



Democratization

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Foreword

Thomas Carothers^a

^a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace ,
Washington , DC , USA

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Foreword

In his classic 1968 book *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Samuel Huntington criticized Americans for believing that ‘all good things go together’ in Third World societies attempting modernization. Huntington was referring to a defining belief among US policy-makers and aid practitioners in the 1960s: namely, the idea that the different parts of the modernization package that they were seeking to advance in those countries – political, economic, and social development – would mutually reinforce each other and, in so doing, also advance American security objectives. The shattering of this optimistic idea on the harsh shoals of experience in the second half of the 1960s and first half of the 1970s – when democracy, development, and security often worked at violent cross-purposes to each other – was a painful experience for an entire generation of Western politicians and scholars.

The idea gained new life in the wake of the Cold War. Freed from the pressures of superpower rivalries and conflicting ideologies, a new generation of Western actors saw the exciting potential for democracy and development to move ahead hand in hand and to reinforce core security goals, above all maintaining peace, in the process. The intervening 20 years, however, have not been especially kind to these post-Cold War hopes. No outright shattering of the proposition has occurred, but significant doubts and questions have accumulated. For example, sceptics of international democracy support point to evidence that elections may actually increase the odds of violent civil conflict. They also note that authoritarian developmental states seem to be better at producing prosperity for their citizens than fractious democratic states are.

Although debates over the proper relationship between democracy support and other policy objectives have multiplied, careful and systematic analysis of the issue has not kept pace. Happily, a few capable young scholars, representatives of an encouragingly vital new generation of democracy researchers, took notice of this gap and set about to fill it. They have assembled a set of articles that tackle the issue from multiple perspectives and have provided an overarching conceptual framework for the collection. Their goal is not to bury the ‘all good things...’ theory once and for all, but rather to illuminate how complex the international policy landscape has become with regard to these issues. Common political, economic, and security goals are now widely shared, much more so than in the divided world of the 1960s, yet still refuse to march in a simple line.

Thomas Carothers

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, USA

Reference

Huntington, Samuel. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.