



The Liberal Democratic Model (United States of America), the Conservative Fascist Model (Germany), and the Socialist Model (Soviet Union), and How to Deal with the Concept of Sovereignty?

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Legitimacy, Sovereignty, Liberalism, Fascism, Socialism, Political Systems

Received: 20, January

Revised: 21, February

Accepted: 30, March

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how different political systems address the concept of legitimacy and sovereignty, focusing on three major models: the liberal democratic system (United States), the conservative fascist system (Germany), and the socialist system (Soviet Union). Legitimacy is considered a fundamental requirement for governance, as it determines the acceptance and justification of political authority. Using a qualitative and comparative approach, the research analyzes the historical, political, and ideological foundations of each system. The findings reveal that the liberal model enhances legitimacy through democratic participation, protection of individual rights, and institutional constraints on power. In contrast, the conservative fascist model limits legitimacy within a nationalist framework, emphasizing authority and state control. Meanwhile, the socialist model, as represented by the Soviet Union, demonstrates a decline in legitimacy due to centralized control, restricted individual freedoms, and lack of political participation. The study concludes that each system constructs legitimacy based on its underlying economic, political, and social assumptions, resulting in varying degrees of public acceptance and effectiveness in governance.

INTRODUCTION

In political science, legitimacy is the right and acceptance of an authority, usually a law or a ruling system. While authority refers to a specific position in an existing government, the term legitimacy refers to a system of government, where government refers to a "sphere of influence". A legitimate authority is seen as having the right and often justification to exercise power. Political legitimacy is a prerequisite for governance, without which the government will suffer from legislative stagnation and collapse. There are several types of political systems that deal with the legitimacy model, and we chose the liberal system (United States of America as a model), the conservative fascist system (Germany as a model), and the socialist system (Soviet Union as a model). We will try to talk about how each system or model of government deals with the concept of legitimacy; by dividing the banknote into three axes, each axis includes a system of government and how to deal with the concept of "legitimacy".

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of political legitimacy has been widely discussed in political science as a fundamental element for the stability and sustainability of governance systems. According to classical political theory, legitimacy refers to the acceptance of authority by the governed, which is essential for ensuring compliance and avoiding political instability. Scholars argue that different political ideologies construct legitimacy through distinct mechanisms shaped by their historical, economic, and social foundations.

In the liberal tradition, legitimacy is closely associated with democracy, individual freedoms, and institutional checks on power. Myers (2018) emphasizes that liberalism prioritizes the protection of individual rights and limits state authority through constitutional frameworks and participatory governance. Similarly, Przeworski (2004) highlights the relationship between capitalism, democracy, and legitimacy, arguing that democratic participation enhances political acceptance and system stability.

Conversely, the conservative fascist model constructs legitimacy through nationalism, centralized authority, and state control. Historical analyses of Germany suggest that legitimacy in such systems is often derived from ideological unity and the reinforcement of national identity rather than democratic participation. Frewin (n.d.) explains that fascist-oriented governance limits pluralism and emphasizes obedience to authority, which narrows the scope of legitimacy.

In the socialist model, particularly in the case of the Soviet Union, legitimacy is grounded in the promise of equality and collective welfare. However, as noted by Bílková (2017), the concentration of power in the state and the restriction of individual freedoms often undermine legitimacy over time. The absence of political participation and market mechanisms contributes to inefficiency and public dissatisfaction.

Furthermore, contemporary studies highlight the evolving relationship between legitimacy and sovereignty in a globalized world. Verovsek (2025) argues that competing visions of sovereignty influence how political systems

justify authority, especially in the context of globalization and rising populism. These perspectives suggest that legitimacy is not static but continuously shaped by political, economic, and social transformations.

Despite extensive research on individual political systems, comparative studies examining how different ideological models construct legitimacy remain limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by providing a comparative analysis of liberal, fascist, and socialist systems in relation to the concept of legitimacy.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how different political systems construct and implement the concept of legitimacy. The research focuses on three case studies: the liberal democratic system (United States), the conservative fascist system (Germany), and the socialist system (Soviet Union).

Data were collected through secondary sources, including academic books, journal articles, and historical documents relevant to political theory and governance. The analysis applies a comparative method by identifying key characteristics of each system and examining how legitimacy is formed within its political, economic, and social frameworks.

This approach allows the study to highlight the similarities and differences among the three models and to provide a clear understanding of how legitimacy varies across political systems.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

First - Implementing Legitimacy in the Liberal System (America as a Model)

Liberalism is rooted in the moral belief that the government's highest duty is to protect the individual's right to life, liberty, and property. Liberals, therefore, believe in the well-being of the individual as the basic unit of a just society. A government with uncontrolled power, such as a monarchy or a dictatorship, cannot protect the life and liberty of its citizens. Hence, the major concern of liberalism is to create a framework to protect the liberty of the individual by controlling power. While these are issues related to domestic politics, the field of international relations is also important to liberals because the state's activities abroad can have a powerful impact on freedom at home. Liberals are particularly concerned with military foreign policies. The primary concern is that war requires states to build up military power. This power can be used to fight foreign states, but it can also be used to suppress their own citizens. For this reason, political systems rooted in liberalism often limit military power by means such as ensuring civilian control over the military. The basic arguments of liberalism are that the concentration of unaccountable violent power poses a fundamental threat to individual freedoms and must be checked.

The primary means of checking power are institutions and norms at both the domestic and international levels. At the international level, institutions and organizations limit state power by promoting cooperation and

providing the means to impose costs on states that violate international agreements.

Economic institutions are particularly effective in promoting cooperation because of the great benefits that can be derived from economic interdependence. Finally, liberal norms add another constraint on the use of power by shaping our understanding of appropriate types of behavior. Today, it is clear that liberalism is not a “utopian” theory describing a dream world of peace and happiness, as it was once accused of. Rather, it offers a coherent response to realism, firmly rooted in evidence and a deep theoretical tradition. Social liberalism, also referred to as “modern liberalism,” is a political philosophy that was demonstrated in America by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal program, followed by President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society program. This is a type of social liberalism, and its accomplishments are the Works Progress Administration and the Social Security Act of 1935, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, liberal philosophies that support a regulated market economy and civil and political rights as harmonious with individual freedom. Liberalism, whether classical or neoliberal, has dealt with maximizing the concept of legitimacy of authority through broad participation of the masses, i.e., maximizing the practice of democracy, which is the cornerstone of legitimacy for any system of government, and this was achieved through the actual practice of the liberal system in the United States of America.

This means not only that it is very risky and likely to fail, but also that it is very unpleasant. The bourgeois coinage of development is that it is stable, incremental, and positive-sum. In a word: liberal. Liberal development strategies—operationalised through a massive institutionalisation of international aid from the late 1950s—are in essence a theatre of global fantasy, a fantasy in which capitalist development is reimaged as a planned, inclusive, and socially just modernisation. The ideological erasure of enclosure, corporal punishment in law, forced labour, slavery, genocidal frontier expansion, theft and fraud, and war from the concrete manifestations of capitalist development has been sustained through the rolling out of a multi-trillion-dollar aid industry underpinned by an international elite institutionalism.

Second - Implementing Legitimacy in the Conservative Fascist System (Germany as a Model)

In 1877, Bismarck, still estranged from the center, was willing to make Germany an independent state. Bennigsen was a Prussian minister. He was a leader of the national liberals in the Reichstag. He thought that this was a precursor to a full parliamentary ministry. He demanded to take two liberal colleagues with him. Bismarck refused, and from that moment on, he was determined to reconcile with the conservatives and the center in order to escape the control of the National Liberals. He also had pressing financial motives for this breach. The revenues allocated to the empire under the constitution had been inadequate from the start, and Bismarck was loath to depend on the contributions from the separate states that this would entail.

The National Liberals wanted to establish direct imperial taxes, in order to increase the power of the Reichstag, and for the opposite reason, Bismarck

was determined to impose indirect taxes. He tried to introduce a tobacco monopoly but was defeated by the opposition of the National Liberals. Later he had more pressing reasons for action. Toward the end of the decade, German agriculture faced the challenge of American wheat for the first time. Bismarck was determined to protect German agriculture for reasons of social conservatism, and also because he viewed agricultural workers as the best resource for the army in wartime. But it was not only agriculture that needed protection. German industry had also been badly damaged by the Great Depression of 1873, and Bismarck was determined to protect the domestic iron and steel industry in order to ensure its strength. Germany in wartime. Thus, all the motives combined to push him to adopt a policy of protection: agricultural protection to please the Junkers, industrial protection to please the capitalists, and escaping the intervention of the Reichstag by increasing customs duties. The mass bases of the liberals had been growing since the 1850s, and the conservative Bismarck saw them as a good support for his ambitions at home and abroad, especially since they promoted the ideas of equality and parliaments as a basis for the sovereignty of the nation, which helped him to limit the power of the German kings (the German Confederation known as "Prussia" was a monarchy at the time), and at the same time (in one of the manifestations of contradiction) they asserted their right to rule Germany alone due to their high education and knowledge of the German heritage, which allowed him to create an autocratic bureaucracy through that group as he wanted, instead of the pure democracy that he had reservations about []. After the Second World War, Europe moved towards adopting the model of liberal democracy in rebuilding its political system for two purposes: the first: with the aim of ensuring that the fascist and Nazi parties would not return to Political participation, in this regard, the Nazi and fascist legacy was eliminated in both Germany and Italy, and European constitutions took measures to prevent the formation of any movements with fascist nationalist tendencies, and the second goal was to confront the socialist expansion that was behind the Soviet Union.

The liberal democratic system is based on majority rule, but this majority is governed and restricted by a set of constitutional principles such as basic freedoms, separation of powers, oversight of the randomness and arbitrariness of the majority itself, respect for individual freedoms, and the generalization of citizenship within the framework of the state. In general, the adoption of liberal democracy was an important factor in Europe's exit from the era of national wars that European history has known, and in establishing respect for ethnic and cultural pluralism within European countries.

Hence, the rise of right-wing nationalist discourse warns of the danger of the return of popular nationalist tendencies to the forefront of the political scene again, which carries with it a danger at the level of infringement on liberal civil liberties, individual rights, and minority rights.

with its shift from the state to the market, liberalism has become "more liberal" so to speak in dealing with the idea of nationalism now, not to criticize the idea itself but because of the obstacle it has come to represent to the freedom of movement of capital, so that it has once again become driven by its

interests linked to the market, not by the ideals it is supposed to represent theoretically, just as its interests linked to the state in its classical stage drove it to submit to the national ceiling of the state, and perhaps this is the same thing that happened with the socialists in a way that changed once they reached the state with their discourse on equality, as many cases such as the Soviet Union indicate, or perhaps what happened with the social democrats after the liberal democratic field was opened to them, and their radical component was greatly reduced. In any case, the liberal nation-state remains unable to keep up with the extreme cultural richness that it was forced to face after descending from the towers of theories to the ground of reality, and it may need to abandon the national definition entirely if it wants to keep up with it completely, and it will lose many of its dreams along the way, most notably the utmost efficiency due to the complex system that it will need at all levels to provide an appropriate formula for its societies, as well as the official identity discourse that we cannot easily imagine a state without, so how can an official identity be woven that brings together a multi-ethnic society? Are there currently existing models that can pave the way? Lest, in a world that is highly complex and interconnected, there has been a remarkable rise in nationalist and populist movements in recent years in Europe and North America. These movements adopt a conservative approach that blends nationalism and populism, as well as anti-globalization stances and a refusal to open borders to immigrants. A prominent example of this is the stance of US President Donald Trump in the United States during his first term, which remains his vision in his second term, which began on January 20, 2025, in addition to the emergence of nationalist and populist movements in Canada, Europe, and Latin America.

It is impossible to understand the ways in which right-wing parties threaten liberal democracy without exploring the history of the relationship between democracy and liberalism, distinguishing the differences between the two concepts, and separating the two notions through the historical analysis of the emergence of liberalism and democracy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Third - Implementing Legitimacy in the Communist System (the Former Soviet Union as a Model)

The Soviet Union is a communist state (1917-1991), founded by a socialist revolution in Tsarist Russia, and expanded by annexing 15 republics, becoming the largest state in the twentieth century. It led the global communist camp for seven decades, and shared international hegemony with the United States between 1945-1991. The Soviet Union was founded following the success of the Bolshevik revolution (Bolshevik means "majority" in Russian) in the "Social Democratic Workers' Party" led by Vladimir Lenin on the night of October 25, 1917 against the Tsarist rule in Russia, which had plunged the country into devastating crises due to its involvement in World War I. The Bolsheviks implemented reforms, most notably the separation of church and state, the nationalization of factories, and workers' control over industrial facilities, which aroused strong opposition in the country, even from their fellow socialists, the "Mensheviks" (Mensheviks mean minority), so the country entered into a civil war that lasted five years (1917-1922), which the Bolsheviks

decided in their favor by force of iron and fire through the political security apparatus and the battalions of the "Red Army". On December 30, 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was declared by decision of the Soviets of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, the Republic of Ukraine, the Republic of Belarus, and the Transcaucasian Republic. Lenin tried to create a major restructuring of the country's economy, and he developed the methodology of five-year economic plans that became a policy followed in all stages of the development of the Soviet state. Lenin died in 1924, and Joseph Stalin, who became General Secretary of the Communist Party in 1922- His successor in power, and entered into a fierce struggle to monopolize it with his opponents from the comrades led by Leon Trotsky, and was able to resolve the conflict in his favor starting in 1927 by eliminating his opponents through what was known as the "Great Trials". Stalin issued a new constitution through which he exercised absolute dictatorship in government, and his policy during this stage was characterized by consolidating the approach of five-year plans, focusing more on "economic planning", completely abolishing the private sector, and imposing communism in the various regions of the Union. The state is primarily responsible for managing the economy in the country, and because it interferes in all activities that occur in society, its management of everything becomes very complex and difficult, as the administration will be responsible for determining all decisions and solving all problems that it will face, and must find all solutions to them as well. In the socialist system (the Soviet Union), freedom is a missing element, meaning that consumers or workers lack the freedom to make decisions, as the control of the socialist system may reach the point of exploiting individuals. The socialist system also failed greatly because it deprives the individual of participation in decision-making, and it also deprives him of the spirit of competition. This system, including the Soviet Union system, the subject of the paper, has proven that it relies on authoritarian rule and the creation of dictatorships, and thus becomes lacking in legitimacy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research paper reviewed how each of the three ruling systems (models) chosen by the paper, namely the liberal system (America), the conservative fascist system (Germany) and the socialist system (the Soviet Union), deals with the concept of "legitimacy", relying on several sources and previous studies. The paper concluded that there are clear differences between one model and another, and that these two states have their elements and causes, which the research paper focused on reviewing and indicating the important ones.

The three models, with their different economic, political, and social assumptions between one model and another, showed that they adopt different concepts of legitimacy, and their degrees of acceptability vary between one model and another.

The liberal system based on granting individual freedoms and excessive provision of a democratic environment with a large space, and the conservative fascist system that adopted the concept of nationalism and worked to limit

legitimacy within this narrow framework, to socialism and its philosophy of legitimacy that came very close to narrowing and limiting democracy and eliminating the capabilities of the individual and limiting his creativity due to the equality between this and that. The results of the study were that each model of governance has its own assumptions that start from economic assumptions to political and social assumptions.

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