presents the case of political development in a quite elaborate form. Before trying to furnish his own interpretation of the term 'political development' he discussed diverse standpoints and goes ahead after accepting some and rejecting some other parts of each definition in the following manner:

21 Ibid.
Political Development as the Political Prerequisite of Economic Development - Political development should be taken as a result of the economic development. Economists like Paul A. Baran, Norman S. Buchanan, have laid stress on the point that political and social conditions can play a quite decisive role in impeding or facilitating the economic growth. Pye discovers four weaknesses in this concept of political development. "First, it has a negative character in the sense that it is easier to be precise about the ways in which performance of a political system may impede or prevent economic development than about how it can facilitate economic growth. Second, such a concept of political development does not focus on a common set of theoretical considerations, for in some cases it would mean no more than whether or not a government is following intelligent and economically rational policies, while in other situations it would involve far more fundamental considerations about the basic organisation of the polity and the entire performance of the society. The problems of political development would thus vary according to particular economic problems in each country. Third, it should also be taken into account that the prospects for rapid economic development have become exceedingly dim in most of the poor countries. Finally, in most of the under-
developed countries people are clearly concerned with far more than just material advancement; they are anxious about apolitical development quite independent of its effects on the rate of economic growth. Therefore, to link political development solely to economic events would be to ignore much that is of dramatic importance in the developing countries." \(^{22}\)

**Political Development as the Politics Typical of Industrial Societies** - Some social theorists like W.W. Rostow try to identify the process of political development with the pace of industrialization. Pye rejects it also on the ground that it ignores the role of several other factors like forces that threaten the hold of the vested interests, an appreciation of the values of orderly legal and administrative procedures, an acknowledgement that "politics is rightfully a mechanism for solving problems and not an end in itself, a tress on welfare programmes and, finally, an acceptance of some form of mass participation." \(^{23}\)

**Political Development as Political Modernisation** - Theorists like James S. Coleman, and S.M. Lipset have laid stress on the point that political development means a study of the developed western and modern countries and modern


\(^{23}\) Ibid., pp.34-35.
countries and of their ways that the developing countries are trying to emulate. It means that the advanced western and modern countries are the pacesetters of political development. Pye feels that such a view has its own shortcomings in as much as it fails to distinguish between the 'western' and the 'modern' and that "it ignores the fact that the backward or developing countries may have their own historical traditions that they may not like to give up for the sake of merely emulating everything that is western or modern." 24

Political Development as the Operation of Nation-State

Some social theorists like K.H. Silvert, Edward A. Shils and William McCord have pointed out that political development consists of the organisation of political life and the performance of political functions in accordance with the standards expected of a modern nation-state. Political development is thus identified with the politics of nationalism within the context of social and political institutions that a modern nation-state must possess. Rejecting this view, Pye says that nationalism is only a necessary but far from being a sufficient condition to ensure political development. Political development is identifiable with nation-building and not with merely a

24 Ibid., pp.35-36.
nation-state. "Development entails the translation of diffused and unorganized sentiments of nationalism into a spirit of citizenship, and equally the creation of state institutions that can translate into policy and programmes the aspirations of nationalism and citizenship. In brief, political development is nation-building". 25

Political Development as Administrative and Legal Development - Some social theorists like Max Weber, Talcott Parsons A.M. Henderson have laid stress on the point that political development is intricately linked with the legal and administrative order of a community. Thus, the establishment of an effective bureaucracy is essential for the process of development. The administrative development is thus associated with the spread of rationality, the strengthening of secular and legal concepts and the elevation of technical and specialized knowledge in the direction of human affairs. Pye finds some weaknesses in this viewpoint also. "It is quite possible that if administration is over-stressed, it can create imbalances in the polity that may impede political development. This view also entirely overlooks the problems of citizenship training

and popular participation that are one of the essential features of political development".  

Political Development as Mobilisation and Participation - There are some social theorists like Clifford Geertz, Rupert Emerson, Bert F. Hoselitz and Eisenstadt who have stressed the point of the role of a politically awakened citizenry and the behaviour of the people in the direction of an expanded popular participation. Extension of franchise is taken as a mark of diffusion of the decision-making process through mass participation. Pye has taken into his consideration the disastrous effects of the politics of mass manipulation and thus pointed out that such a view of political development "is also fraught with the dangers of either sterile emotionalism or corrupting demagoguery, both of which can sap the strength of a society".

Political Development as the Building of Democracy - Joseph la Palombara and J. Ronald Pennock are of the view that the case of political development is integrally connected with the building of democracy and inculcating 'values' of a democratic order in the minds of the people. Pye differs from this view and he points out that such a concept would exclude the cases of those countries where

27 Ibid., pp.39-40
democracy is non-existent and that democracy is a 'value-laden' concept, while development is 'value-free'. "To use the building of democracy as the key to political development can thus be seen as an effort to push upon to others American, or at least Western, values".28

**Political Development as Stability or Orderly Change** - Some social theorists like Karl Deutsch and F.W. Riggs have laid stress on the point that stability is legitimately linked with the concept of development in that any form of economic or social advancement does generally depend upon an environment in which uncertainty has been reduced and planning based on reasonably safe predictions is possible. Pye differs from this approach and says that it "leaves unanswered how much order is necessary or desirable and for what purpose change should be directed. There is also the question of whether the coupling of stability and change is not something that can occur only in the dreams of a middle class, or at least in societies that are far better than most of the currently underdeveloped ones. Finally, on the scale of priorities there is the feeling that the maintenance or order, however desirable and even essential,
stands second to getting things done; and thus development calls for a somewhat more positive view of action".  

Political Development as Mobilisation and Power - Some social theorists like James S. Coleman, G.A. Almond and Talcott Parsons have taken the view that the concept of political development can be evaluated in terms of the level or degree of absolute power which the system is able to mobilize. According to this view, states naturally differ in proportion to their inherent resource base with the result that the measure of development is the degree to which they are able to maximize and realize the full potential of their given resources. Pye is critical of this view also on the plea that "such an explanation is applicable to the case of a democratic political system and thus it ignores the case of development in others where the mobilization of power is deliberately kept limited".

Political Development as one Aspect of a Multi-Dimensional Process of Social Change - Thus, some social theorists like Max F. Millikan, Donarld L.M. Blackmer and Daniel Lerner have advanced the argument that it is unnecessary and inappropriate to try to isolate too completely political development from other forms of

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29 Ibid., pp.41-42.
30 Ibid., pp.42-44
developments. Although, to a limited extent, the political sphere may be autonomous from the rest of the society, for sustained political development to take place it can only be within the context of a multi-dimensional process of social change in which no segment or dimension of the society can lag behind. Pye appreciates this view on the plea that "here all forms of development are related, development is much the same as modernization, and it takes place within a historical context in which influences from outside the society impinge on the process of social change just as changes in the different aspects of a society - the economy, the polity and the social order - all impinge on each other". 31

Political Development as a Sense of National Respect in International Affairs - Finally, Pye refers to the problem of 'development syndrome' as pointed out by writers like James S. Coleman and Myron Weiner that takes into account the case of post-nationalism era where the sense of national self-respect and dignity in the international sphere shall inform and the nation-state will no longer be used as the basic unit of political life. Since Pye says nothing about the critical examination of this interpretation, it appears that he either accepts it or ignores it altogether and

31 Ibid., pp.44-45.
instead goes ahead to give his own explanation of political development that includes some element of all the diverse definitions and interpretations that he has discussed before coming to his own interpretation.

The meaning of the concept of political development that Lucian Pye offers bear three characteristics:

(i) Equality - The subject of political development does suggest mass participation and popular involvement in political activities participation may be either democratic or in a form of totalitarian mobilization, but the key consideration is that subjects should become active citizens. At least, the semblance of a popular rule is necessary. It also means that laws "should be of a universalistic nature, applicable to all and more or less impersonal in their operation." 

(ii) Capacity - It refers to the capacity of a political system by which it can give 'outputs' and the extent to which it can affect the rest of the society and economy. It is also associated with governmental performance and the conditions that affect such performance. It entails the sheer magnitude, scope and the scale of political and governmental performance making it like a welfare agency. It

32 Ibid., pp.45.
also means effectiveness and efficiency in the execution of public policy. There is a trend towards professionalisation of government. Finally, it is related to rationality in administration and a secular orientation towards policy. "The actions of the government are guided more by deliberations and justifications that seek to relate ends and means in a systematic manner". 33

(iii) Differentiation - It implies diffusion and specialization of structures. The offices and agencies tend to have their distinct and limited functions and there is an equivalent of a division of labour within the realm of government. It also involves the integration of complex structures and processes. Thus, differentiation "is not fragmentation and the isolation of the different parts of the political system but specialization based on an ultimate sense of integration". 34

Besides, Pye also makes two more points. First, all the three characteristic elements of political development may, and may not, fit together easily and thus there may, and may not, be tension between the demands for equality, the requirements for capacity and the process of greater differentiation. Thus, a pressure for greater equality "can

33 Ibid., pp.46-47.  
34 Ibid., p.47.
challenge the capacity of the system, and differentiation can reduce equality by stressing the importance of quality and specialized knowledge".\textsuperscript{35} Second, development is clearly not unilinear, nor is it governed by sharp and distinct stages, but rather by a range of problems that may arise separately or concurrently. A study of political development in the wider perspective of comparative politics also shows that while the characteristics of \textit{equality} is concerned with \textit{political culture}, the problems of \textit{capacity} are related to the performance of the \textit{authoritative structures of government}, and the question of \textit{differentiation} touch mainly on the performance of the \textit{non-authoritative structures} and the general political processes in the society at large. "This suggests that in the last analysis the problems of political development revolve around the relationship between the political culture, the authoritative structures, and the general political process."\textsuperscript{36}

Though much popularized by Pye, the concept of political development underwent a refinement in view of an agonizing realisation about its deficient conceptual framework in respect of its application to the scenario of developing countries. Hence, Leonard Binder came forward

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p.48.}
with his thesis of political development in which he attributed following implications: 37

- Change of identity from religious to ethnic and from parochial to societal,
- Change of legitimacy from transcendental to immanent sources,
- Change in political participation from elite to mass and from family to group,
- Change of distribution from status and privilege to achievement, and
- Change in the degree of administrative and legal penetration into social structure and to remote regions of the country.

Also valuable are the views of Riggs at this stage who integrated the concept of political development with the forces of "environment". In his view, the term 'development' in the political context should be confined to connote an increasing ability to make and carry out collective decisions affecting the environment (not the context). It is obvious that the ecological dimension which the term 'environment' introduces in considerations of political

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decision making, requires that 'both the cultural and the human environment need to be added to the physical environment in order to form an adequate picture of the ecology of political/administrative action'. Likewise, the term 'context' has a significance of its own that informs us to study state as a part of the international society. Thus, he defines: "My view of development, accordingly, is that it involves a growing understanding of both constraints and resources of the environment. Moreover, and this is often the critical element in development, a society may choose to do things that change its environmental so as to reduce the elements of constraint and increase the elements of resources, thereby expanding its own capacity to make decisions that will enlarge the scope of its own self-determination". 38

The concept of political development also covers the aspect of political decline or decay. That is, as a concept, it does not merely suggest that the movement is in a linear direction, because institutions grow and mature as well as decay and dissolve. The whole idea focuses attention between the ongoing social processes of modernization on the one hand and the strength, stability of weakness of the

political structures - traditional, transitional or modern - on the other. "The level of institutionalisation of any political system can be defined by the adaptability, complexity, autonomy and coherence of its organisations and procedures. So also the level of institutionalization of any particular organization or procedure can be measured by its adaptability, complexity, autonomy and coherence. If these criteria can be identified and measured, political systems can be compared in terms of their levels of institutionalization. Further more, it will be possible to measure increases and decreases in institutionalisation of particular organizations and procedures within a political system".  

Thus, the concept of political development views the operation of a political system in terms of its increasing democratization, while that of political decay does the same for its regression and disintegration leading to the advent of some from of totalitarianism. Moreover, as the concept has been developed by the American writers, it is naturally connected with what has happened in an advanced Western country like that of the United States. A look at the indices of political development, as pointed out by leading

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writers on the subject, shows that "the Anglo-American qualities most clearly approximate the model of the modern political system".\textsuperscript{40} Moreover, as the advanced liberal democracies of the West have been able to solve their gigantic problems and face challenges in an effective manner, the idea of political development also involves the capacity of a political system "to control and co-ordinate various processes of change in society generated by the socio-demographic and structural changes".\textsuperscript{41}

Concept of Political Development: Some Definitional Problems and Requirements of a New Theory

The concept of political development cannot be precisely defined. As a matter of fact, this concept, as it has developed till now, carries a number of definitional problems that include:\textsuperscript{42}

(a) A set of definitional priorities which constitute the meaning of development as a process and the notion of being developed or underdeveloped as a state;

(b) A set of values which make development desirable, if not mandatory;


(c) The inter-connection between the two categories of developed and underdeveloped societies, and

(d) The recognition of an implicit rank order of development - at least in the mind of the analysts, but possibly also in that of the participants.

All the four problematic situations can be described as:

(a) *Definitional Priorities* : The concept of development originated in the discipline of economics and it came to have a wider perspective when social theorists took into their account the fact that several "revolutionary" countries of the world after achieving independence generally opted for socio-political priorities, while the 'democratic' ones went for a more distinctly economic or economistic solution. Some social theorists like S.M. Lipset took into account "the individual diversities and cultural constraints of different societies" and, "some people saw development as having to do with what was hopefully described as the attainment of specific and identifiable societal goals". What further added to the confusion was that while some writers referred to the progress made by

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some advanced Western countries in all walks of life as the subject-matter of development and that should be taken by all developing societies as a model to emulate if not by specific institutional or quantitative replication but at least through functional equivalence. All this leaves an impression that in the concept of political development, there "is the hesitant and discordant division of development theories into socio-political and economic priorities, and also the see-saw battle between historical analogy and abstract models of utilitarian or rational emphasis". Nettl thus feels that the basic contrast between a normative and a logical empirical ordering of categories remains in this as in almost every area of social science.  

(b) Set of Values: The subject of political development is made confused and perplexing when certain terms like 'traditionality' or 'modernity', 'free' or 'closed' societies, 'developed' and 'developing' social systems and the like acquire normative dimensions and thereby make the entire concept value-laden that should otherwise remain like a value-free subject on account of being a matter of empirical investigation. The result is that while some

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46 Ibid., p.18.
developing countries appreciate the Western model of development, some do not as they term it unattainable; not only this, some view "the Western model as 'destructive'; destructive in particular of stability, which had slowly become the unconscious but dominant preoccupation of western analysts. And the immutability of the Western world as a value in itself was also challenged from within Western society; far from the state of ultimate perfection which it appeared to be so long as it was a model for developing countries, it looked instead to be heavy with problems of its own. A new emphasis on societal goals on the part of leaders in developed countries was matched by academic preoccupations with the problems and values of so-called 'post-modernity'.

(c) Connection between the Developed and Less Developed World: A theory of Political development must include within its range the entire world whether eastern or western, developed or developing, since there is interdependence between the two. "What this amounts to is a rewriting of European, American and even Soviet history for developmental purposes. The modern world is no longer so much a goal or a process model but an historical abstraction of functional 'events' which, one way or another, must

happen and be coped with by all countries aspiring to modernity".  

(d) Rank Order for Development: Though the subject of development originated from the discipline of economics and later became a fashionable tool at the hands of sociologists, it would be wrong to lay much emphasis on the predominance of any such discipline. Apart from throwing focus on the economic and sociological aspects, due emphasis should also be attached to the organisational criteria like capabilities of the political system to control or coerce, or on a wide sweep of economic, social, political and cybernetic indices which provide hard facts without any specific commitment to professed institutional or processual emphasis. "If development is, indeed, a highly differential process according to particular societies and their goals, then rank ordering comparisons become meaningless".

Having discussed the problems of presenting a precise definition of the term 'political development', four 'requirements' that ought to be taken into account while explaining its meaning are:

(i) The Inter-Related World: The world as a whole has inter-related countries and the study of development has an

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48 Ibid., p.21.
inter-disciplinary focus. Thus, undue emphasis should not be attached either to any or some countries or to any discipline or some disciplines like economics and sociology. No simple or direct relationship is discernible between the levels of economic growth and socio-political structures or processes and partly because at a conceptual level sociologists and political scientists "will not be tied in their work to ex-ante or ex-post economic priorities. Accordingly, future theories of development might increasingly discard the economic components of the Western experience and learn to live with the assumption that socio-political development in many countries in the world today might have to take place in a situation of industrial stagnation or even regression". 50

(ii) Stability and Instability: Political development does not merely imply progress towards stability or growth; it also covers the case of drifting of things towards instability or disintegration where it becomes identifiable with, what S.P. Huntington calls, 'political decay'. So far, social theorists have laid emphasis on factors like nation-building, integration, commitment to the universalism of a societal level instead of the parochialism of the village,

49 Ibid., p.22.
50 Ibid., p.25.
achievement instead of ascription, mobilization institutionalisation and the like. Apart from this, one must also look towards wars, inflation, insurrections, etc. no matter they bring about what is known as the breakdown of the political system. Though it "carries possible consequences for theories of development, we have not made it a basic part of any such theory, but relegated it to a special discipline concerned with conflict". 51.

(iii) Population: The social and political consequences of the demographic explosion need their special attention in a study of development. The population explosion creates several tedious problems that the nation-states have to tackle in a way that affords enormous material for the study of development. It contradicts the suggestion of some anthropologists that no relationship can be discovered between the density of population and political organisation. "Connected with this are the often significant differences in age structure between elites and populations of developed and developing countries." 52

(iv) Race: The theories of development eventually attempt to accommodate racial conflicts and racial differences. The Marxists have committed the mistake by reducing the nature

51 Ibid., p.28.
52 Ibid., p.29.
of social conflict to the denominator of class struggle; the anti-Marxists have committed the error by ignoring the factor of racial differentiation altogether. There "is an immediacy of primary identification and interpersonal conflict which is quite lacking in class formation and confrontation between classes; the very violence of personal conflict between black and white obviates the intervention of sociological collectivist notions as a means of creating identities and then hostility".\(^{53}\)

Thus political development is a very comprehensive and multi-faceted subject that cannot be defined precisely owing to certain technical difficulties and that certain factors should invariably be noted while making an attempt in this direction. Nettl has reacted against the tendency of laying to much importance on the development of a country like the United States or on a particular discipline like economics. He has, however, recognized the importance of this subject and thus appreciated the fact that such a study "has contributed substantially to the infusion of a dynamic approach to the study of society" and that there "is no doubt that the salience of developmental problems has made social scientists more historically minded, and has helped

\(^{53}\)Ibid., p.31.
to produce highly ingenious theories of how we ourselves became what we are".\textsuperscript{54}

Though political development cannot be defined precisely, certainly its broad features can be outlined. David M. Wood makes an apt observation that, most commonly, political scientists studying the phenomenon of modernization “have treated what they call political development as a dependent variable, using other facets of modernization as independent variables”.\textsuperscript{55}

It should also be looked into as to what leads to the development of a political system. The answer is that the events which lead to political development “come from the international environment, from the domestic society, or from political elites within the political system itself”.\textsuperscript{56}

It follows that events going on in the international sphere like wars or aggressions bring about conditions of change in the political system. Besides, events taking place within the system may also have the same effect. Development results when the existing structure and culture of the political system are unable “to cope with the problem or challenge which confronts it without further structural

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p.32.


\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
differentiation and cultural secularization". The challenges that may lead to political development are:

(i) Problem of State-Building: This problem arises when there is a serious threat coming from the side of a domestic or international environment so that the very question of the survival of the state comes into the forefront. A war or aggression occurring in the international sphere or a change in the political goals of the powerful elites may create serious threats to the very existence of the political system. "State building occurs when the political elite creates new structures and organisations designed to 'penetrate' the society in order to regulate behaviour in it and draw a larger volume of resources from it. State-building is commonly associated with significant increases in the regulative and extractive capabilities of the political system, with the development of a centralized and penetrative bureaucracy related to the increase in the these capabilities, and with the development of attitudes of obedience and compliance in

the population which are associated with the emergence of such a bureaucracy". 58

(ii) Problem of Nation-Building: It "refers to the process whereby people transfer their commitment and loyalty from smaller tribes, village or petty principalities to the large central political system". 59 The problems of state-building and nation-building may be studied together, they may also be studied separately as it is not necessary that the two ever go together. There are several cases to show that while the problem of state-building has been solved, the problem of nation-building has still remained to create threatening postures for the very survival of a political system.

(iii) Problem of Participation: There are various interest groups in the society that strive to have a share in the decision-making process. Thus, political infra-structure comes into being in the form of political parties, groups, cliques, factions, etc. It leads to the expansion of 'demands' and also for participation in the process of decision-making so that 'outputs' are favourable to the interests of the claimants.

58 Ibid., pp.35-36.
(iv) **Problem of Distribution**: Finally, there arises the problem as to how national income or wealth should be distributed or opportunities be given to all without any artificial discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste, creed, colour, etc. Talent should be recognized and that merit should be the deciding factor in the midst of 'equal opportunities' for all. It is also known by the name of the politics of welfare or general good.

The problems of political development analysed through structural-functional approach hint at five major factors that must be considered in such an analysis. They are:

(i) **Nature of the Problems Confronting a Political System**: The stability or instability, or the development and decay, of a political system very much depends on the nature of the problems that a political system is confronted with. Different people demand different forms of participation, national integration, economic betterment, situations of law and order and the like. Since advanced countries have solved most of these problems over the years, the burden on their political system is not so heavy. Different from this is the case of backward and developing societies where such demands

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59 Ibid., p.36.
have come up suddenly and their effect is cumulative and reinforcing. Thus, it is generally recognised that major problem in the new nations today "is the cumulative revolutions they must face". 60

(ii) Resources of the System: A political system has to satisfy the 'demands' made upon it. It may be possible that the load of demands is so great that a political system may not bear or may do so at a heavy expense.

(iii) Effect of Foreign Social Systems: When an economy develops new capabilities, new systems of production and distribution, the loading of the political system with demands for welfare may be significantly reduced and thereby affect political development. "It is also possible that international institutions like the International Monetary Fund or World Bank may develop a regulative or distributive capability that reduces the pressures on the domestic political system". 61 Thus, the existence or the development of capabilities in other social systems may affect the magnitude of the challenges confronting political systems, keep the flow "at an incremental and low-intensity level, and perhaps

60 Ibid., p.39.
61 Ibid.
help avoid some of the disruptive consequences of cumulative pressures".  

(iv) Functioning Pattern of the System: The problem of political development or decay also depends upon the pattern of the political system. It means that a political system may, or may not, cope with the burden of 'inputs'. "it may be resilient enough to bear the stress of 'loads' and thus keep itself going, it may also be weak enough to break down under the pressure of 'demands'. It is not necessary that all political systems may be geared for change and adaptation in an equal measure".  

(v) Response of the Political Elites: Finally, comes the problem of the role of the political elites. It is possible that powerful elites may change their goals in response to the pressure of demands and thereby save the political system from decay, or they may misjudge the seriousness and intensity of input fluctuations and thus either radically modify the system or fail to respond until it is too late with the result that there is the breakdown of the system itself.

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62 Ibid., p.40.
63 Ibid.
64 Ibid.
It is thus quite clear that the subject of political development is burdened with certain crises that may be enumerated as under:

(1) **Identity Crisis:** The people should identify themselves with their political system. That is, they must recognize their national territory as their homeland and they must feel that their own personal identities are in part defined by their identification with their territorially delimited country. It is found that there is a lot of contradiction between the traditional political culture having its roots in the loyalties of the individuals towards their community, tribe, religion, etc. and a modern political culture requiring that they should sacrifice their primordial loyalties at the altar of their national commitments.

(2) **Legitimacy Crisis:** It refers to the problem of achieving agreement about the legitimate nature of authority and the proper responsibility of government. What should be the pattern of central or local authority? What should be the limits to the executive or bureaucratic authority? How much of the colonial structure of government should be maintained in the post-independence era? These are some of the problems that relate to the legitimacy crisis. This point has a
more prominent place in backward societies ridden with theocratic values where people still cling to the idea that the political structure should conform to the precepts of their religion.

(3) *Penetration Crisis*: It refers to the problem of the government in reaching down to the society and effecting basic policies. How much the government should do for the good of the people? What the government should not do? To carry out significant developmental policies, a government must be able to reach down to the village level and touch the daily lives of the people. The problem arises when an endeavour of the government, in this direction, leads to the inculcation of 'demands explosion' that it feels hardly capable of solving.

(4) *Participation Crisis*: It occurs when there is uncertainty over the appropriate rate of expansion and when the influx of new participants creates serious strains on the existing institutions. A question arises as to whether freedom should be allowed for various political parties and groups to operate with a view to influence the decision-making process, or what restrictions should be imposed so that they are prevented from becoming anomie organizations. Such a
question also covers the issue whether participation facilities should be given for a genuine democratic purpose or just for the sake of demonstrational politics.

(5) Integration Crisis: It deals with the extent to which the entire polity is organised as a system of interacting relationships, first among the officers and agencies of government and then among the various groups and interests seeking to make demands upon the system and finally in the relationship between officials and articulating citizens.

(6) Distribution Crisis: It refers to the questions about how governmental powers are to be used to influence the distribution of goods, services and values throughout the society. In some cases governments seek to meet the problem directly by intervening in the distribution of wealth; in other cases the approach is to strengthen the opportunities and potentialities of the disadvantaged groups.

The nature of these crises determines the sequence of political development in different countries of the world. It is, therefore, necessary that, ultimately, any useful theory of political development "must come to grips with the
types of problems that may be subsumed under the category of crises”.

The democratic theory of development has been overwhelming the world in recent times and the Russian federation has not remained untouched by it. However, an abiding pessimism about the prospects for consolidating democratic reform in Russia seems to be growing in Russian politics. For instance, "the population feels that the 'liberal experiment' of the Yeltsin years has ended in failure, that the sacrifices it imposed were in vain, and that the principal result of reform was to turn the country over to thieves, cynics, criminals, and Mafiosi".

"Decommunizing a country as Russia has turned out to be a far more intractable process than either Russian reformers or Westerners ever imagined". Many seem to believe that Russian democracy has failed to acquire the sort of fundamental legitimacy necessary to assure its survival. "A deeper attribute of democratic stability - a normative commitment to the democratic process on the part of both the elite and society - is still not present in Russia". This

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65 Ibid., p.67.
gloomy viewpoint characterizes many observers of contemporary Russian politics.

But not all is gloomy about Russian politics; in fact, Russia has changed immensely since the fall of the Berlin Wall, with Russian democratization proceeding at a pace unimaginable a decade ago. Though few would contend that Russia has a perfectly functioning democratic system, it is well on the way to developing most of the institutions and processes of a viable democratic regime. Comparing Russia with the other republics of erstwhile USSR, one would have to conclude that remarkable and unexpected advances have been made. Comparing Russia's political change with its economic 'reform' leads to exactly the same conclusion.

"For the first time in Russia's history, power within the Kremlin has changed hands through an electoral process. The election not only took place but was conducted as constitutionally prescribed, no small achievement for a country with Russia's authoritarian history. More than two-thirds of the eligible voters participated, and they appeared to make informed choices among a range of candidates who offered competing platforms, policies, and leadership styles". 69

Perhaps the Russian people should be credited with more than one step forward. Indeed, one of the greatest surprises of the Russian experience with democratization is the degree to which ordinary Russians have embraced democratic reform. Historically, many scholars have seen Russia as characterized by a legacy of cultural authoritarianism inimical to democratization; some see the contemporary manifestation of this tendency in a demand for a strong hand to govern society by autocratic means.

Several projects have concluded that support for democratic reform in Russia is reasonably widespread, and few if any want a return to the old Communist system. Those who foresee a return to authoritarianism based on 'historical legacy' arguments ignore a considerable body of social scientific literature documenting the degree to which ordinary Russians favour democratic institutions and processes.

Some scholars who accept that Russian desired democracy at the beginning of the reform process are now convinced that support for democratic institutions and processes has waned. There are many variants to this argument - for instance, some contend that Russian support for democracy in the first place was without substance - but the most common theme is that the failure of the economy has undermined
enthusiasm for democracy. Whatever may have been the truth of the first decade of reform in Russia democracy faces opposition even today.

Thus, little consensus characterizes Russian experiment with democracy. It is therefore useful to reconsider the nature of contemporary Russian support for democratic institutions and processes to determine whether the events of the 1990s have undermined Russia's nascent democratic culture. It is important in assessing change to know who is altering her or his views; aggregate analysis cannot provide such information.

Theories of Short-Term Attitude Change

Much of the debate about attitude change within Comparative Politics has focused on the relative primacy of culture and institutions. Culture - the aggregation of beliefs, values, and attitudes toward politics - is often said to change quite slowly, with generational replacement being the primary means of change.

Theories of institutional legitimacy provide a basis for understanding short-term change in support for democratic institutions and processes. Dissatisfaction with system outputs may not directly undermine basic commitments to democratic governance, just as economic success does not
directly create democratic values. But over the long term, the accumulation of experiences may well contribute to more basic allegiances to the fundamental institutions and processes of the political system.

In transitional regimes, since people have limited experiences with the new and evolving political and economic institutions. No reservoir of goodwill exists. The issue here is thus whether democracy has acquired legitimacy - a sort of "loyalty" to democratic institutions and processes - an essential indicator of democratic consolidation. "the consolidation of a democratic transition is most usefully construed as the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation"70, such that all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine. Political competitors must come to regard democracy (and the laws, procedures, and institutions it specifies) as "the only game in town, the only viable framework for governing the society and advancing their own interests. At the mass level, there must be a broad normative and behavioural consensus - one that cuts across class, ethnic, nationality, and other cleavages - one the
legitimacy of the constitutional system, however poor or unsatisfying its performance may be at any point in time." \(^71\)

Many analysts fear that economic failure will undermine the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. From a micro-theoretical perspective, this means that one should expect the influence of environmental factors on public support for the country's major political and economic institutions to be more substantial in transitional regimes like Russia than in established, stable democracies.

The empirical literature on support for democratic institutions and processes also points to some linkage between democratic values and economic evaluations, although that literature is beset by measurement difficulties. The general view here is that, in the absence of some economic benefits from reform, Russians will be willing to cash in democracy for a political system capable of producing results. Without a reservoir of goodwill, support for democracy is contingent upon its economic performance.

It is not surprising therefore that some Russian analysts speculate that democracy will be overturned in favour of the traditional Russian love of order - that an


iron hand will restore stability, at the expense of democracy. Little literature addresses this question rigorously, however. Generally, though, many believe that social disorder exacerbates feelings of threat, which in turn undermine support for democratic institutions.

Thus, many pessimists are attracted to a simple syllogism: support for democracy in Russia is contingent upon the political system producing economic benefits; Russians are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with the performance of their economic system; therefore, support for democracy in Russia is both limited and precarious.

Recent Scenario

Elections: Parliamentary elections were held in late 1995 and 1999; presidential elections took place in mid-1996 (including a run-off election) and early 2000.

Yel’tsin: President Yel’tsin dominated much of this period, but often as much by his absence as by his presence. Yel’tsin was frequently ill, always sporadic and unpredictable, and, in the end, he resigned from office prematurely to boost the presidential prospects of his Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin, the current president of Russia. During this period, Yel’tsin survived a reasonably serious attempt to remove him from office through impeachment.
Divided Control of Government: Though it is a mistake to think of divided control as meaning the same thing in Russia and the United States, during most of this period Yel’tsin and the Communist-controlled State Duma were very much at odds with each other.

Political Uncertainty: During one stretch Russia resembled Italy - five prime ministers served in a 17-month period. This may have been a conscious strategy by Yel’tsin to keep his political enemies confused and preoccupied, but it also kept foreign investors uncertain about whether Russia was secure enough for investment.

Political Stability: Ironically, Russia was also characterized by some degree of political stability, at least as indexed by the remarkably little mass collective action given the political and economic situation in the country. By and large, the Russian people did not rise up in revolt against those who governed them, although strikes were not uncommon.

The Declining Role of the State: The Russian state seemed to lose control of society during this period, as manifest in the rising crime rate, the inability of the state to collect taxes and pay wages, the growing autonomy of the provincial governments (including the widespread practice of ignoring
federal laws in adopting regional legislation), and the ascendance of the "oligarchs".

The Power of the Oligarchs: The "oligarchs" amassed enormous political and economic power in Russia. This was not without intense struggle among themselves, and not without setbacks (e.g., the rouble devaluation in August 1998), but vast political and economic power devolved into private hands during these years.

Economics: The conventional view is that the economic lives of ordinary Russians deteriorated markedly during this period, with the massive rouble devaluation of August 1998 being the low water mark for this process.

Waning of the Communist Party: The Communist Party in Russia (the KPRF) remains the single strongest party in the country. However, the party's influence and support declined during this period, beginning with Yel'tsin's defeat of Gennadiy Zyuganov in the 1996 presidential election. The strength of the communists in the State Duma also declined.

War in Chechnya, Parts I and II: Russia suffered both serious defeats and substantial (but costly) victories in Chechnya during this period. Part II of the war was instigated by terrorist bombing in Russia, which took hundreds of lives and enraged the Russian people.
The Putin Era: Vladimir Putin became president succeeding Yel’tsin. Putin’s popularity is closely related to his success in Chechnya, and he often spoke during the presidential campaign of reform and of restoring the power of the state. Some fear that Putin has authoritarian tendencies, but according to a survey (2000), his support in the populace was widespread.

Breakdown in Confidence: Russians are generally thought to have lost confidence in nearly everything during this period, which may be the reason why the country’s victory in Chechnya was so influential in Russian politics.

Entrenchment of Democratic Institutions: Though there is certainly debate on this matter, democratic institutions in Russia became somewhat more secure during these years. In 2000, political power was peacefully and relatively democratically transferred.

Given this level of political and economic turmoil, it is perhaps not surprising that analysts would characterize Russian democracy as making some progress, but also as taking "two steps back".

Measuring Support for Democratic Institutions and Processes

Conceptualizing democratic values as a multi-dimensional belief system is imperative here considering
eight belief domains: (1) support for an independent and pluralistic media; (2) social conservatism; (3) the relative valuation attached to order and liberty when they conflict; (4) rights consciousness; (5) support for dissent; (6) support for the rule of law; (7) support for a multi-party system with competitive elections; and (8) political tolerance.

The following table projects the change in support base:

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<td>Less democratic</td>
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<td>More democratic</td>
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<td>Significantly more democratic</td>
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Pro-democratic and anti-democratic change is of roughly the same magnitude. Indeed, considering change from the beginning of the panel to the end, roughly one-third of the Russians became more democratic, another third became less democratic, and the final third changed little. It is important to emphasize, however, that two-thirds of the
Russians in the panel expressed at least as much support for democratic institutions and processes in 2000 as they did in 1996. Democrats should take at least some comfort from these findings.

Thus, this analysis supports several substantively significant conclusions, the most important of which is that support for democratic institutions and processes has waned little among the Russian mass public during the four years covered by this survey. Over the course of the panel, 20 percent of the respondents became somewhat less supportive of Russian democracy; only 11 percent became significantly less supportive. Whether, at an absolute level, support is high or low is difficult to judge, but on average, roughly one-half of these pro-democratic statements were endorsed by the respondents, and two-thirds of the respondents maintained or increased their level of support for Russian democracy.

Changing Support for Market-Based Institutions and Processes

Russians are strongly supportive of governmental social guarantees, with almost no one opposing income, job, and education guarantees by the government. Similarly, nearly everyone believes that the income gap between rich and poor is too wide. On the other hand, a majority of Russians (in
1996, 2000, and almost in 1998) asserts that market reforms ought to continue even if they bring hardship to people. Thus, it seems that many Russians are willing to accept the idea of a market economy, even if they are not very enthusiastic about many of the details.

Though a plurality of Russians expresses relatively stable views toward a market economy, in each time period there is change. Movement away from supporting a market economy is slightly more common than movement toward supporting economic reform, but the differences are really quite small. For instance, between 1996 and 2000, 31.1 percent of the respondents became at least somewhat less pro-market, while 25.8 percent became more pro-market. As with democratic attitudes, two-thirds to three-fourths of the Russians did not become less favourably predisposed toward a market economy, although it is worth remembering that support was relatively low in the first place.

The following table shows changing economic reflexes:

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<td>Significantly less pro-market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less pro-market</td>
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<td>No change</td>
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<td>49.3</td>
<td>43.2</td>
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To what degree are economic and political attitudes connected, and has the nature of that connection changed over time? In earlier analysis of Russia during the first part of the 1990s, economic and political preferences became moderately but not strongly correlated, with those favouring democracy tending also to favour a market economy. That analysis strongly suggested that political attitudes cause economic attitudes, not vice-versa.

Those who supported democratic institutions and processes in 1996 tended to hold similar views in 1998 and 2000. Market attitudes were similarly stable. There is some slight tendency for diminished predictability of democratic attitudes and increased predictability of economic attitudes over time, although the trend is quite weak.

The relationship between political and economic attitudes is partly equivalent. Thus, those who support democratic institutions and processes tend also to support a market economy. However, these relationship are not particularly strong which means that many with a propensity
to support democracy nonetheless are silent about implementing a market economy in Russia. Thus, it is necessary when considering Russian political culture not to conflate political and economic reform.

The Influence of Economic Perceptions

How has support for democratic institutions and processes been influenced by the turbulence of economic change in Russia? The dominant speculation is that the economy has deteriorated markedly, and that economic deterioration undermines support for democracy as well as market reform in Russia.

Table 3

Perceptions of Economic Performance, Russia, 1996-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1996 perceptions</th>
<th>1998 perceptions</th>
<th>2000 perceptions</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Retrospective sociotropic (N)</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
<td>1397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>6.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1324</td>
<td>1399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Change</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective sociotoropic (N)</td>
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<td>1323</td>
<td>1396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>38.3</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>19.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prospective egocentric (N)</td>
<td>1394</td>
<td>1322</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>15.1</td>
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<td>No Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>24.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Within each perception, percentage total to 100.0 percent, except for rounding errors; response categories collapse strong responses (e.g., “much worse” and “worse” are combined).

b n/a = not asked


It is worthwhile to consider first the nature of changing perceptions. Let us consider first economic perceptions in 1996. A majority of Russians perceived their own economic circumstances to have declined. For instance, 53.0 percent viewed their personal economic circumstances as having deteriorated since the year before. By 1998, this percentage had dropped a bit, with a corresponding increase in the percentage of respondents perceiving no change in their economic position. There was also a slight decline in the segment of the population faring better, adding more Russians to the middle category. ( Virtually none of the respondents was unable to evaluate how the last year had treated them economically.) By 2000, the percentage judging themselves to the worse off had declined markedly to only 32.1, and the percentage reporting no change increased to 47.6. The percentage judging their economic lives to be better increased as well, although not as drastically, Clearly, over the course of the survey period, the economic
circumstances of most ordinary Russians stopped deteriorating.

The empirical questions herein are of considerable importance for understanding the transformation of Russia. Many assume that support for democratic reform is waning in Russia, and that the absence of such support increases the likelihood of an authoritarian government being installed. Though the preferences of the mass public are definitely not the only factor that will shape the consolidation of democracy in Russia, public opinion is of course important, and therefore it is essential to know what ordinary Russians are thinking.

On several scores, Russians extend moderate support to democratic institutions and processes and only weak support to market-based institutions and processes. Neither set of attitudes seems to have changed substantially over the last portion of the 1990s, and there is little evidence of substantial erosion of support for the new political and economic systems in Russia.

These findings indicate that perceptions of economic malaise have not undermined support for democracy; in fact, systematic examination of that hypothesis leads to the conclusion that economic performance has little impact on
democracy reform. In general, virtually no evidence of support for democracy in Russia is contingent upon perceptions that the economy is performing adequately. This finding cuts both ways. Russians have become dramatically more optimistic about their economy (personal and systemic), but that optimism does not translate into greater support for democratic institutions and processes. In general, it is not the economy that is driving people’s attitudes toward the consolidation of democracy in the country.

Attitudes toward a market economy are a somewhat different matter. They are more closely related to perceptions of the performance of the economy although the strength of this relationship should not be overstated. Still, many aspects of market reform are resisted by most Russians, and only if the economy continues to improve will support grow for more economic reform.

Having analysed the situation, the question now arises - Has Russian democracy taken "one step forward, but two steps back"? This is of course a question not easily addressed, since the answer to this query depends entirely on the expectations of the questioner. But the overwhelming conclusion of this research is that the nascent democratic culture in Russia has not eroded over the course of the last part of the 1990s. Russian culture may not be very
supportive of a market economy, but the evidence is that few prefer an alternative to democratic governance. These finding are thus not entirely optimistic about the prospects of consolidating Russia's effort at democratic reform, but at a minimum they suggest that Russia should be credited with two steps forward, even if it must be penalized with one step back.