HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
Peter N. Stearns, Ph.D.

EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT

Contents

ANCIENT PERIOD

Ancient Greece and Rome

Overview Greek and Roman contributions to government centered particularly on the array of government forms attempted at various times and in various places. Monarchy was a frequent staple, sometimes sliding into tyranny; aristocratic assemblies were widely popular; and several Greek states introduced a form of democracy. Finally Rome ultimately offered one of the great examples of empire, interestingly partly coterminous with the Han dynasty in China. The importance of these various forms was enhanced by the frequent commentary by political theorists and historians. This illustrated the high level of political interest at the time, while also contrasting with Chinese preference for a single form of government. It also facilitated a legacy, as later societies could look back on the Greco-Roman experience to sift through a variety of possibilities for government organization. Greece and particularly Rome also contributed to ideas about government function, including the centrality of a legal system.

Greek City-States City-state governments began to form in Greece (including settlements elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean) by around 800 BCE, from a previous period based on more scattered villages. The peninsula's mountainous terrain accounts for the separation among several hundred units, that usually fiercely guarded their independence. Greeks had a sense of their larger culture, but did not strive for political unity. Internal rivalry and warfare were common, though alliances also formed. Many city states began as monarchies, but on the whole rule by aristocratic oligarchies was more widespread. Tensions with the landowning aristocracy sometimes generated one-man rule, or what the Greeks called tyranny (without the modern repressive implications), governing with more popular interests in mind. After a period of tyranny Athens, one of the more influential city-states, formed a distinctive democracy: citizens met in an assembly to decide policy; officials were chosen from among the citizenry at random, serving short terms; and citizens were also responsible for military service. The majority of Athenians, however, were not citizens – women, slaves, and foreigners were not included; and behind the scenes some aristocratic politicians added some stability to the system. Still, there was no question that this was an innovative form of government, copied by a number of other city states for several decades. Quarrels over the form of government between Athens and the more tightly-controlled state in Sparta contributed to a major war for influence at the end of the 5th century, which ultimately led to the decline of the whole Greek system.

Roman forms of government Like Greece, Rome began as a republican city-state, after gaining freedom from an earlier monarchy in the 5th century BCE. Though there was no written constitution, the institutional structure was quite clear. Primary authority rested with an aristocratic Senate, responsible for legislation that was normally accepted by lesser magistrates; the Senate had fundamental budgetary power. Senators were selected from among the magistrates, who were in turn chosen by assemblies elected by the wider group of citizens – providing a partial democratic element that was further enhanced by the election of tribunes who were supposed to provide balance to the power of the Senate. The magistrates' initiatives were controlled in several ways: the most powerful positions had short terms of office, and in many cases two officials served in each position, providing checks on any individual. The whole system represented a clear example of checks and balances between government branches and, indirectly, between the landed aristocracy and the wider group of citizens. Tensions between these social

groups, plus the growing role of military generals as the Republic expanded through frequent warfare, ultimately brought the republic down and led to the establishment of the Empire. Imperial rule supplanted the republican decision-making apparatus, though some earlier institutions were retained without significant power. Emperors began to claim religious authority as well as primary control over military and other policy decisions, guided by a rather informal group of advisors. Early emperors held various audiences and assemblies in which citizens could present concerns, but the imperial government rested increasingly on the authority of the military – which came to have a predominant role in the selection of emperors. While emperors often sought to name their successors, often from within their family, transitions became increasingly uncertain, dependent on military approval.

Empire and law Unlike the Chinese, Romans did not seek to develop a bureaucratic state that would embrace the whole empire. And while the empire did support a polytheistic religion, it did not really attempt a farther-reaching cultural integration. Only in the 4th century, with the effective adoption of Christianity by the state, did this approach begin to change, but by then the empire was already in decline. Even at the highpoint of empire, many localities retained significant government authority – even their own king – subject however to imperial policy. As the Empire declined, thanks in part to overexpansion, a second administrative capital was established in Constantinople (in the early 4th century CE). From the later days of the Republic, Rome began to appoint a group of governors to oversee major provinces, but these were few in number. During most of the imperial period, overall political unity was retained through careful central control of the military and through the extension of Roman law. Roman law, as it evolved from the Republic onward, was a massive array of statutes regulating crime, family property, slavery and slave status, typically privileging the landowning class. Roman citizens throughout the empire were supposed to be able to claim access to courts of law, but here too, in many regions, local rules had primacy. However, in 212 citizenship was extended to all inhabitants of the empire, which generalized legal practice to some extent. Several emperors undertook major codifications of the law, which further bolstered the prestige of the legal system and its subsequent legacy in Western Europe and the Byzantine Empire alike. Roman taxation was another intriguing system that combined central needs, particularly to support the military, with the patchwork quality of the empire overall: taxes varied by locality (including in-kind payments in areas where a money economy was less well established), though on average individuals paid in about 2-5% of income; customs duties on trade (including the sale of slaves) provided much of the state's revenue.

Pax romana and public works From the later Republic onward, military conquest became a key feature of Roman politics, going well beyond the earlier interest of many Greek city-states in military expansion. The prestige of the military, and under the empire the imperial emphasis on celebration of conquest, was noticeably different from the priorities in Han China. Long periods of internal peace, celebrated under the heading of the *pax romana,* were accompanied by steady fighting on various frontiers (particularly in the east and north), which among other things recurrently provided spoils to support the military. Public works, along with law and conquest, formed the other hallmark of the Roman state, again with precedents from the Greek city-states. Structures were distributed widely through the empire, including public baths and amphitheaters as well as a massive road system (aimed particularly as facilitating troop movement) and Mediterranean ports. While neither Greece nor Rome innovated fundamentally in the list of government functions, careful administration, plus public works such as the aqueduct system and state-sponsored entertainment, was responsible for sustaining up to a million people in Rome at its height.

Political theory Much of the impact of government in the classical Mediterranean was amplified by the importance and variety of political theory. In addition, historical work, from Thucydides onward, privileged accounts of political developments and changes in organization of the state. Launched by the Athenian philosopher Plato, Greek theory emphasized the importance of wise and ethical leadership, while detailing the merits of various forms of government (often favoring some kind of enlightened aristocratic rule and frequently criticizing democracy). Roman political theory, particularly through the writings of Marcus Cicero, highlighted the importance of checks and balances in the republic and emphasized the importance of the rule of law. Cicero emphasized the presence of an overarching, rational natural law, which no human law should violate, while insisting as well on legal equality and liberty.

Legacy The later impact of Greek and Roman government innovations was far more diffuse than in the case of China, and in some ways even India, because of the diversity of forms involved plus the depth of

the collapse of the Roman system in the West. Arguably, some of the limitations of Greek and Roman government, particularly in the organization of empire, contributed to a more varied legacy as well: the simple fact was that, despite the vivid memory of the glories of Rome, Roman government structure was never recaptured in Western Europe. However, Roman institutions were preserved more directly in the smaller Byzantine Empire, with particular emphasis on codified law and the power of imperial administration (supported as well by links to the Orthodox Church). In the West, legacy (aside from memories of empire) highlighted selective revivals, rather than direct continuity – though the structure of the Catholic Church clearly emulated Roman administration. Thus Roman law regained prestige in the later Middle Ages. Ideas of democracy and division of powers, from Athenian precedent or Ciceronian theory, were retrieved from the 17th century onward, though without intending replication in detail. Some Greek political theory has also been seen as contributing to later totalitarian government structures.

Study questions

1. Should Greece and Rome be seen as the origin of modern democracy?
2. How do the political legacies of the classical Mediterranean compare with those of China?
3. What were the most distinctive governmental features of the Roman Empire?

Further reading

Aloys Winterling, *Politics and Society in Imperial Rome* (Wiley, 2010)

Ian Morris and Walter Scheidel, *The Dynamics of Ancient Empires: state power from Assyria to Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 2009)

Stephanie Budin, *The Ancient Greeks: an introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2009)

Irving Zeitlin, *Rulers and Ruled: an introduction to classical political theory* (University of Toronto Press, 1997)

POSTCLASSICAL PERIOD

Postclassical Western Europe

Overview The postclassical period helped establish some durable or at least recurrent features in Western government, including the persistent rivalries among various monarchies and feudatories. Despite one imperial effort, internal competition and frequent warfare marked the Western political tradition after the fall of Rome. Most of the period was marked by the importance of feudalism, reflecting an inability to form effective government structures at a more complex level; most kings were essentially figureheads beyond their own small region. Compared to many Asian societies, and also the Byzantines, West European government remained rather rudimentary through the whole period; and of course in much of northern Europe it was in fact a fairly new institution. But feudalism proved to be a building block that gradually allowed the construction of somewhat more successful central monarchies; yet it also served as the basis for the emergence of the first iterations of the institution of parliament. Western Europe was not the first region to develop formal councils that could serve as a check on monarchs, but the early parliamentary tradition arguably proved particularly promising. Overall, political developments in the postclassical centuries center on forms of government and geographical coverage; there were few innovations in function, and indeed governments struggled to recapture some standard functions during much of the period.

Charlemagne and the failure of empire Conquests by a Frankish king, Charlemagne, in the decades around 800 CE, briefly created a large state, after several centuries of decentralized rule following the fall of Rome in the West. The empire included present-day France, the Low Countries, western Germany and northern Italy. The pope gave Charlemagne the title of Emperor (partly to establish that a secular ruler was subject to religious authorization). The new government took a number of measures, for example establishing a more stable currency. Charlemagne established a palace school and encouraged Christian monasteries to expand their educational functions. Actual administration, however, was decentralized – because of limited resources and lack of trained officials. Emissaries were sent out from the capital, but outlying areas were ruled by separate lords. An annual council brought this group together, and here the

emperor could lay out policy; but in later years the council largely focused on complaints from the nobility. Most important, the empire could not hold together: over time, heirs split it into separate units. The idea of an empire persisted in Germany and parts of Italy: the so-called Holy Roman Empire would last until the early 19th century. But this was not an effective government, as Germany and Italy largely devolved into separate regional and city states. Voltaire correctly noted that this was not holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire. More effective governments would gradually develop elsewhere, particularly in France, England and later Spain; though independent city states in Italy forged particularly effective administrative units that would ultimately serve as the framework for the Renaissance, with far wider functions than feudal or royal states managed in the period.

Role of the church Christianity played a complex role in West European government. Early in the period the Roman Pope established a separate power base, ruling a regional state around Rome itself (of varying size): this provided some protection from control by secular rulers. For the most part, church and state worked in harmony throughout much of the region. At key points, kings and lords actively accepted a religious mission: thus the French king headed a force that attacked a religious heresy in southern France, while at the end of the 11th century many rulers responded to the pope's appeal for a crusade to free the Holy Land from Muslim control. But secular and religious authorities could be at odds as well. At many points the Church tried to restrict endemic warfare, as well as seeking to protect religious authorities from attack, through the Peace of God and Truce of God movements (with limited results). A famous controversy in the 12th century pitted the Pope against the Holy Roman Emperor: the latter had assumed the right to name bishops and use them as state functionaries, and the Pope intervened, excommunicating the emperor and forcing him to back down. In other words, the notion of some religion-state separation, which placed limits on the authority of the Western state, has real merit, though it should not be overdrawn.

Feudalism Through much of the period, but particularly until the 11th or 12th century (with Charlemagne's empire as partial interruption), feudalism was the dominant political form throughout most of the region. The collapse of Roman authority, plus intermittent invasions from groups like the Vikings, led local landlords to form their own militaries, offering protection to lesser lords and peasants. Most peasants were serfs, regulated by a combination of village councils and their landlords. Lords themselves, able to afford horses and weapons, typically grouped in a hierarchy, pledging loyalty and military service as vassals to a regional superior in return for defense. Vassals typically made some token payments to the lord; they were supposed to advise him; and in return the lord helped adjudicate disputes, even providing a jury of peers in some instances, and of course sought to defend from attack. The system was imperfect, incapable of preventing frequent disorder and served as a source of many regional wars among feudal rivals. Over time, however, it did improve stability in some regions. As conditions improved, small cities began to redevelop as well. Some were ruled by feudal lords, but a number of independent urban governments emerged as well, another political element.

Feudal monarchies Many parts of Europe remained locked in this decentralized system through the postclassical period and beyond; this was particularly true in Germany, but also the Low Countries. But in France and England, and later Spain after Christian "reconquest" from Islamic rule, more effective monarchies gradually developed. In France, the king was essentially just a major feudal lord at the outset, though with vague claims to greater authority. Gradually, and particularly from the 12th century onward, kings were able, through conquests and marriage alliances, to acquire more territory and make a number of other lords their vassals. Control of their own landed estates gave them a revenue base (only gradually would wider taxation become possible, with the feudal lords largely exempt). With this, kings could gradually hire some officials of their own, mainly from townspeople, while still depending on nobles for much local administration. Small military forces complemented what could be raised through feudal loyalty. The king even established a French navy, and began calling himself King of France rather than King of the Franks. Kings also began to expand a small network of law courts, offering royal justice instead of relying on more local jurisprudence. Revival of interest in Roman law encouraged a wider judicial function as well. Limited public works – for example, building defensive walls around Paris – and some charity to the poor complemented the expanding government role. Feudal monarchy in England was somewhat better organized after the conquest by Norman forces in 1066: the king was able to name sheriffs as royal officials in outlying regions. Here too, however, the king ruled only in some balance with powerful feudal lords. Only later for example would the state be able to claim monopoly of force against

the feudal tradition of separate regional militaries. Not surprisingly, the feudal heritage also imbued most kings with a strong sense of military mission, not only in defense of royal prerogatives but in competition with other rulers. A long, recurrent war between England and France was one result of this orientation.

Parliaments The feudal tradition also explains the rise of parliaments. Expanding royal claims butted against the belief that vassals should have some voice through councils with the lord – and that the lord had no right to impose additional levies on the lords. As early as the 11th century, a parliament formed in Barcelona to advised the ruler of Catalonia – laying some claim to be the first such body in world history. More influential was the emergence of parliament in England. Early in the 13th century an unpopular English king, embroiled in war the France, sought to raise additional revenues. His nobles rebelled, and defeated royal forces in 1215, forcing the king to accept the Great Charter (Magna Carta). This document restricted royal power in several ways (protecting not only the feudal lords, but town governments and Church leaders as well), with some vague references to more general rights. It stipulated that a Council should be established, whose permission would be essential for any additional taxation. While this was not directly followed up, a first English parliament did meet in 1265. Similar bodies arose in France (and also several separate French provinces), many German regions and elsewhere. These were not modern bodies. They met irregularly, depending on royal initiative, and many countries experienced long periods when central parliaments were not called at all. Membership was divided by three or four estates: nobles, leading churchmen, and top town officials fleshed these out. There was no suggestion of wider democracy. However, a tradition was established that imposed some limits on royal authority at the time, at least periodically, and that would be expanded later on.

Evaluation This was an early stage in the development of the Western state, and by many measures much of Europe was badly ruled through much of the period, though with some improvements over time. Some historians have recently claimed that Europe's divisions were a blessing in disguise, encouraging creative competition and innovation compared to the more stable empires in other parts of the world. Relatively limited government authority gave freer rein to businessmen and other innovators. The system also, however, encouraged disorder and war, not only in this period but long afterward.

Study questions

1. Why did Europe depend so heavily on a feudal political system?
2. How were some kings able to carve out greater authority amid feudalism?
3. What were key differences between medieval and modern parliaments?

Further reading

Jena-Pierre Poly and Eric Bournazel, *The Feudal Transformation, 900-1200* (Holmes and Meier, 1991)

Clifford Backman, *The Worlds of Medieval Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2003)

John Watts, *The Making of Polities: Europe, 1300-1500* (Cambridge University Press, 2009

EARLY MODERN PERIOD

Early Modern Western Europe

Decline of feudalism In many regions, the powers of monarchs and central governments expanded at the expense of regional feudalism. The process actually began with Renaissance Italian city states, where the feudal system had never taken strong root. By the 16th century a number of northern rulers were expanding their functions (the term Renaissance monarchs is sometimes used), including gaining fuller control over military activities. Growing use of canon reduced the options for feudal armies. Nobles retained important powers and functions, continuing to provide much of the bureaucracy including military leadership. But other bureaucrats were recruited as well, and in places like France ennobled bureaucrats stood alongside the more traditional "nobility of the sword".

Religion The Protestant Reformation and then the religious wars gave governments new religious functions – but in the long run reduced the political role of religion. Different rulers devoted massive time and resources to the support of one or another of the religious factions, through the middle of the 17th

century. In Lutheran regions, the state supported the church directly, appointing leading clerics and providing financing; the same became true for the Anglican church in Britain. Calvinists and Catholics remained somewhat more separate; but the Catholic church found it needed to accept more state support, particularly in France. But the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) in Europe and then the religious settlement in Britain (1688) reduced religious strife, and some measure of tolerance developed in places like Holland, England and even Lutheran Prussia. Religion no longer became an explicit cause of war within Europe – a huge change – and government interest in other functions expanded.

Colonial expansion First with Portugal and Spain, but soon with several other countries colonial expansion and policy became a growing government concern. Support for navies and naval ventures grew. In Britain and Holland, and to an extent France, private companies actually conducted the trade and even a good bit of the military activity, with state support. The bureaucracies of East India companies, with thousands of staff members recruited increasingly for aptitude rather than family connections, innovated more quickly than many governments did – providing something of a model in the process. And of course colonial expansion was a major source of new revenue.

Mercantilism and war By the 17th century, mercantilist doctrine became fashionable. Mercantilists assumed that countries were locked in competition, and that gains for one meant losses for another. Frequent warfare became a weapon in this competitive process, but economic policy was a vital component as well. Mercantilists urged governments to promote expansion of the internal economy and its export prowess, seeking to limit imports except as they came from the country's colonies. France became the clearest exemplar of mercantilist policy, as the state set new regulations for manufacturing while also cutting back internal tariffs to promote a national market. But Britain played the game as well, for example introducing high tariffs on Indian cotton cloth in 1733 to protect Britain's own infant industry. Governments began to pay much greater attention to road and canal building, particularly in the 18th century. While religious wars ended, other kinds of warfare remained a central function of kings and their governments – overseas and within Europe as well. France, particularly, conduced recurrent series of wars in the later 17th and early 18th centuries, expanding territory and reducing the military capacity of neighboring regions such as (decentralized) Germany.

Absolute monarchy By the 17th century a number of monarchs began claiming absolute power – as with the famous "I am the state" quote by France's Louis XIV. The nobility was further trimmed: Louis built his great Versailles palace to preoccupy nobles with court functions and intrigues, distracting them from their regional base. Other rulers in central Europe soon followed this lead. The central state began sending representatives to the provinces to exercise government functions directly. Bureaucracies expanded and became more specialized, with businessmen recruited to head up financial units – a process some have called bureaucratic rationalization. New functions gained attention, besides the greater attention to military and public works ventures (plus more systematic taxation). Many governments set up scientific academies to promote research. The French also established an institute to watch over the purity of the French language. From the Renaissance onward, promotion of the arts became a standard monarchical function. Some governments even began to build larger prisons, creating new options for the punishment of crimes. Military policy itself showed the growing role of the state. Officer ranks were more carefully defined; armies began to arrange their own provisions, rather than living off the land; uniforms and other insignia were standardized; medical care and even pensions were organized. In all this the power of medieval parliaments declined: they were often not called into sessions for many decades, though regional assemblies persisted.

The parliamentary option In the Netherlands, independent after 1648, and ultimately in Britain a different monarchical form developed, though some of the functional changes were put in place as well. Parliamentary power was enhanced and earlier limitations were eased: most notably, the legislatures began to meet regularly rather than depending on royal summons. Contests for parliamentary votes became more important, and the monarchs themselves, depending on parliamentary approval for funding, appointed ministers of state from the leading parliamentarians—some of whom gained a greater policy role than the kings themselves. The notion of limited monarchy and a representative legislative assembly drew approval from intellectuals even in countries like France. Europe was at this point divided on how the government should be organized. In no case were parliaments democratic (though a hint of democratic arguments did emerge in the 17th-century English civil wars). Voting right were limited to a

segment of the properties group, and aristocratic upper houses had considerable power. In England, the government also sponsored a revision of the Poor Law; while welfare was not yet seen as a major state function, it did get some attention.

Enlightened despotism In Prussia and Austria in the 18th century, reforming monarchs carried the ideas of absolute monarchy a step further, arguing that the king and his state should take on a variety of new measures to improve society. They revised law codes to limit excessive punishments. They sponsored new technologies and new crops, seeking to stimulate economic growth. This was a brief and limited experiment, but it furthered the general process of partially reconsidering the functions of the state (though many enlightened despots were also eager warriors).

Education Education expanded rapidly in early modern Europe, but not primarily because of state responsibility. However, the state did become involved, setting the basis for what would be a more substantial redefinition of the government and its contact with ordinary citizens in the 19th century. In several Protestant countries the government directed religious authorities to expand schools, providing funding – this was true in Scandinavia and Scotland most notably; and in return for support they participated in setting standards and inspecting outcomes. In Prussia after the mid-18th century, Frederick the Great sketched a full school system, with attendance requirements, state-sponsored examinations and support for teacher training. This was a striking innovation. Many governments also set up new training institutes for bureaucrats. Most governments in the 18th century provided formal training for military officers, particularly those dealing with artillery, navigation and fortification. France established schools for civil engineers (Roads and Bridges).

Political theory and public opinion From the religious wars onward, debates over appropriate government forms and functions became a major intellectual preoccupation. A growing number of intellectuals, particularly by the time of the 18th-century Enlightenment, urged governments to shake off religion and establish greater tolerance. They urged new freedoms for press and assembly. They sought more rational and limited punishments for crimes. While many intellectuals supported enlightened despotism and the idea of government activity for the public good, there was also interest in parliaments and some talk of democracy. Something like a discipline of political science took shape. At the same time, growing literacy and greater prosperity encouraged some portion of the general public to begin to take an interest in political matters. Something like a measurable public opinion emerged, capable of putting pressure on governments. Thus a sporadic campaign against slavery and the slave trade generated petitions with tens of thousands of signatures, as well as marches and other manifestation, from the mid-18th century onward. Here were important new factors in the conduct of government.

Nation state Obviously, Europe did not develop a unified government – nor were there significant efforts in that direction. The expansion of government and limitations on feudalism did however create a clearer outline of the nation state—a government that would cover a cultural region, with mutual interaction and support between culture and politics. (Note that definitions of national culture are always partially invented and artificial.) More efficient governments thus created more effective national frontiers, as between France and Spain. Sponsorship of a more national market and national literatures moved in the same direction. The nation state idea was not yet fully articulated, partly because so many monarchs claimed that they owned the state, but it was germinating – along with the recurrent wars that pitted states against each other. At the same time, however, recurrent conferences, beginning with Westphalia, further the idea that the rulers of European nation states could also periodically talk with each other to resolve or reduce conflict.

Study questions

1. In what ways did feudalism decline and what were the results?
2. What were the most important changes in government functions?
3. What were the main features, respectively, of absolutist and parliamentary monarchies?
4. Was Europe becoming a cluster of nation states?

Further reading

Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: religious conflict and the practice of toleration in early modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)

John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe,* v. I (3rd ed., Norton, 2009)

E.N.Williams, *The Ancient Regime in Europe: government and society in the major states, 1848-1789* (Pimlico, 1999)

19TH CENTURY

Government in the Industrial Age

Overview Full-fledged industrialization began with developments in Britain at the end of the 18th century. Other Western societies joined in by the early 19th century. Japan and Russia entered the process at the end of the 19th century. Then after World War II the Pacific Rim and then China, India and other players launched their own industrializations. By the early 21st century, well over half the world's population was involved in industrial or rapidly industrializing societies. While economic and technological changes held center stage, industrialization, and preparing for industrialization, also involved a variety of shifts in the nature of role of government. Before dealing with more specific regional developments through the 19th and then 20th centuries, some points about the contrasts and continuities between the industrial and the preindustrial state can be ventured.

Government as cause For quite a while, historians paid great attention to the role of the state in causing industrialization in the first place, particularly in Britain. This approach has declined with the realization that other governments, as in China, were at least as well organized – but no industrialization initially resulted. The British advantage rested on colonial holdings and scientific culture more than the state. However, the British government in the 18th century did expand canals and roads, while ordering industrial supplies for the growing navy. It established a central bank and set up a much more formal patent office. Tariffs on foreign manufactured goods encouraged British factories, particularly in cotton textiles. Government role in later industrializations expanded still further, for example normally in establishing or at least promoting a new railroad system. (Thus while the British government had facilitated railway land acquisition, the French and German governments built the rail network directly.) Japanese and Russian industrializations depended even more heavily on the state, for example in setting up factories directly in key industries. The same pattern applied to Pacific Rim industrializations. Governments do not explain the timing of industrialization alone, but their involvement was critical particularly in "latecomer" cases – of course including China at the end of the 20th century.

New functions Government functions and personnel expanded everywhere, to help prepare for industrialization and then to respond to some of its results. (Only Britain and Norway briefly shrunk their governments in the 19th century, in response to liberal beliefs in more free enterprise; but these were anomalous cases and lasted a few decades at most.) Law codes had to change to accommodate new issues, including more complicated property and corporate law. In addition to the expanded public works function – as in helping to set up railways – governments fairly quickly added factory inspections, toward minimal safety standards and some protection of child and female labor; these were initially cursory, but they expanded with time. Responsibility for public health increased, with new programs for sewage disposal and, later in the century, centers to assist with infant care. Organization of commercial fairs and industrial expositions became a standard feature, beginning with Britain's Crystal Palace exhibit in 1851. Formal patent offices were established more widely – very quickly, for example, in the new United States. Though the function was not entirely new, professional policing became a responsibility – in some cases, as in Britain, for the first time in any formal sense (the famous British force was organized in the 1820s by prime minister Robert Peel – hence, bobbies). Perhaps most important, though there were a few limited precedents, governments assumed responsibility for education, setting up school requirements, standards for teacher training, and so on – as Japan did with its ambitious Education Act of 1872. Beginning with Germany in the 1880s, governments haltingly organized new welfare systems, with protections for accident and illness, old age and unemployment; here too, innovations started small but expanded over time. On another front, many governments began to expand their capacity to require military service, and military spending rose rapidly in many industrial states. Obviously in all these

categories specific programs depended on time and place, but the overall pattern was clear. And this meant not only larger governments, but more contact between the state and ordinary people on a variety of fronts – even in such basic matters as a requirement to acquire a marriage license.

Facilities and personnel These changes interacted with new industrial technologies, initially particularly the railroad and the telegraph, which permitted more rapid communication and movement around a large territory. To this soon would be added typewriters and other duplicating devices, vital to a larger bureaucracy. Personnel expanded everywhere and in most cases, as in the West after the 1850s, this was accompanied by civil service reforms which introduced merit examinations rather than heredity or personal connections (as China had already done in the past). Corruption and favoritism remained problems, but professionalism was enhanced overall, and bureaucracies no longer depended on aristocratic birth. Though with some earlier precedents, tertiary training for future bureaucrats also expanded – including a larger array of military training schools but also new programs in public health, statistics, agricultural research, modern languages and so on; another responsibility for the state.

Form of government Here, no single "industrial" model prevailed, but there were innovations. One scholar has argued that, with more people living in cities, better educated, and with wider contacts with the state, government either had to allow greater popular voice – that is, approach some kind of democracy – OR establish new forms of authoritarianism (sometimes with a façade of popular participation). This may seem to be an overgeneralization, but it is worth attention. Certainly government forms changed quickly in many industrial or industrializing societies. Though this became clearer in the 20th century than in the 19th, monarchies had difficulty adjusting to the demands of industrial society – sometimes because they staked too much on protecting the landed aristocracy, as in prerevolutionary Russia. With few exceptions, republics, rather than monarchies, became the order of the day as industrialization gained ground. World War I would also reveal the unprecedented organizational capacity of the industrial state, in organizing the economy, requisitioning labor, issuing propaganda, and policing against dissent. This would feed directly into new kinds of authoritarianism in the 20th and 21st centuries. Disputes about the form of government became an important issue in many parts of the world, in part in the effort to adjust to the needs of an industrial society.

Nation state Another clear political trend coterminous with the advance of industrialization was a preference for the nation state, rather than subnational units or multinational empires. Sometimes the trend connected directly with industrialization. Thus German national unity in the 19th century was prepared by a tariff union, in turn motivated in part by a desire to advance industrial opportunities. In many other cases, the nation state seemed logical in part because of the industrial success of European nation states. Connections should not be pressed too far: industrialization was not the main cause of the spread of nation states, and many nations states proved to be too small to provide appropriate markets – hence, particularly after World War II, the growing efforts to link nation states in larger tariff unions.

Conclusion Industrial implications for government were most significant in the area of functional change and organizational capacity. Overall, industrialization or the effort to industrialize provided a loose framework, within which a variety of specific developments took shape within individual countries. There were, however, some common trends and needs, within which more detailed political developments would take shape over the past 250 years.

Study questions

1. What kinds of new functions does industrialization require of the state?
2. What was the role of the state in initiating industrial revolutions?
3. What are the connections between the advance of industrialization and the decline of monarchy?

Further reading

Peter N. Stearns, *The Industrial Turn in World History* (Routledge, 2017)

Alexander Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (Harvard University Press, 1962

Western Europe and the Settler Societies

Long 19th century Many world historians use the idea of a "long" 19th century as part of their overall periodization: the notion is that key characteristics (including initial industrialization) began to take shape in the second half of the 18th century, setting in motion trends that would persist into the early 20th. These trends would include the new surge of Western imperialism, which was already taking shape with increasing British control of India. The long 19th century would also be defined in part by the revolutions that burst forth in the final quarter of the 18th century and would unleash a new, sometimes violent, debate about the nature of government that would also run through the ensuing decades; French decisions about government form would not really coalesce until the 1870s and 1880s, for example, after the initial ferment of the revolution of 1789.

Geography The core of "the West" continued to center in Western and Central Europe. However, many political movements – including liberalism – and government innovations were also shared by the British-dominated settler societies of the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. These societies faced frontier conditions different from those of Western Europe, and the extension of government to new areas, and the role of government in dealing, usually harshly, with indigenous people further differentiated the settler societies. But many trends were shared, particularly in terms of the form of government organization with the rise of parliamentary regimes and the expansion of the vote.

Age of revolution The "age of Atlantic revolution", from 1776 to the final major risings in 1848, had a variety of implications for government. The risings sought new restrictions on government interference in a variety of areas, emphasizing a new program of human rights. Governments should no longer restrict speech, assembly, religious freedom or the press. In the French Revolution, emphasis also highlighted the elimination of aristocratic legal privilege: government service should be "open to talents". Monarchies should either be eliminated or restricted by new legislative bodies, with significant authority; these in turn should derive from a wider suffrage, though still usually defined in terms of property qualifications (and definitely entirely male). These were huge changes, though many were incompletely achieved. In the process some government functions also expanded. Again in France the revolutionary government mandated the metric system, another major government shift though responsibility for weights and measures was not entirely new. Legal codes were reconsidered, to limit the crimes subject to capital punishment. Government responsibility for schools increased, though not yet to the point of universal requirements. The French government set up a variety of new technical schools, to improve bureaucratic recruitment and spur the economy.

Consolidation European revolutions in 1830 and 1848 largely maintained the basic goals, often objecting to interference with the freedom of the press or undue religious influence. The revolutionary mood spread into central Europe. After 1848, and the formal defeat or eclipse of the revolutionary thrust, attention turned to consolidating previous gains, often with new compromises among liberals and conservatives. Most governments now supported religious freedom, including freedom for Jews. They granted considerable press freedom, though police interference continued and many governments, even in liberal Britain or the United States, extended censorship over sexual content in the name of essentially Christian moral values. The Importance of parliaments was confirmed – though in France not until the 1870s. In unified Germany parliamentary powers were limited by the power of the emperor to appoint chief ministers. At this point however attention largely turned away from the form of government, around which there was now considerable agreement, toward growing social and military issues.

Democracy Democratic voting rights expanded gradually, though for a brief moment the radical phase of the French revolution established universal manhood suffrage. In Britain three separate reforms, from 1832 to the 1880s, gradually established nearly universal manhood suffrage. Several northern states in the United States opened to universal suffrage from the 1820s onward, and then the end of slavery extended democratic rights (in principle) nationwide. French suffrage was assured from 1848 onward, and the German compromise included wide suffrage but with a three-class voting system that provided greater power to the propertied group. Italy did not move to democracy until after World War I. By the later 19th century, the big new voting issue involved women, as feminist agitation increased widely. New Zealand was the first nation to move, in 1893, though several American western states innovated even

earlier. Women's suffrage was still an open issue by 1914, though trends were becoming clear, particularly in countries with a Protestant background.

Religion The religious function of Western governments declined considerably, as the commitment to greater religious freedom suggested, but there were complexities. The United States established separation of church and state early on, though government policies, as in the schools, favored a loosely Protestant ethical approach. Change came harder in Europe. The French Revolution worked to reduce the power of the Catholic Church, seizing many church lands and at one point trying to enforce oaths of loyalty from priests. Later regimes however increased the Church role, particularly in primary education, until a firmly secular system was established in the 1880s. Further quarrels in the 1890s led to more definitive separation and a commitment to the French Republic as a secular state. British conflicts over the role of the Church of England, particularly in schools, extended beyond the 19th century. Germany sought to reduce the role of the Catholic Church (in a religiously divided nation) in the 1880s, and the Italian state frequently conflicted with the papacy as papal territories were stripped away with national unification. Again the trend was clear, but not surprisingly, given the importance of religious functions in the past, the change was difficult and contested.

Nationalism The French revolution heralded the new phenomenon of popular nationalism, symbolized by the creation of the world's first national anthem. The idea was that now that the state belonged to the people, rather than a monarch, the people owed it active national loyalty. Nationalism spread widely in Europe and the United States, and soon beyond, helping to motivate Italian and German unifications. Nationalism gave established nations a new source of political loyalty, and it was frequently played up in the schools. But nationalism could also constrain the state, particularly supporting foreign policy ventures in the name of national honor. Popular nationalism, trumpeted by the mass press, pushed states into some imperialist ventures that might otherwise not have been undertaken by the later 19th century.

Functions The two great expansions of the functions of the Western state in the 19th century involved mass and secondary education and social insurance. Efforts to extend state schooling at the primary level dotted the first half of the century; in the United States, these centered on states and localities (mainly in the north), but national governments took the lead in Europe. Germany already had the framework of a system. France sketched a growth in public schools in 1833, but fleshed out a fully national system, and compulsory attendance requirement, only in the 1880s. State support for secondary schools and universities grew as well; in the United States the federal government established public universities in every state in the nation. Social insurance emerged from the 1880s onward, in response to industrialization and new pressures from rising socialist movements. These were not the only developments, however. New legislation limited hours of work for women and children, and ultimately men, followed by some factory inspection efforts. Later in the century governments moved to agree on national time zones to facilitate transportation. Beginning with city governments, the state began to take responsibility for establishing and maintaining parks. The list was considerable, and growing.

War and collaboration After the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, the major states of Europe moved to promote greater European peace, beginning with the fairly statesmanlike Treaty of Vienna in 1815. This did not prevent later conflicts, particularly around the national unifications, but in fact European war became far less common than had been the case in the early modern period. However, this was replaced in part by the new round of imperialist expansion in Africa, Southeast Asia and Pacific Oceania, which was supported as well by more government military spending and larger standing armies (on the continent). At the same time European governments took the lead in a variety of new international collaborations (often including the United States). New agreements provided postal coordination, allowing international mailing for the first time; the international time zone agreement; international patent protection; coordination of weather statistics; congresses aimed at limiting the spread of epidemic disease – here too the list was considerable and growing, arguably modifying (though not balancing) the spread of nationalism in defining government policy.

Study questions

1. What were the main government changes that resulted from the various revolutions?
2. How and why did democratic voting systems spread?
3. What were the main changes in government function during the long 19th century?

Further reading

Nicholas Barreyre and Claire Lemercier, "The Unexceptional State: rethinking the state in the nineteenth century (France, United States," *American Historical Review* 126 (2021)

Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and head Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985)

Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848* (Vintage, 1962)

20TH CENTURY

Western Europe and the United States

Interwar crisis Most Western governments performed badly between the wars. They did not handle the economic Depression constructively, and they failed to respond to the growing threat posed by Nazi Germany. Several factors were involved. World War I had created massive economic problems, and it also killed many potential young leaders; fatalities were highest in the rank of lieutenant. Many governments became more defensive, as in the United States which retreated to isolationism. Many government officials lacked adequate training in economics. Further, particularly in the 1930s, increased partisanship paralyzed decision-making. Centrist political parties declined, and at the extremes communist and far right parties added to confusion. All of this complicated responses to the Depression, which often centered on government retrenchment and new tariffs barriers, both counterproductive. Aggressive acts by Nazi Germany drew no vigorous reply, only a futile hope for compromise. Some exceptions involved Scandinavia and the United States, where governments did begin to expand welfare protections and other economic efforts to deal with some effects of the Depression. Overall, however, it would take World War II to galvanize Western governments into more constructive action.

Fascism From key parts of the West came the experiment with fascist governments, first in Italy, then Germany and to an extent Spain. Fascism involved a vigorous renunciation of the premises of liberal government. Instead, the state and its leader were to become to sole focus for popular loyalty, and the source of most policy direction. As Benito Mussolini put it, "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state." Fascist governments practiced what the Nazis called *Gleichschaltung,* or leveling, subjecting virtually all institutions to state control – particularly, political parties and trade unions. School curricula were revamped to emphasize loyalty and nationalism, and youth groups provided additional guidance. Some church activities were limited. Political police intimidated potential opposition, and many protest leaders were imprisoned or worse. At the same time, the state maintained constant propaganda, using radio, films and mass meetings, railing against potential enemies. (Fascism depended on a variety of new technologies, particularly in media.) Voting occurred, but only for official political parties. Government intervention in the economy increased, for example in the automobile industry, and increased armaments production added in. Governments also began to organize mass leisure for workers, building cheap resort buildings for example on the Baltic coast. And of course in Germany the government began to organize systematic oppression, and ultimately extermination, of the Jews. This kind of government has been called totalitarian because of the effort at total state control. The term is no longer current, partly because it became part of dbious Cold War rhetoric, partly because we increasingly know that even the fascist states did not try for total control. They were cautious, for example, with the Catholic Church, and gave considerable latitude to big business and the landed aristocracy. Still, this was a distinctive innovation in the history of government, largely defanged by the losses of World War II but with some potential legacy later on.

Postwar Western governments: form Throughout the West after World War II, parliamentary democracies were revived or restored. This trend included Germany and Italy, now reconstituted under allied supervision. It would later spread to Spain, Portugal and Greece, giving the West the most homogeneous political structures arguably since the Middle Ages. Differences remained in particulars: France, for example, was far more centralized than federal Germany or the United States.

Postwar functions Here the big development was the emergence of the full welfare state, with governments providing an increasingly elaborate safety net with protections for the elderly, the

unemployed, the ill; state-run medical systems or medical insurance became the norm except in the United States. Family protections increasingly included provision of day care centers, legislation providing periods of parental leave, and direct payments to families with young children. Government sponsored housing programs expanded, a major feature in Britain. Economic intervention increased, including reliance on trained economists (as in the United States with the establishment of the Council of Economic Advisors). Many states launched formal economic planning; many took over sectors such as railways and mines. State-run universities expanded, giving qualified students considerable support. These developments depended on increased taxation, including new devices such as value-added taxes. Bureaucracies expanded, and many governments were increasingly operated by highly specialized officials called technocrats. These developments provoked some pushback, and in the United States the full welfare/planning state apparatus did not emerge at all. By the 1980s as economic growth slowed, some states cut back a bit on welfare arrangements (this was most notably true in Britain, where free university tuition for example was replaced by considerable fees). But in most cases the basic apparatus held up, and often seemed to contribute to considerable popular wellbeing.

Foreign and military policy Headed by leaders in countries like France, postwar European states made a concerted effort to correct the tensions that had led to two world wars. The big effort centered on constructing systems of economic coordination that would reduce nationalist impulses and anchor Germany in a European concert. The result was a series of moves ultimately yielding the European Union, embracing most European countries and providing policy coordination not only in economic matters, but in free movement of labor and even (for some members) a common currency. The Union developed its own technocratic bureaucracy, centered in Brussels, issuing regulations in a variety of domains. European states also, in some cases reluctantly, abandoned most of their colonial holdings and, particularly after the Cold War, dramatically reduced military expenditures, often to well below 2% of Gross National Product. Leaders boasted that they were creating a new kind of civilian state, focused on domestic prosperity. In this regard the United States was quite different. It participated actively in helping to create new international agencies after World War II, abandoning isolationism. It encouraged greater European unity. But, pressed by the Cold War (which its leaders may have exaggerated), it became increasingly militaristic, with high levels of military expenditure, recurrent weapons innovation, and frequent participation in war. For better or worse, these policies helped excuse European allies from comparable military commitments, an odd and possibly precarious balance.

Environmental policy By the 21st century many Western governments were beginning, though hesitantly, to add a new function: intervention toward environmental protection. (Sweden was the first country to call for international action in this area, in the 1970s). To some extent this extended earlier responsibilities, for example in maintaining parks and developing public works. But it also involved new forms of regulation, as in rules regulating automobile fuel emissions and even projecting a complete end to gasoline-powered vehicles by some future date. Individual governments, as in Holland, were also developing new approaches to managing the impact of rising ocean levels. Here, clearly, was an important if uncertain new frontier for governments.

Study questions

1. What were the major innovations of the fascist state?
2. What were the main symptoms of government failure in the interwar West?
3. What were the principal innovations in the Western state after the war?
4. What were the main differences between Europe and the United States in postwar government policy?

Further reading

Sheila Fitzpatrick and Michael Geyer, eds., *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism compared* (Cambridge University Press, 2008)

Robert Paxton and Judith Hessler, *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (5th ed., Wadsworth/Cengage, 2011)

Francis G. Castles et. al., *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State* (Oxford University Press, 2010)