6th Edition

POLITICS, POWER, AND THE COMMON GOOD

An Introduction to Political Science

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Sixth Edition

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About This Course

Politics is a fascinating subject and one that affects all of our lives. Unfortunately, some students are turned off by politics because they see it as an activity involving people who seek personal benefits or glory. The overblown rhetoric, distortions, and lies of some government leaders, the exaggerations and unfulfilled promises of the politicians who seek our votes, and the violence and wars that have been justified by dubious political ideals are sufficient to lead us to adopt a skeptical view of politics.

However, there is another side to the story. Politics can and should be about how we might best achieve what is good for our communities and for the world as a whole. Humanity faces many important challenges—for example, how to establish and expand human rights, protect the environment, reduce poverty, and create a more peaceful world. Political actions and decisions are very important in dealing with such challenges. In order to act effectively in political life, it is essential to understand how the political world works. We need to examine different views about how political communities should be organized and the values they should pursue.

A number of years ago, we decided to write a textbook that would provide students with an interesting, easy-to-read, and straightforward introduction to the discipline. With this sixth edition of *Politics, Power, and the Common Good*, we continue to endeavour to present a clear explanation of the basics of politics, while at the same time raising challenging questions that will encourage students to think deeply about the contemporary political world.

In this book, we provide the basic knowledge that every citizen (or potential citizen) should have, from understanding the political parties that seek our votes to understanding the way that Canada's parliamentary system works. While readers need to understand the politics and political structure of our own country, politics is about more than the institutions of government. Globalization makes it important to understand what is happening in the world at large and how this affects our lives in Canada. Readers will learn about the contending perspectives that are used to understand the world, the problems of the nearly one billion people who live in extreme poverty, the global political systems of the twenty-first century, and much more.

As the authors of this book, we do not claim to have all of the answers to political problems, nor do we want to promote a particular political perspective. Instead, our goal is to introduce our readers to the analysis of politics and government and to raise important political questions to ponder and discuss.

Content Highlights

This text is designed to provide students with timely information about political issues that are important today and will likely affect our lives in the future. Users of the new Revel edition of *Politics, Power, and the Common Good* will encounter a suite of digital features that deliver relevant and engaging content on current topics in political science, including the following:

- Chapter-opening *In the News* interactive feature provides author-written content, updated annually, that puts relevant news and current events into the context of Political Science and helps your students engage with the course.
- Tables, figures, images, and boxes are reviewed for currency and updated in real time as needed.
- Images and videos bring chapter content to life.
- Data is presented using engaging interactive features such as clickable timelines and maps, as well as graphs with manipulable elements and predictive functionality.
- Drag-and-drop, matching, and fill-in-the-blank activities allow students to put their knowledge to the test as they learn new terms and concepts.
- Integrated writing opportunities prompt students to engage with and think critically about the research presented to them. Self-paced journalling prompts encourage students to express their thoughts without breaking stride in their reading. Assignable shared writing activities direct students to share written responses with classmates, fostering peer discussion.
- Quizzes at the end of every module and at the end of each chapter help students measure their understanding of key concepts before moving on.

About the Authors

Eric Mintz is Honorary Research Professor at Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland. He has frequently taught courses in Introduction to Politics, Canadian Politics, Environmental Politics and Environmental Policy, and Political Ideologies. He has been the lead author of *Canada's Politics* and contributed five chapters for the fourth edition to be published by Pearson Canada in 2020.

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Dr. David Close was educated at Wayne State, Georgetown, and McGill Universities. He began teaching political science at Memorial University of Newfoundland in 1975. He wrote a number of books, including, most recently, Nicaragua: Navigating the Politics of Democracy (2016) and Latin American Politics (2nd edition, 2017). As well, he was the author, co-author, and contributor to many books in Spanish, particularly about conflicts in Latin American countries.

In 2001, David began collaborating with Eric Mintz and Osvaldo Croci in writing six editions of Politics, Power, and the Common Good. In particular, David focused his writing on social movements, protest and political violence, non-democratic governments, and the politics and development of the poorer countries in the book.

Chapter 1

Understanding Politics

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Many people gathered in Paris at the 2015 international conference on climate change to encourage world leaders to limit the increase in global warming caused by greenhouse gases. 95 countries signed a commitment to take measures to reduce the increase in global temperature. However, in 2017, President Donald Trump (who had claimed a number of times that global warming is a hoax) said he would cancel the US commitment to the Paris Agreement.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- **LO 1.1** Define the concepts of politics and power.
- **LO 1.2** Explain the difference between authority and legitimacy.
- **LO 1.3** Discuss whether seeking the common good is a meaningful goal of political life.

Introduction: Understanding Politics

Climate change, the biggest long-term threat to the world, is a critical political issue. If effective action is not taken, the effects could be horrific. A huge decline in the ability to grow food could lead to mass starvation, riots, wars, flooding of large areas, and massive population migrations (Dyer, 2008). Ultimately, increasing greenhouse gases beyond a certain level could result in the extinction of most species, including human beings.

Carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas (GHG) that is the leading cause of human-induced warming, stays in the atmosphere for a very long time. It has increased from 280 parts per million (ppm) in the atmosphere prior to the Industrial Revolution to over 410 ppm in 2018 (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2019), particularly through the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas). Already, the average global temperature has increased by about one degree Celsius over the average in the twentieth century, and the negative effects of climate change are being felt, particularly in tropical areas and in the Arctic. When CO_2 concentration in the atmosphere reaches somewhere between 450–600 ppm, accelerating temperatures will likely be irreversible (Solomon, Plattner, Knutti, & Friedlingstein, 2009).

There is a strong scientific consensus that urgent action is needed to limit climate change, but substantial change has been difficult to achieve. The very large corporations that extract, process, and sell fossil fuels have been able to exert powerful influence on governments to continue to support their activities. They have also devoted considerable efforts to try to persuade the public that they are committed to environmental protection while supporting groups that question the need for action. Some governments have been reluctant to take decisive action on climate change because of the revenues, jobs, and economic growth associated with fossil fuel exploration, production, and transportation. Developing and poor countries point out that most of the increase in CO_2 in the atmosphere has been released by industrialized countries over the past few centuries. They are concerned that global measures to reduce GHG emissions will affect their ability to develop their economies unless the richer countries provide large amounts of money to offset the cost of reducing emissions.

In 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted, committing the industrialized countries to an overall reduction of GHG emissions by 5.2%. However, the United States refused to sign the Protocol, and Canada withdrew from the Protocol in 2011 after having increased its emissions.

At the twenty-first international conference on climate change in Paris, 2015, an agreement was reached by 195 countries (including Canada). The agreement included a commitment to keep the global average temperature increase "well below" a global increase of 2°C compared with pre-industrial levels, and to make efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C. Each country would determine its own contribution to this worldwide goal and the developed countries made a non-binding commitment to provide $100 billion a year to help the developing countries. Although the Paris Agreement was hailed as a major breakthrough, critics pointed out that there is no enforcement mechanism, reductions in GHG do not come into effect until 2020, and $100 billion is insufficient to help poorer countries deal with climate change. Further, although US President Obama endorsed the agreement, President Donald Trump announced on June 1, 2017 that the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate accord. This was strongly criticized by countries around the world. Although, under the terms of the Accord, the United States cannot withdraw from the Accord until November 4, 2020 (the day after the next US presidential election), Trump's promotion of coal and other industries suggests that the US will not abide by the Paris Agreement. However, some US states and cities have indicated that they will try to reduce greenhouse emissions.

The common good of humanity requires a very great reduction in the use of fossil fuels. However, this would involve major challenges to political and economic power and the lifestyles of individuals. Difficult questions exist about how the costs of addressing the problem should be distributed and how a coordinated response can be achieved in a world characterized by power conflicts and a highly unequal distribution of wealth.

Politics sometimes seems to be a trivial or undesirable activity. When we see political party advertisements that are devoted to personal attacks on leaders of other

parties, politics may seem like a game played by those seeking to gain or maintain power. When we hear about politicians in some countries defrauding governments or accepting bribes, we may view politics as characterized by corruption. When politicians avoid fulfilling their promises and seem to spout empty rhetoric, we may wonder why anyone would bother to spend time following politics.

The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle viewed politics as the "master science." This depiction of politics may seem strange, but it reflects an important reality. The laws and policies of government can affect all aspects of our lives and our society. The opportunity of many students to receive a higher education is affected by the funding of educational institutions, the availability of loans and grants to students, and the tuition fees (directly or indirectly set by government) that students must pay. If you are unable to find work or become disabled, your ability to live a decent life may depend on the level of support that governments have provided. Political decisions affect the economy, the quality of the environment, the funding and use of scientific research, the freedoms you enjoy, and whether your country will send troops to fight in another part of the world. Thus, understanding politics can help you to think about, to discuss, and to take action about important issues that can affect your life, your community, country, and the world.

In this chapter we focus on some basic concepts needed to understand politics. It is important to recognize that there are no universally accepted definitions for many of the concepts used in analyzing politics. Those with different perspectives about politics will often define concepts in different ways. For example, while democracy is often defined primarily in terms of the procedures for holding elections to choose among competing parties and candidates, others define democracy as involving direct control of governing decisions by the people, or even "government that is by or for the common people" whether or not that government is chosen by a competitive election (Macpherson, 1965, p. 5). Similarly, there are no generally accepted definitions for concepts such as politics and power. Nevertheless, clear definitions of basic concepts are important if we are to analyze, understand, and discuss politics in a meaningful way.

Basic Concepts

LO 1.1 Define the concepts of politics and power.

Politics can be viewed as a feature of all organized human activity (Leftwich, 1983). Whether in a family, a business, or a sports group, decisions about what the group should do need to be made. Different members of the group will often have different views, and efforts may be made by members of the group to try to persuade others about a particular course of action. Power relationships will likely influence what the group does. Thus, we can analyze the politics of any group to assess how decisions are made, which people tend to get their way, and whose ideas, interests, and values the group's decisions tend to reflect.

Some political scientists view the study of politics as including all relationships that involve power (Hay, 2002). Generally, however, political science focuses primarily on the making of decisions that relate to the governing of a political community. David Easton's definition of politics as the "authoritative allocation of values for a society" (1953, p. 129) is used by many political scientists. The "allocation of values" refers to how the limited resources of a society (more generally, those things that are desired or valued) are allocated (distributed). By referring to the *authoritative* allocation of values, Easton suggests that what is distinctive about the allocation of values through governmental institutions is that this allocation is generally accepted as binding on all persons in the community. Politics, in this view, "concerns all those varieties of activity that influence significantly the kind of authoritative policy adopted for a society and the way it is put into practice" (Easton, 1953, p. 128). However, while many government decisions are authoritative, governments also take actions that are not considered binding on the members of the political community. For example, governments may try to persuade us to adopt healthier lifestyles.

politics
Activity related to influencing, making, or implementing collective decisions for a political community.

For the purposes of this book, we define **politics** as activity related to influencing, making, or implementing collective decisions for a political community (whether a country, a local community, or the loosely organized global community). Political activity includes individuals and groups trying to influence the collective decisions and policies of governments and mobilizing support for political parties seeking to gain or maintain control of the government. Political activity also includes the interactions among various governing institutions in developing and implementing public policies. Raising awareness of problems affecting the political community and efforts to change political values, attitudes, and opinions can also be viewed as political. In addition, collective action concerning problems that affect society or the world might also be considered political regardless of whether the action is directed at influencing government (as discussed in Box 1-1 A Broader View of Politics).

Box 1-1 A Broader View of Politics

We often think of political activity as involving the struggle for political power and the attempts to influence the decisions of government. But this may be too limited a focus. Consider the following examples.

Various environmental groups have sought to end the clear-cutting practices of forest companies in British Columbia. Having had limited success in persuading the B.C. government to pass stricter logging regulations, they turned to other methods to achieve their objective. Europeans were encouraged to participate in a boycott of products made with B.C. lumber, and pressure was put on retail businesses such as Home Depot to sell only lumber produced in an environmentally friendly manner. These activities had considerable success, and several B.C. forest companies began to change their logging practices.

In 2010, environmental groups, including Greenpeace and Forest Ethics, reached an agreement with the Forest Products Association of Canada. The major forestry companies agreed to stop logging about 30 million hectares of boreal forest, which is the prime habitat of endangered caribou herds, to reduce GHG emissions to become carbon neutral, and to meet or exceed the high sustainability standards set by the independent Forest Stewardship Council. In return, environmental groups promised to suspend their boycott campaigns and help the industry market itself as "green" (Mittelstaedt, 2010). However, two environmental groups later withdrew from the agreement claiming that too little was being done to protect the ecosystem. As well, some First Nations opposed the agreement that had been negotiated without their knowledge or participation and thus violated their treaty rights.

In many ways, these activities by environmental groups are similar to what we normally consider political. People were mobilized to try to achieve an objective that was viewed as being in the public interest. Rather than influencing government to adopt a policy that might change the actions of forestry companies, environmental groups directly pressured some of the companies to change their actions to deal with a public problem. The activities of the environmental groups, therefore, could be considered political, even though these groups decided to try to affect the decisions of private businesses rather than the decisions of government.

Power

Discussion and analysis of politics often focuses on power. Statements such as "the prime minister is very powerful," "big business is more powerful than ordinary citizens," and "the United States is the most powerful country in the world" are frequently made. Determining the validity of such statements, however, can be difficult and controversial. Nevertheless, power is important in affecting political decisions.

power
The ability to achieve an objective by influencing the behaviour of others, particularly to get them to do what they would not have otherwise done.

Power is often defined as the ability to achieve an objective by influencing the behaviour of others (Nye, 2004), particularly to get them to do what they would not have otherwise done.[1] Power, in this definition, is a relationship among different individuals and groups. As such, it is not easily quantifiable and changes depending on the objective being pursued and the circumstances involved. For example, the president of the United States may be very powerful in decisions concerning the deployment of armed forces, but less powerful when trying to persuade the American Congress concerning agricultural or housing policies.

[1] Some political scientists prefer to use the term *influence* for the general ability to affect behaviour, leaving the term *power* to refer to the use of coercion, inducements, or manipulation to get people to act against their own desires or interests (Dahl, 1984).

Political power can be exerted in several different ways.[2] *Coercion* involves using fear or threats of harmful consequences to achieve an outcome. For example, Nazi Germany's threat to invade Czechoslovakia in 1938 was successful in convincing the Czech government to allow Germany to annex part of its territory. If your employer threatens to fire you unless you work on behalf of a certain candidate in an election, coercive power has been used to intimidate you. *Inducements* involve achieving an outcome by offering a reward or bribe. For example, if your employer promises to give you a promotion should you decide to support a particular political candidate, power has been exercised in the form of an inducement. *Persuasion* is a very important aspect of political life, as people are often involved in trying to persuade other people to think and act in particular ways. Persuasion may involve the use of truthful information to encourage people to act in accordance with their own interests or values, or the use of misleading information to manipulate people. In practice, it is often difficult to distinguish between persuasion based on truthful information and persuasion involving manipulation, as exaggeration and selective presentation of the facts are often used to make a persuasive argument. Power can also be exercised through *leadership*. For example, a country that is successful in providing wealth and harmony to its population may be able to convince other countries to follow its example (Nye, 2004).

Tami Thirlwell

"Don't they understand that politics is about power?"

Power does not necessarily mean that one actor controls or dominates others, although the term is generally used to refer to situations where one person or group is in a stronger position than others. Politics often involves considerable bargaining and negotiating among different political actors. Although bargaining sometimes involves exchange among equals (as when two legislators agree to support each other's proposals for new legislation), the type of bargain achieved often reflects differences in power among the parties to the bargain. For example, rich countries may be in a better position than poor countries to negotiate an international trade agreement favourable to the rich countries' interests because of their greater power, even if some concessions are made to poorer countries to win their support or to legitimate the agreement.

It is difficult and often contentious to determine who is powerful in any political community and whether power is concentrated in a small number of hands or widely dispersed. Even if through careful analysis we were able to determine who influenced various decisions that we considered important, this would not necessarily give us a full picture of who is powerful. If those who are powerful are able to prevent important issues from being raised, then power has been exercised through "non-decisions" (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962). For example, the owner of a polluting factory may be said to be powerful if discussion of the pollution problem is deliberately avoided by the political leaders of the community or by the media. In other words, power can be exercised through control of the **political agenda**, that is, the issues that are considered important and are given priority in political deliberations.

political agenda
The issues that are considered important and given priority in political deliberations.

[2] Power can be significant even when there is no intentional exercise of power. Political actors may change their behaviour because they *anticipate* that there will be negative consequences from those with greater power if they act in a particular way, even if no direct threat has been made.

Table 1-1 The Three Faces of Power

First face	Ability to affect decisions
Second face	Ability to ensure that issues are not raised
Third face	Ability to affect the dominant ideas of society

In addition, those who are able to shape the dominant ideas in a society may have a general, long-term effect on the politics of that society and the decisions that are made. If those dominant ideas work against the interests of the weaker groups in society and result in the weaker groups acting against their own "true" interests, then it could be argued that power has been exercised in an indirect manner (Lukes, 1974). Take, for example, societies where women are expected to confine themselves to domestic responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, and raising children, while men are involved in public activities, including politics. Ideas that these "separate spheres" are "natural" or that women do not have the qualities necessary to participate in public life might lead many women to believe that their proper role is different from that of men, and thus avoid challenging a patriarchal system. In this case, power has been exerted through the dominant ideas that favour the interests of men, rather than through deliberate efforts to affect specific decisions.

This "third face" of power (see Table 1-1) moves us away from power being defined solely in terms of a relationship in which a person or group directly influences another person or group. Instead, this approach assumes that decisions will reflect the interests of the dominant groups because of their ability to shape the ideas of the political community. Subordinate groups may be unlikely to act in their own interests because they have accepted the ideas that benefit the dominant groups. However, determining what is in the "true interests" of an individual or group is often contentious, because it assumes that the preferences of an individual (for example, which party a person votes for) are not necessarily the same as what is good for that person.

The Distribution of Power

In any society, the resources that give individuals and groups the potential to exert political power are unequally distributed. Wealth, control of important aspects of the economy, social status and prestige, official position, control of information and expertise, the ability to mobilize supporters, control of the means of force, and the ability to influence people are some of the resources that can be used for advantage in politics. Although all citizens in a democracy have some potential power through their right to vote, other resources are less equally distributed.

David Turnley/Corbis Premium Historical/Getty images

People power. Citizens of Prague, Czechoslovakia, turned out by the hundreds of thousands in November 1989 to protest the communist regime led by General Secretary Milos Jakes. Just one month later, the regime toppled peacefully, and the formerly communist Assembly elected Václav Havel, leader of the pro-democracy Civic Forum, as the country's president.

Analyzing the distribution of power involves more than adding up the resources available to different groups. Groups differ in how effectively they use their power resources. Some groups are more successful than others in mobilizing potential supporters, forming alliances with other groups, and appealing to the values and beliefs of the community to achieve their objectives. Mobilizing ordinary citizens around a popular cause can sometimes bring about fundamental changes (see Box 1-2 People Power).

The political power of different individuals and groups is not only a product of their skill in mobilizing resources. Political institutions may be organized and operate in ways that advantage or disadvantage certain groups. For example, the US Senate, which contains two senators elected from each state, gives the representatives of small states the power to reject proposals favoured by those representing a substantial majority of the American population. This has, for example, often been the case for attempts to pass gun control legislation.

Box 1-2 People Power

"People power" has been successful in bringing down authoritarian regimes in a number of countries. "People Power" in the Philippines in 1986 resulted in the overthrow of a dictatorial government and the establishment of democratic government. The peaceful "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia in 1989 resulted in the end of communist rule and the establishment of a democratic government. The general public in the Baltic countries participated in the "Singing Revolution" (1987–1991) that restored the independence of these countries that had been seized by the Soviet Union. Black South Africans, by engaging in a determined struggle against the white minority-controlled government and organizing international support for their cause, were eventually successful in challenging the oppressive system of apartheid. Large-scale protests sparked by the suicide of a fruit vendor who had been harassed by police led to the establishment of democratic government in Tunisia in 2010. This led to the "Arab Spring" that included massive youth-led protests in Egypt and protests (some peaceful, others violent) throughout the Arab world. However, with the exception of Tunisia, these protests were suppressed by authoritarian regimes. Likewise, student-led actions to support demands for democracy in the People's Republic of China were brutally suppressed by the army on orders from the Communist party leadership in 1989. Despite the outrage in many parts of the world when news coverage revealed the suppression of peaceful protest, the Chinese government did not back away from its hardline stance.

Nevertheless, non-violent protests with widespread public support and a commitment to establishing a democratic system may be more likely to be successful than violent protests and rebellions (Carter, 2012).

Overall, different analysts come up with different depictions of how power is distributed in particular countries. When considering democratic countries like Canada and the United States, some see power as highly concentrated, particularly because decisions tend to reflect the interests and involvement of a small number of persons, such as government and business elites (Domhoff, 2009; Rothkopf, 2008, Rothkopf, 2012). Others note the influence of a wide variety of groups that promote many different interests and argue that power is quite dispersed throughout society, with no group or interest dominant (Dahl, 1961). Similarly, some view political power as widely dispersed in a democracy because voters can affect the general direction of government through their choice among the political parties that compete for their support.

The Positive and Negative Sides of Power

Power is often viewed negatively because of its association with efforts to dominate or exploit others. Governments, at times, have used the power they wield to establish, promote, or defend systems of economic, social, and military domination and exploitation. As well, there are tendencies for individuals with political power to use their power for their own benefit rather than for the good of the political community. In addition, those in powerful positions may become arrogant and unresponsive to the needs and desires of the population. As former US senator William Fulbright put it, "power has a way of undermining judgment, of planting delusions of grandeur in the minds of otherwise sensible people and otherwise sensible nations" (cited in Lobe, 2002, p. 3).

Power is often thought of in terms of some people, groups, or countries having *power over* others, which is then used to the benefit of those holding the power. However, we can also think about power (particularly in the form of authority, discussed below) in a more positive way as the *power to* achieve worthwhile collective goals. Power is often necessary to induce people to co-operate in order to achieve objectives that benefit themselves and the political community as a whole, such as developing the economy, providing security, and protecting the environment. Such objectives may not be easily achieved by individuals but might be achievable by using the collective power of the community organized by government. This can be illustrated by what is known as the **free-rider problem**. Imagine that there was agreement in a community that each person would contribute to building a road that would benefit everyone. One miserly individual might decide not to contribute, knowing that the road would still be built with the contributions of others. However, if enough

free-rider problem
A problem with voluntary collective action that results because an individual can enjoy the benefits of group action without contributing.

people followed this self-interested logic, the road might never be built, and everyone would suffer. The use of the coercive power of government (for example, to enforce the payment of taxes) is often useful or necessary to achieve goals that benefit the community as a whole. However, as Box 1-3 The Tragedy of the Commons illustrates, sometimes there are alternatives to the use of coercive action by government to achieve the common good.

Box 1-3 The Tragedy of the Commons

In a famous article, Garrett Hardin (1968) asks us to imagine a situation where herders allow their flocks to graze on a common pasture (that is, a pasture available freely to all members of the community). To make more money, each herder may find it profitable to purchase more cattle to graze on the common land. Eventually, the pasture will be overgrazed, and all will suffer. One solution would be to privatize the commons, with the owner then charging a fee to allow each head of cattle to graze there. This would not necessarily lead to the common good, however, as only those who could afford the fee could then graze their cattle. It might also result in the owner converting the pasture to another, more profitable endeavour, thereby depriving herders of their livelihood. The alternative that Hardin favours involves a coercive government ensuring that the commons is not overused.

However, American political scientist and Nobel economics prize winner Elinor Ostrom (2000), looking at a variety of real-world situations, points out that under the right circumstances co-operation among the users of a common resource, such as water or pastures, can result in the proper management of that resource. These conditions include the development of a sense of community, shared values, and mechanisms to monitor and enforce the use of the resource to ensure that no cheating occurs. In contrast to Hardin's bleak outlook, which included the idea that a dictatorial, overbearing global government might be needed to solve global environmental problems such as overpopulation, Ostrom's analysis points to the possibility that co-operation to achieve solutions potentially can be achieved even when individuals are concerned with their own interests, provided that there is trust and discussion among the members of the community. To what extent this can apply to global problems remains an open question, although Ostrom suggests that co-operative institutions in combination with governments and markets can be useful in dealing with global environmental problems (Dietz, Ostrom, & Stern, 2003).

Authority and Legitimacy

LO 1.2 Explain the difference between authority and legitimacy.

authority
The right to exercise power.

legitimacy
Acceptance by the members of a political community that those in positions of authority have the right to govern.

Authority and legitimacy are of special importance in understanding politics. **Authority** is the right to exercise power. Those with political authority claim that they have been *authorized* (whether by God, tradition, legal rules, election, or some other source) to govern. If the right to make governing decisions is generally accepted by those being governed, then that authority can be viewed as having **legitimacy**. More generally, we can assess the extent to which a system of governing is accepted by the population as being legitimate.

Types of Authority That May Establish and Maintain Legitimacy

How is the legitimacy of a system of governing established and maintained? Why do most Canadians accept the right of a few people in government to make decisions for the political community, even though they may not agree with the decisions that are being made? German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920) described three basic types of authority, each of which could try to establish its legitimacy in its own way:

- charismatic authority
- traditional authority
- legal–rational authority

In practice, there are often combinations of these types of authority.

Charismatic authority is based on the personal qualities of the leader. These qualities might include exhibiting extraordinary or supernatural qualities through such means as performing miracles, issuing prophecies, or leading a military victory (Weber, 1958). Charismatic leaders, such as Mao Zedong, leader of the Chinese communist revolution, have inspired intense devotion in their followers. Some democratic leaders such as John F. Kennedy, Winston Churchill, and Charles de Gaulle have been described as charismatic, although this has not been the basis of their authority. Indeed, in democratic countries with media freedom, opposition parties, and active social groups, it can be difficult for a leader to maintain a charismatic image for a substantial length of time.

charismatic authority
Authority based on the perception that a leader has extraordinary or supernatural qualities.

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Charismatic leaders, such as Mao Zedong, leader of the Chinese communist revolution, inspire intense devotion in their followers. Charismatic authority rests upon the belief of followers in magical powers, revelations, and hero worship. The Chinese media depicted an elderly Mao supposedly performing the heroic feat of swimming across the Yangtze River to maintain his charismatic image despite his policies and actions that resulted in the death of tens of millions of China's people.

Traditional authority, whether exercised through the elders of a tribe or a ruling family, is based on customs that establish the right of certain persons to rule. The traditional authority of monarchs who inherited their position was often buttressed with the idea that rulers had a divinely created right to rule that was sanctified by religious authorities. Japanese emperors, for example, claimed to be descended from the sun goddess. The legitimacy of traditional authority can be based on beliefs that a certain family has always ruled and that customs are sacred practices that will bring evil consequences if violated (Weber, 1958). Queen Elizabeth II exercises traditional authority, although her authority is very limited. As the saying goes, "The monarch reigns, but does not rule."

traditional authority
Authority based on customs that establish the right of certain persons to rule.

Modern societies, in Weber's view, are characterized by efficient management and bureaucratic organization. Their **legal–rational authority** is based on legal rules and procedures rather than on the personal qualities or characteristics of the rulers. Authority is impersonal in the sense that it rests in official positions such as prime minister or president, rather than in the individuals holding such positions. The right of those in governing positions to rule is based on being chosen by a set of established

legal–rational authority
The right to rule based on legal rules and procedures rather than on the personal qualities or characteristics of the rulers.

and accepted legal procedures. Those holding official positions are expected to act in accordance with legal rules and procedures. Thus, their authority is limited. The legitimacy of the system of governing is based on a general belief in the legality of the procedures for selecting those who have official duties and the legal "correctness" of the procedures that are used in governing (Weber, 1958). This type of authority is "rational" in that it is logically connected to what Weber saw as the goal of governing: maintaining public order (Nelson, 2006).

Holding free and fair elections involving all adult citizens using procedures established by law to select those authorized to make governing decisions is often considered to be the most effective way of establishing the legitimacy of government. Nevertheless, a "legitimacy crisis" can occur even in democratic systems (Habermas, 1975). Although an unpopular government in a democracy can be voted out, if governments are persistently ineffective in dealing with serious problems or are seen as corrupt, citizens might question the legitimacy of the democratic institutions and processes in their country. For example, if the policies of successive governments led to widespread poverty and unemployment or to a collapse in the value of the currency, then the legitimacy of the system of governing might be challenged. Legitimacy can also be reduced if some groups feel that there is a long-term pattern of mistreatment by the government. In other words, the legitimacy of a democratic government not only may require an acceptance of the procedures by which governing authorities are chosen and actions are taken, but also may depend on the perceived rightfulness of how government (or, more generally, the system of governing) exercises its authority (Barnard, 2001). In particular, the governing authorities will have a higher level of legitimacy if their actions are perceived as being consistent with the general principles and values of the political community (Gilley, 2006).

In addition, a system of governing that is imposed on a country or on a part of the population without its consent might be viewed as illegitimate, even if it establishes democratic procedures. For example, when a democratic system of governing was established in Germany after World War I, some Germans doubted its legitimacy, partly because they viewed it as being imposed on the country by the victors in that war. The problem of legitimacy, combined with the failure of German governments to deal effectively with the problems the country faced, eventually contributed to the demise of the democratic system and the takeover by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Likewise, conquered peoples are often unwilling to accept the legitimacy of the governing authorities imposed by the foreign rulers.

The Significance of Legitimate Authority

Effective governing depends not only on governing institutions having the power to force people to act in certain ways, but also on their ability to establish and maintain legitimate authority. A government that is not accepted as legitimate by a significant proportion of the population will have to devote much of its energy and resources to persuading or coercing the population to obey its laws and maintain order. All governments rely on coercion and other forms of power to some extent, but generally most people feel an obligation to obey a legitimate government. Thus, a government whose rule is considered legitimate can rely more on authority than on coercion to get people to obey the laws it adopts.

Having legitimate authority gives government a powerful resource to achieve its goals. People usually obey laws, even when they find those laws to be against their interests or values, because they view the source of those laws as legitimate. This can potentially allow the government to act for the good of the community, even when some may object to the policies adopted. However, even though most people would agree that political authority is a necessary and desirable feature of an orderly society, questions can arise concerning whether there are circumstances in which authority

should be resisted or disobeyed. What would you do if you were drafted to fight in a war that you considered unjust? Would you resist the authority of a democratically elected government that was persecuting an unpopular minority, even if Parliament had passed a law that allowed action to be taken against the minority group?

The Common Good

LO 1.3 Discuss whether seeking the common good is a meaningful goal of political life.

Political philosophers have often viewed politics as different from other activities in that it should be concerned with the **common good** of the whole community. Ensuring the good functioning of governing—such as maintaining order and security, providing for a just settlement of disputes, helping to develop a prosperous, sustainable economy, providing quality education, protecting the environment, and working toward a peaceful world—potentially benefits all members of the political community (Wolin, 1960).

common good
What is good for the entire political community.

On the surface, the concept of the common good seems uncontroversial. Who would not agree that political activity should be directed toward the common good of the political community? However, in practice, determining and achieving the common good can be contentious as members of a political community have different interests and values. Not every individual and group in the community will agree on what is good for the whole community.

Those who have an **individualist perspective** on politics assume that human beings act primarily in accordance with their own interests—in other words, selfishly. In this perspective, a political community is basically a collection of individuals each pursuing his or her own interests. Thus, it is naive or hopelessly idealistic to expect people (whether as voters, politicians, or government officials) to deliberately act for the common good, particularly when that involves sacrificing their own interests.

individualist perspective
A perspective that views human beings as acting primarily in accordance with their own interests.

Those who hold the individualist perspective often believe that if every person is free to pursue his or her own interests, the result will lead to the best overall result for the members of the community. For example, Scottish philosopher Adam Smith (1723–1790) suggested that if individuals pursue their own economic self-interest in a competitive free-market system, the result will be maximization of the wealth of society. For many of Smith's contemporary followers, the implication is that government should be restricted to the minimum needed to provide security and protection for individuals and the free market.

Are we concerned only with our own good? If individuals pursue their own interests, will the good of the entire community be served? Are the communities that we live in no more than a collection of independent individuals? Critics of the individualist perspective argue that humans are social beings who flourish through harmonious interaction with others. Connected to our social nature is the capability to care about others. This capability initially develops within our own family, but can extend to the social groups to which we belong, to citizens of our country, and potentially to the whole world. The outpouring of assistance by people around the world when countries are devastated by earthquakes, hurricanes, and other disasters suggests that individuals exhibit a concern for the well-being of others that is not motivated solely by self-interest. Indeed, although Adam Smith is often associated with the idea of the importance of self-interest, in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759/2010) he emphasized that individuals have an interest in the happiness of others.

Further, the communities to which we belong—including political communities—help to shape our sense of ourselves, that is, our identity. A sense of belonging to and participating in a political community could be considered an important part of a fulfilling and meaningful life. People have an interest not only in their own material

well-being, but also in the quality of their community and the social relations that are a part of that community (Lutz, 1999). Individuals engage in political activity not only to advance their own interests, but also to pursue the values they think should guide the actions of government (Lewin, 1991).

Contemporary political communities often feature considerable diversity such that a consensus on what is the common good may be difficult or impossible to achieve. The values of a particular religion in many countries no longer provides a widely accepted guide as to what constitutes a good life and a good society. Even if some general values such as freedom, equality, order, and justice are shared by people within the community, these values may be thought of in different ways, and different people or groups may give these values different priorities.

As well, the costs and benefits of actions to achieve the common good are often unequally distributed. For example, most people would agree that reducing air pollution would be for the common good of the political community. However, the costs of reducing pollution to achieve this objective may fall more heavily on some, such as factory owners and automobile users, than on others. Likewise, a free school breakfast program primarily benefits those whose parents are very poor. Nevertheless, we might view such a program as being for the common good if we assume that being part of a community involves caring about others in that community and supporting policies that help all people enjoy the benefits of the community. However, in countries where there are sharp divisions (based, for example, on economic inequality, religion, region, or cultural identities), the sense of being members of a shared political community and a willingness to be concerned about others in the whole country may be weak or non-existent. In such political communities, the notion of the common good may not be very meaningful.

Achieving the Common Good?

We often look to government to achieve the common good. But how can we be assured that government will pursue the common good rather than the particular interests of those in government? In *The Republic*, the ancient Greek philosopher Plato (c. 429–347 BCE) sketched out an ideal of how the common good might be achieved. This involved placing political authority in the hands of a wise philosopher–king who had been thoroughly educated in the art of governing. To ensure that such a leader would rule for the common good rather than out of personal interest, leaders would be prevented from having a family or owning property.

What might this suggest for governments and their citizens operating in the real world and not in a great thinker's utopia?

In the contemporary world, democracy is often seen as the form of government most likely to pursue the common good. Ideally, through discussion among citizens, an informed consensus can be reached about the policies that are desirable for the common good. However, meaningful discussion is often difficult to achieve outside of small groups and small communities. Instead, there is often an expectation that decisions in a democracy will tend to reflect the opinions of the majority of the population. Even if this is the case, it does not ensure that the common good of the community will be achieved. The majority is not necessarily oriented toward the common good of all members of the community, and at various times majorities have supported policies that oppress minorities. Furthermore, governments in some countries can be elected with the support of only a minority of voters, and thus may be inclined to adopt policies favoured by their supporters rather than a majority of the population.

pluralist system
A political system in which a large number of groups representing a wide variety of interests are able to influence the decisions of government. Government tries to satisfy as many groups as possible, and no group has a dominant influence on government.

Liberal democracies are sometimes described as having a **pluralist system**. This involves a large number of groups raising the demands of a wide variety of people and interests. Government tries to satisfy as many groups as possible resulting in the common good. A potential problem is that, even if government is responsive to groups

representing a wide variety of interests, this does not necessarily result in the common good. Providing particular benefits to various groups that are able to exert effective pressure may not be the same as acting for the common good. If each group pursues its own interests, the good of the entire community may be ignored.

Although seeking the common good may be a worthwhile objective for political life, it should be kept in mind that the claim to be acting for the common good (or other ideals) can be deceptive. Ruthless leaders have tried to justify brutal actions in the name of the long-term good of the political community. For example, the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin tried to justify his actions, which resulted in the starvation of tens of millions of peasants, with the ideal of creating a "classless society." Fascist leaders such as Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini used the appeal of the good of the nation to suppress dissent and justify wars of aggression. Even in those democratic countries where individual rights are valued, appeals to the common good are sometimes made to justify repressive government actions in order to fight terrorism, subversion, and crime. In general, there is a real danger that government leaders claiming to pursue the common good of the whole political community will act in ways that are oppressive to some members of that community.

A Question of Communities and the Future

The common good is often thought of in terms of the country in which we live. But the common good of the country may not necessarily be the same as the common good of the other political communities to which we belong, such as provincial or local communities. Indeed, some argue that we should be concerned about the common good of humanity. The processes of globalization have increased interaction and interdependence among the peoples of the world. However, despite greater awareness of and concern for what happens in other parts of the world, for most of us our sense of being part of a global political community is much weaker than our sense of being Canadian. Major differences among the peoples of the world in culture and circumstances mean that there are fewer shared interests and values upon which a consensus about the common good of humanity could be based.

In addition, the common good is often thought of in terms of the quality of life and the community in the present. However, should the quality of life of future generations be taken into account in seeking the common good, even though they have no voice? Pursuing rapid economic growth may be in the common good of people today, but what if global climate change leaves humanity 50 years from now with a devastated environment?

Conclusion

Politics plays a vital role in our lives, our communities, and the world. Whether or not we are interested in politics, we are affected by political decisions. Because of disagreements about what governments should do, political activity often involves mobilizing people to promote particular interests and values. However, politics can also involve efforts to resolve conflicts in order to achieve the co-operation needed to achieve collective goals.

Politics is a complex activity. To understand what goes on in political life and the decisions and policies that result from political activity, it is necessary to examine the interests that people and groups pursue, the ideas and values that affect their activities and decisions, the identities that are important to them, and the institutions, rules, and processes that shape political activities and lead to the actions and policies of government. As well, politics is affected by the economic, social, and historical context and the international system in which it operates (with government policies, in turn, affecting economic and social systems as well as individual behaviour). Of particular importance in determining the actions that governments take is the distribution of political power.

Many people have a negative view of politics because of its association with unscrupulous efforts to gain or maintain power. Governments are often criticized for

being inefficient, wasteful, and prone to corruption. Some governments have supported or acquiesced in the domination and exploitation of the weak. The laws and policies adopted by governments may reflect the interests and values of the dominant groups in society, resulting in the harassment, persecution, or neglect of the less powerful. As well, some governments have pursued the conquest, control, and exploitation of other countries. Because power and authority are easily abused, it is important to ensure that those in governing positions are held accountable for their actions and that excessive concentration of power is resisted. As the famous saying of nineteenth-century British historian Lord Acton warns, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

There is, however, a positive side to politics. Many people engage in political activity not only to advance their own interests or to pursue power for its own sake, but also with the hope of advancing the common good of the political community. For example, through political action by many people, including young persons, many governments have been persuaded to deal with global climate change. Many governments have also worked toward the common good by establishing peace and security, creating a fair and impartial system of justice, helping to develop their country's economy and infrastructure, providing accessible education and health care, and assisting the weaker and disadvantaged members of society.

Key Terms

Authority p. 8
Charismatic authority p. 9
Common good p. 11
Free-rider problem p. 7
Individualist perspective p. 11
Legal–rational authority p. 9
Legitimacy p. 8
Pluralist system p. 12
Political agenda p. 5
Politics p. 4
Power p. 4
Traditional authority p. 9

Discussion Questions

1. What are the major political issues in your local, provincial, and national communities? What about in the global community? Do the most talked-about issues reflect the most serious problems that each of these communities faces? Are any important issues ignored?
2. Should we be concerned if political power is highly concentrated? Can we trust government to look after the common good?
3. Is it meaningful to talk about the common good in a diverse society?

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Chapter 2

Nation-States and Globalization

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More than a million Catalans march in Barcelona demanding that the Spanish government recognize Catalonia as a nation.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- **LO 2.1** Describe the nature of the modern state and explain how the modern state developed.
- **LO 2.2** Explain the difference between a nation and a state.
- **LO 2.3** Discuss the significance of nationalism and national self-determination.
- **LO 2.4** Examine the meaning of citizenship.
- **LO 2.5** Outline the nature and significance of globalization.

Introduction: Nation-States and Globalization

On June 18, 2006, 74 percent of Catalans voting in a binding referendum supported the adoption of a revised Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia (a region of northeastern Spain with 7.2 million people who have a distinct language, history, and culture). The revised statute recognized the Catalan nationality and expanded the self-governing powers of Catalonia's government. Recognizing this distinct nationality came after an intense debate within Spain and a close vote in the Spanish legislature.

A few days later, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Cabinet attended the Fête Nationale celebrations in Quebec City. When reporters asked Harper if he would describe Quebec as a nation, he evaded the question. However, in November 2006, Harper introduced a motion that the Canadian House of Commons "recognize that the Québécois form a nation within a united Canada" (CBC News, November 7, 2006). Although the motion, which passed by a 266–16 margin, has no legal significance, it stirred up considerable controversy. Michael Chong resigned from the Cabinet, stating that he believed that Canada is one nation—a view widely shared by English-speaking Canadians. Other Cabinet ministers differed on the meaning of recognizing the Québécois as a nation: did it refer only to French-speaking Quebecers, most of whom share a common culture, or did it refer to all residents of Quebec?

In June 2010, Spain's constitutional court struck down provisions of the Autonomy Statute that gave preferential status to the Catalan language and declared that there was no legal basis to recognize Catalonia as a nation. In response, more than one million Catalans marched in protest in Barcelona chanting the slogan: "We are a nation." In January 2013, the parliament of Catalonia passed a Declaration of Sovereignty of the Catalan people proclaiming that "the people of Catalonia have—by reason of democratic legitimacy—the character of a sovereign political and legal entity." In the September 2015 Catalan election, parties supporting independence for Catalonia won a majority of seats (but slightly less than a majority of votes). The Catalan legislature passed a "roadmap" to Catalan independence; however, the Spanish government said that it would not allow any steps to be taken toward Catalan independence, and the Spanish Constitutional Court ruled that the Catalan legislation violated the Spanish constitution. Nevertheless, the Catalan government continued to proceed with its plans to "disconnect" from Spain. (The Guardian, 2016, January 10 and July 27).

On October 1, 2017, the Catalan government held a referendum on independence for Catalonia. Although about 90% chose the independence option, only about 43% of the electorate voted. Nevertheless, the Catalan parliament declared Catalan independence on October 27, 2017. In response, the Spanish government took direct control of Catalonia. Facing Spanish arrest, Catalan President Carles Puigdemont along with four cabinet ministers fled to Belgium to avoid being tried for rebellion and sedition. The Spanish government held a new Catalan election on December 21, 2017. The three Catalan parties that favoured independence won 70 of the 135 seats based on 47.5% of the vote. In May 2018 the Catalan legislature selected Quim Torra, a hardline Catalonian nationalist, as president. However, in February 2019, twelve Catalan independence leaders faced charges in a Madrid court for taking part in the 2017 referendum and the declaration of Catalan independence.

If you look at a map of the contemporary world, you will see that all of the land mass (except Antarctica) is divided into about 200 countries. Almost all of these countries consider themselves to be independent or sovereign, meaning that they are not controlled by another country and thus are self-governing within their borders. There are some anomalies. Borders and control of certain areas are disputed. For example, India and Pakistan each lay claim to Kashmir, and Israel controls the West Bank and East Jerusalem that it captured in a 1967 war. There are also a number of territories that are controlled by another country and thus are not fully self-governing, including Bermuda by the United Kingdom, Puerto Rico by the United States, and New Caledonia by France.

Although the contemporary world is basically one of self-governing states, if you looked at a map of the world in 1913, you would see quite a different pattern of

political organization. Empires including the French, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian controlled and dominated many subject peoples. The British Empire, in particular, controlled a sizable proportion of the world and its population.

We begin this chapter by examining the nature of the modern state. Then we look at the concept of nation, which is often viewed as the basis of the modern state, thus making the nation-state the leading form of political organization. We also discuss citizenship, an important feature of modern states. Finally, we examine the processes of globalization, which some observers believe is eroding the significance of nation-states.

The Importance of the State

LO 2.1 Describe the nature of the modern state and explain how the modern state developed.

A **state** is an independent, self-governing political community whose governing institutions have the capability to make rules that are binding on the population residing within a particular territory. To achieve this, states claim to have "the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" (Weber, 1970, p. 78).

state
An independent, self-governing political community whose governing institutions have the capability to make rules that are binding on the population residing within a particular territory.

The state can be viewed as a more extensive and permanent expression of the political community than the **government**, the set of institutions that makes decisions and oversees their implementation on behalf of the state for a particular period of time (Heywood, 2002). The Canadian state, for example, includes not only the Canadian government and the governments of the provinces and territories, but also the military and police forces, the employees of the various levels of government, and state-owned corporations (termed Crown corporations in Canada). Some state institutions (such as the courts and the Bank of Canada) are autonomous in the sense of being free (or largely free) of direct government control.

government
The set of institutions that makes decisions and oversees their implementation on behalf of the state for a particular period of time.

Overall, states play a major role in modern societies. In addition to their traditional functions of providing law, order, and security, modern states are very involved in activities such as regulating business activity; fostering economic development; stabilizing the economy; providing health, education, and social services to the public; assisting the disadvantaged; and protecting the environment. Indeed, the institutions of modern states deeply affect all aspects of our lives from birth to death. Government spending accounts for a significant proportion of a country's gross domestic product (GDP)—the total monetary value of all goods and services produced within the country (see Table 2-1).

Further, if government transfers of money to individuals, businesses, and various organizations are included, this often more than doubles the total government expenditures as a percent of GDP (The Heritage Foundation, various years). Generally, government spending as a proportion of GDP is higher in the richer countries than in the poorer countries, although some exceptions to that pattern exist. As countries become more prosperous, the state is able to provide a higher level of services to its population. Indeed, governments in most countries have substantially increased their spending on such matters as education, health care, social services, research, business subsidies, and regulations since the 1940s.

Sovereignty and the State

States are often described as being sovereign. The **sovereignty** of states has two basic related dimensions. First, states claim to be the highest authority for their population and their territory. Second, states are not subject to any external authority, but rather expect to be able to act independently in the world. As such, they are viewed as legally equal to other states regardless of differences in power. They may make agreements with other states for various purposes, but they remain sovereign because they can cancel those agreements.

sovereignty
The principle that states are the highest authority for their population and territory and are not subject to any external authority.

Table 2-1 General Government Final Consumption Expenditures as a Percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 2016

Country	Government Expenditure as % of GDP	Country	Government Expenditure as % of GDP
Sweden	26.1	New Zealand	18.4
Denmark	25.4	Russia	18.1
Netherlands	24.7	Poland	17.9
France	23.6	China	14.4
Canada	21.1	United States	14.3
South Africa	20.6	Chile	13.5
Hungary	20.3	Mexico	12.2
Greece	20.2	Switzerland	12.0
Brazil	20.2	India	11.7
Japan	19.9	Egypt	11.4
Germany	19.6	Pakistan	11.3
Argentina	18.9	Indonesia	9.4
Australia	18.9	Vietnam	6.5
United Kingdom	18.8	Bangladesh	5.9

SOURCE: Compiled from The World Bank, General Government Final Consumption Expenditure (% of Gross Domestic Product), 2016. Data Bank World Development Indicators. Retrieved from databank.worldbank.org/data

NOTE: These figures include government purchase of goods and services, compensation of government employment, and most expenditures on defence and security (other than capital costs). The figures do not include government transfer payments to individuals, businesses, and organizations.

Although some forms of political organization resembling the state have existed in different times and places, the modern state is generally viewed as developing particularly in Europe over the past several centuries and spreading to other parts of the world in more recent times. As the feudal system declined in Europe, various monarchs strove to establish themselves as the highest authority in the territory that they controlled by limiting the authority of lords and nobles and challenging the authority of the Catholic Church. The treaties comprising the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which ended the devastating Thirty Years War (based, in part, on conflicts between Protestant and Catholic rulers), established the idea that states and their rulers were the supreme authority in their territory. Devastating civil wars promoted the idea that a single absolute power with the means of coercion was needed to maintain order.

The development of bodies (such as Parliament) that represented different parts of the country and important elements of the population provided rulers with a means to levy and collect the taxes needed to wage wars and to develop an administrative structure (McGovern, 2007). The development of the capitalist economic system and the Industrial Revolution also were important in the development of the modern state. Costly infrastructure (such as canals, roads, railways, and ports) needed to be built by, or with the financial support of, the state. Markets needed to be developed by removing internal barriers to trade within a country. A common language, an educational system, and an extensive array of laws governing business activities were needed to service the needs of business and industry.

Prior to the development of the modern state, the territories controlled by European monarchs were often viewed as their own property to be disposed of as they saw fit. Territory sometimes passed from one set of rulers to another as a result of royal marriages or conquest. Although the term *sovereign* referred to a monarch with absolute authority, legislatures and the people challenged the absolute power claimed by monarchs. In England, the Glorious Revolution (1688) resulted in Parliament's removal and replacement of a monarch, and established the idea that Parliament is the supreme authority. The leaders of the French Revolution (1789) proclaimed that sovereignty rested with the people.