

Juan Linz's Definition:

“Political systems with limited, not responsible, political pluralism, without elaborate and guiding ideology, but with distinctive mentalities, without extensive nor intensive political mobilization, except at some points in their development, and in which a leader or occasionally a small group exercises power within formally ill-defined limits but actually quite predictable ones.”

- A. Authoritarian regimes typically rely on a **small set of key groups** and prevent the expression of certain group interests (e.g., labor, leftists, religious groups): i.e., limited (but not responsible) political pluralism.
- B. Auth. Regimes organize interest representation in a **corporatist** (not pluralist) manner. These interests are usually arranged by function.
- C. In contrast to Totalitarian regimes, the **boundary between state and society** is not diminished.
 - In authoritarian regimes, the state maintains some distance and allows for some private organization to operate (professional, cultural, religious—e.g., Egypt's syndicates)
- D. Authoritarian regimes have **mentalities** rather than totalitarian ideologies.
 - Ideologies are systems of belief that are intellectually organized and elaborated. Mentalities are ways of thinking.
 - Mentality is “intellectual attitude,” ideology is intellectual content.”
 - Mentality allows for flexibility in switching sides (e.g., left authoritarianism==right authoritarianism), but limits the ability of authoritarian regimes 1) to mobilize people for extended periods of time or 2) create a strong emotional and psychological identification with the regime.
- E. Authoritarian regimes have low levels of social mobilization for several reasons:
 - **When you demobilize you depoliticize**
 - Depoliticization is often a regime goal which **facilitates stability**
 - Depoliticization suits the reality of **limited political pluralism** (you don't want much political participation)
 - Mobilization **initially** attracts support, but becomes difficult to sustain without either a move toward democracy (real participation) or totalitarianism (which requires an ideology).
 - Auth. Regimes **reduce politics** to the 1) administration of public interest and 2) the expression of certain key interests
- F. Authoritarian regimes are often characterized by single-, dominant-, or privileged **one party rule**.

How Do Authoritarian Regimes Come About?

Certain historical and social contexts give rise to authoritarian regimes. We can identify two dominant scenarios:

- A. **Struggle for independence** against external/colonial power
- B. **Crisis in liberal or populist “democracies”**

Populist-Authoritarianism

In the first instance, a single-party rule usually emerges and serves as the principal Instrument of mobilization against colonial rule. Its aim initially is 1) to incorporate hitherto excluded sectors (we call this “inclusionary authoritarianism”) and 2) to rid society of “agents” of colonialism.

Bureaucratic Authoritarianism

In the second instance, a conservative military-bureaucratic alliance forms in reaction to political and economic instability in rapidly modernizing societies that are usually semi-democratic (we call this “exclusionary authoritarianism”). Its aim is 1) to restore stability as a means 2) to attract foreign investment.

Authoritarianism in the Arab World: Go to Crystal