

# Non-Renewable Security: Analyzing Contemporary Authoritarianism's Effect on Environmental Security



Flames consume a stack of United States flags numbering in the thousands as they are burned in a flag retirement ceremony, Saturday, Jun. 29, 2019 in Shelby County Ky.

Timothy D. Easley/Special to Courier Journal

Alexander E. Hampton  
Utrecht University  
Student Number: 6774903

## **Table of Contents**

---

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Connecting Environmental Security and Contemporary Authoritarianism.....	18
3. Decaying Democracy and Authoritarian Ascendancy.....	39
4. How Contemporary Authoritarians Secure the Environment.....	63
5. The Triumph of Trump’s Brand of Authoritarianism and Subsequent Environmental Security Strategy.....	86
6. Conclusion.....	100

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines contemporary authoritarianism and how it affects environmental security efforts with specific focus on the United States. It underscores the role democratic decay plays in the ascendancy of this type of authoritarianism and how this allows for these authoritarian leaders to disregard environmental security issues for economic growth and retention of power over the short-term. Contemporary authoritarianism approaches environmental security in a fundamentally short-term manner where short-term economic growth and state stability are emphasized over a long-term environmental security strategy that would likely result in long-term economic and state stability. Opting for short-term economic growth and stability serves a purpose for authoritarians. These leaders are interested in retaining power. After all, in contemporary authoritarian states there are democratic elections and these authoritarians can – despite the difficulty of doing so – be voted out of power. Thus, maintaining the economy and overall stability of the state over making the difficult governing decisions common in democracy allows for authoritarians to hold power. As a result, not establishing a long-term environmental security strategy is endemic to contemporary authoritarianism as it is beneficial to the state to disregard environmental concerns.

Key Words: Contemporary Authoritarianism, Environmental Security, Democracy, United States

## **Introduction**

On August 11, 2017, a group of white nationalists descended upon Charlottesville, Virginia. White nationalist demonstrations were not foreign to America. Notions of white supremacy had been entrenched in the fabric of the United States since its inception. The institution of slavery was established on and persisted due to these notions. During the early years of the Reconstruction era, the US witnessed the emergence of populism in the form of white nationalism with the Ku Klux Klan. The KKK espoused sentiments of the white race being superior, and, thus, having a divine right to govern. The KKK was the first such group, but it was not the last to emerge in the United States. The early 1930s saw the rise of American Nazis propounding the same arguments of Aryan superiority being advanced in Germany. America's white nationalist variety of populism has come and gone. Historically, the political apparatus in the US has been effective at starving these fringe political groups of exposure and limiting access to political authority. However, the election in 2016 highlighted just how far the decay of America's guardrails of democracy had come when the country elected a president garnering explicit support from white nationalists.

By the time the white nationalists appeared in Charlottesville, President Donald J. Trump had been in office less than 8 months. The period between January and August had been a contentious time for the American political landscape. Inauguration was met by the Women's March, the FBI opened investigations into alleged Russian election meddling and connections to the Trump campaign, and Neil Gorsuch was successfully approved to the Supreme Court after the Senate refused to carry out the process for President Obama's nominee. Once a beacon of democracy in the world, the US was seemingly embroiled in a crisis of identity not seen since the Civil War. America was facing a choice: does the country revert back to when it was "great" and

white people were the primary stewards of the nation or does it move towards a more progressive and diverse society.

Authoritarianism did not arrive in the US or the world in August 2017. From the Americas to Asia to Europe to Africa and the Middle East, authoritarianism is on the rise. This version of authoritarianism does not adhere to a specific ideology. It is not strictly the fascists of the 1930s and 40s or the communists that reigned supreme from the 1950s through the 1980s; it is not exclusively existent on the right or left. However, many of the starkest examples of this descent into contemporary authoritarianism exist on the right.

The rise of contemporary authoritarianism around the world presents significant threats to the international community's ability to achieve progress. For a world facing an impending environmental crisis, authoritarianism on the rise is cause for concern when considering the necessity of long-term environmental security strategies.

How does the rise in authoritarianism potentially restrain efforts to implement effective, long-term environmental security strategies? There are of course multiple answers to this question. However, for this thesis, the process begins by analyzing and comprehending how contemporary authoritarians come into existence in the first place. This entails the examination of different examples of contemporary authoritarianism. When looking at the ascent of these authoritarians it is vital to examine how they decay existing democratic institutions and consolidate control in order to capture political power. After all, it is through this tedious process of decaying democracy that authoritarians today manage to implement their security strategies the way they do. Thus, a key aspect of this analysis has to analyze how states function once an authoritarian ascends with specific attention on environmental security. Consequently, this portion of the analysis will center around the short-term security approach found within contemporary authoritarianism.

Contemporary authoritarians govern and securitize in a manner designed to preserve control, and in order to preserve control often implement policies and strategies reflecting positively on the state at that particular moment. Thus, there is an absence of long-term strategy. The necessity for authoritarians to retain control ensures this. By examining how contemporary authoritarians decay democracy and the implications of this decay on the concentration of power, the current ascendancy of authoritarianism and its effects on environmental security can be comprehended. With this, the process of securing the environment when faced with rising authoritarianism can be interpreted.

When discussing the instability of environmental security in rising authoritarian states, the case of the United States is uniquely positioned to be examined within a contemporary context. With the US as the case, how a strong, stable democracy decays, how authoritarianism ascends, and how authoritarian leaders' function in the realm of short-term strategy – in regard to environmental security – can be examined. The US has a rich history of authoritarian figures and movements, and President Trump ran on a populist platform laced with authoritarian connotations. All of this makes the US a quintessential example of rising contemporary authoritarianism allowing for a study of how authoritarians come to power in democratic society and how authoritarians affect environmental security.

From this, the research question is derived: how does contemporary authoritarianism affect efforts at achieving environmental security? The hypothesis being the following: by comprehending contemporary authoritarian states and applying this comprehension to the contemporary United States, this rising trend's implication for environmental security can be comprehended. Analyzing contemporary cases and applying these to comprehend the current reality in the US allows for an in-depth examination of how authoritarianism breaks down

democracy, ascends to and consolidates power, utilizes power in relation to environmental security, and what, if any, solutions exist to reverse this rising trend. From this comprehension of how authoritarianism decays, ascends, and functions, it may be possible to comprehend why reversing the rise of authoritarianism is vital to achieving environmental security and for the preservation of strong, effective democracy.

*Historiography:*

Authoritarianism is a well-established field of study. With the rise of contemporary authoritarianism, various scholars are discovering a newfound interest in the area as well. Simultaneously, environmental security, particularly theories on sustainable development, are becoming increasingly prevalent in conversations within the international community in regard to environmental preservation and the vitality of the planet. With the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, state initiatives, local initiatives, etc., the topic of sustainable development is certain to remain a prevailing facet of the environmental security discourse for the foreseeable future. What remains largely uncertain is how a fluctuating international community – with rising and declining state powers, degenerating democracies, rising authoritarianism, and novel global threats – can achieve these challenging goals. Despite the relevance of authoritarianism and environmental security in the contemporary, there is limited research on how specifically contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security. There is, however, an expansive and diverse literature covering how authoritarians breakdown democracy and ascend, how authoritarians exercise authority, and how to thwart the ascendancy of authoritarianism and

stabilize democracy. Thus, for the purposes of this thesis, literature on authoritarianism is the chief historiography due to its relevance overall to the topic.

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt's *How Democracies Die* is a recent work on the deterioration of democracy around the globe with an emphasis on the situation within the US. Levitsky and Ziblatt have a combined twenty years researching authoritarianism in Latin America and Europe, and their expertise in these regions is indicated throughout the work. This is best highlighted when discussing the guardrails of democracy which is a section meant to showcase how even the best designed and longest lasting democracies encounter severe tests either strengthening or weakening democratic principles. When discussing the Weimar Republic, it is pointed out how the constitution of the republic was designed and assembled by the greatest legal minds in Germany at the time, yet it still collapsed with Hitler.<sup>1</sup> Further, Levitsky and Ziblatt go on to discuss how one of the most necessary aspects in order to maintain a stable democracy is mutual toleration, which they support by utilizing the case of Spain in the 1930s when they write, "In short, neither the Republicans on the left nor the Catholics and monarchists on the right fully accepted one another as legitimate opponents...in the absence of strong norms of mutual toleration, the Spanish Republic quickly fell apart."<sup>2</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt primarily focus on the US, but the arguments are substantiated through the usage of historic and contemporary examples of authoritarianism to highlight the similarities with the case of the US.

Levitsky and Lucan Way's *Competitive Authoritarianism* examines the realities of contemporary authoritarianism. A core tenant of their work rests on the notion that the unprecedented democratization following the Cold War did not entail democracy being an outcome. Rather, in many cases this democratization process led to competitive authoritarianism

---

<sup>1</sup> Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, (New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018), 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 104-105.



whereby there is a multi-party system with elections and a governing constitution but systematic abuse by the party in control skews the playing field to disadvantage any opposition.<sup>3</sup> Levitsky and Way argue competitive authoritarianism became the authoritarian norm in the post-Cold War era as a result of rising Western pressure to democratize. As a result of this pressure, the cost of building and sustaining autocratic authoritarianism became too high, and authoritarian regimes began implementing thin veneers of democracy, such as a multi-party system, elections, and select civil liberties.<sup>4</sup> Competitive authoritarianism was not autocratic like China because it could not afford to do so under tremendous pressure from the West. Levitsky and Way's fundamental argument is that in the post-Cold War era the international community is witnessing a shift in how authoritarianism functions. It is no longer blatant authoritarianism capable of tremendous human rights abuses or the oppression of its people, instead contemporary authoritarians have to implement policies in the short-term that keep the people on their side and offset any oppressive or detrimental actions.

*Authoritarian Brazil* is an edited work featuring multiple authors focusing on authoritarianism in Brazil from 1931 until 1971. The collective works discuss topics ranging from the policies of the regime to the viability of authoritarianism in Brazil. In Philippe Schmitter's article dealing with how the Brazilian regime is following the blueprint crafted by the Portuguese in what he calls the regime's "Portugalization", he discusses how the military regime in Brazil would solidify itself by means of centralizing power with the central government and then expand this power to penetrate the periphery.<sup>5</sup> Schmitter states that centralization in Brazil had reached

---

<sup>3</sup> Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511781353.

<sup>4</sup> Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, 40-43.

<sup>5</sup> *Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, Policies, and Future*, Ed. by Alfred Stepan, (London: Yale University Press, 1973), 220.

unprecedented levels through the gradual subordination of all countervailing powers.<sup>6</sup> Schmitter was arguing that one way the military regime was seizing power was by breaking down the existing institutions and centralizing authority within the regime. A central aspect explored throughout the articles is how an authoritarian regime takes, uses, and solidifies power once in control.

E.J. Feuchtwanger's *From Weimar to Hitler* explores the era of the Weimar Republic from its post-World War I beginnings to its downfall. Feuchtwanger's work is a comprehensive analysis of the positive and negative facets of the Weimar Republic meant to explore how the Republic succumbed to the Nazis despite strong democratic principles being enshrined in its constitution. When discussing why the Weimar Republic collapsed Feuchtwanger writes while discussing the federal system, "The parties were confirmed in the habits they carried over from the imperial period: addiction to ideological purity, commitment to affiliated interest groups, preference for opposition over assuming the burdens of government."<sup>7</sup> He goes on to argue maintaining the dualism enshrined in the federal system required strong commitment to liberal democracy, which he argues had disappeared in the final years of the Weimar Republic.<sup>8</sup> In essence, one of the reasons the Weimar Republic failed to prevent the rise of Hitler was the inability to work within the democratic system – for the parties in power to disregard their pure ideology to ensure the government functions. When parties fail to cooperate and commit to opposing all proposals not neatly confined to their ideology, democracy is destined to falter.

As this thesis is designed, it fits into the narratives of the existing literature on authoritarianism. Despite this, there is limited work discussing how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security. As a result, the argument utilized within this research will be novel

---

<sup>6</sup> *Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, Policies, and Future*, Ed. by Alfred Stepan, (London: Yale University Press, 1973), 220.

<sup>7</sup> E.J. Feuchtwanger, *From Weimar to Hitler*, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), 320.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 320.

in the realm of contemporary authoritarianism. Thus, the research utilizing an analysis of different contemporary authoritarian states and extrapolating this to analyze the developing situation in the US offers a unique opportunity to examine how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security. Additionally, this thesis opens a substantial and necessary dialogue for shifting the discussion of environmental security in the realm of authoritarianism away from discussions on China to one focusing on those authoritarian states that do not fit the traditional autocratic authoritarian model.

Theory:

Environmental security came into existence following the Cold War. When the Cold War ended, there were no clearly defined natural threats for states to securitize against. The underlying premise of the Cold War – the realist notion that state conflict in pursuit of power is a natural aspect of international community – had rapidly waned. The United States no longer had the Soviet Union to securitize against along realist terms. Thus, the US along with various other states began searching for new issues to frame as threats to national security. The result was security threats like the environment.

In order to securitize the environment, a state has to ask three questions: whose interests are to be secured, what is the threat, and how does the state address this threat? As a result, environmental security by design requires a state to discern and construct what the specific threat is. Obviously, the notion of state on state conflict propounded by realism exists within the environmental security discourse. After all, states could begin participating in conflict over scarce

resources or the effects of pollution. However, in the case of environmental security, the realist approach exists only if it is constructed in this way.

The constructed realist approach to environmental security aligns closely with the Malthusian arguments in the environmental security debate. Malthusian approaches to environmental security remain the largest portion of the scholarship today, but this is changing. In addition to the Malthusian argument, there are three other arguments present in the field of environmental security – Radical, Cornucopian, and Sustainable Development – that are becoming more extensive aspects of the debate as interest in environmental security grows. Each of these will be discussed in detail in chapter one. For now, the Cornucopian discourse will be discussed in relation to contemporary authoritarianism as it is the discourse these authoritarians adhere to.

Contemporary authoritarianism approaches environmental security with a sense of apathy characteristic of the Cornucopian discourse. Authoritarians construct environmental management and threats as though they are predictable and unlikely to constrain humanity. When undertaking the securitization process, these authoritarians securitize the interests of the state and their support base, view economic insecurity as the chief threat to state security, and seek to securitize the environment with a *laissez-faire* approach that prefers economic security where environmental security comes about naturally through innovation. Thus, the environment is not, at least on the surface, viewed as having a constraining factor. This is fundamentally short-term thinking.

Short-term approaches to environmental security allow authoritarians to ignore long-term consequences for present gain. Heavy polluting industries can continue to pollute because it guarantees jobs, oil and gas companies can increase drilling operations and the construction of pipelines, and transitioning to more sustainable energy can be stalled until “necessary”. By ensuring the economic situation does not deteriorate as a result of transitioning away from non-

renewables or implementing new, substantial regulations related to the environment, authoritarians are exercising power in a manner meant to preserve their short-term interests – remaining in power – and ignoring the long-term consequences of these actions that would potentially destabilize the regime. As a result, by the time authoritarians do make the decision to act or the free market creates a solution, it could be too late. Almost ironically, the short-term approach meant to prevent the destabilization of the state and entrench authoritarians in power can rapidly become the very reason for destabilization.

An in-depth analysis of the theory will be conducted in the first chapter whereby the connection between contemporary authoritarianism and environmental security should become evident. For general purposes, this section should provide necessary information to begin comprehending this linkage and how the authoritarian approach can affect environmental security.

#### *Methodology and Sources:*

With the research question dealing with how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security, comparative case studies will be the most effective means of determining how authoritarians decay institutions and ascend, how authoritarians come to exercise power, and how these leaders affect environmental security. As this introduction makes clear, the research will utilize the case of the United States as its primary case study. However, there is also a necessity to use other cases to provide essential context for how the US fits into the broader narrative of contemporary authoritarianism. The additional cases are as follows: Peru, Russia, and Brazil with other cases employed to provide supplementary evidence not explicitly in these three.

These cases demonstrate the wide array in which authoritarians breakdown democracy, seize control, function in control, and impact environmental security. Examining this wide array of authoritarian states exemplifies the manner in which contemporary authoritarianism rises, which is a critical aspect in examining the US in the contemporary. Thus, utilizing the cases mentioned allows for an in-depth analysis of authoritarianism as it exists in the context of the contemporary US. From this, the concept of how authoritarianism ascends, manages to exercise control, and the implications authoritarianism has for environmental security can be fully explored through the lens of a case of democratic decay in progress.

To establish a frame of analysis capable of proving the hypothesis, the research will rely heavily on secondary sources dealing with Brazil, Russia, Peru, and the United States discussing the ascendancy of authoritarianism, how authoritarians exercise power, and how authoritarians implement environmental security. The secondary sources primarily include scholarly articles and books relating to the aspects of authoritarianism mentioned written by experts in the fields of authoritarianism and environmental security. Additionally, the research includes critical primary sources, particularly related to the United States, such as government documents, memoranda, reports, official speeches, news articles, etc....

Utilizing these types of sources allows for each case to be examined using levels of analysis. For most of the cases, this approach will include an inherent individual level – typically the chief political actor(s) – and a state level whereby the full extent of the authoritarian system can be examined. The United States case will include all three levels of analysis – individual, state, and international – as a result of Donald Trump’s unprecedented individualistic Presidency, the long-term state erosion of democratic principles, and the contempt displayed by Trump and the contemporary Republican party for the state and international environmental regime.

Each of these source types mentioned provides a look at authoritarianism. From the influential work of scholars in the fields to the published documents, each source is essential to examining the cases of contemporary authoritarianism and deploying the levels of analysis necessary to prove the hypothesis. As this sort of analysis of authoritarianism seldom involves discussing environmental security, it can be rather difficult to connect the two concepts. However, through an in-depth analysis of how contemporary authoritarianism ascends and exercises power, how regimes approach environmental security can be understood. The design of the research as presented here allows for the unique linkage of authoritarianism and environmental security to occur and stimulates a conversation of how authoritarianism's rise is affecting environmental security.

### *Thesis Structure:*

An in-depth analysis of authoritarianism and environmental security ultimately exploring the linkage between the two serves as the basis for the first chapter. The chapter will examine what environmental security consists of and what exactly this research means when utilizing the term contemporary authoritarianism. Once these are both sufficiently considered respectively, how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security can be properly theorized. As a result, how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security can be discussed in the ensuing chapters.

Second, an examination of contemporary examples of how authoritarianism ascends with particular focus on ascendancy within democratic societies. This chapter will consist primarily of analyzing the cases of Peru with Turkey and Hungary as supplemental cases. The final portion of

the chapter will extrapolate the examples in these cases to provide necessary context to comprehend the ascendancy of authoritarian tendencies in the US and form the initial basis for how Trump is capable of acting in an authoritarian manner. The intent of the chapter is to provide the basis for how contemporary authoritarians are capable of securitizing the environment in a Cornucopian manner by way of democratic decay. How these authoritarians are capable of securitizing in the manner they do is critical to comprehending how they affect environmental security and understanding what must occur to reverse course.

The third chapter focuses on authoritarian approaches to the securitization of the environment. This chapter will cover how authoritarians utilize democratic decay to implement short-term environmental security approaches based in the Cornucopian discourse. Additionally, it covers the focus of these authoritarians on economic security over the environment to examine why they resort to these short-term strategies at all. Following this, how authoritarian states approach environmental security will be compared to the strategy of the United States from President Clinton through Obama to better understand how Republicans and Trump have shifted away from US environmental security precedent towards a more contemporary authoritarian approach.

Chapter four examines Trump's brand of authoritarianism and his subsequent approach to environmental security. The chapter analyzes Trump's authoritarian tendencies on the individual level and the federal government's more authoritarian approach at the state level under the stewardship of the Trump administration. In tandem with this analysis, the chapter examines Trump's abandonment of international agreements, focus on eliminating regulations, attention on economic growth, etc. Chiefly, this chapter is concerned with how power has effectively been concentrated into the hands of Trump and Republicans and limits opportunities for recourse among



their political opposition allowing for his implementation of an environmental security strategy in line with contemporary authoritarian leaders. Following this discussion, the chapter will look briefly at what exactly these authoritarians get wrong when prioritizing economic security over environmental security. This chapter seeks to bring all the elements discussed throughout the thesis together. By tracking the decay of American democracy in chapter two in comparison with examples of contemporary authoritarianism; analyzing US environmental security precedent in contrast to Russia and Brazil; analyzing the further extent of democratic decay since 2016; and examining Trump's environmental security strategy, it should be clear how the US is emblematic of these contemporary authoritarian states and is implementing environmental security along similar lines.

## **Chapter I: Connecting Environmental Security and Contemporary**

### **Authoritarianism**

As is evident from the introduction, the chief concern of this thesis is how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security. A crucial element in answering the research question and proving the hypothesis is comprehending environmental security and contemporary authoritarianism respectively. Following an in-depth examination of what each of these terms mean and the theory behind them, it will be easier to comprehend the linkage between the two. After all, while China or Iran fit a traditional conceptualization of how an authoritarian state appears and functions – a traditionally autocratic state – many contemporary cases of authoritarianism do not fit this notion. Thus, the manner in which contemporary authoritarianism approaches environmental security is different. Whereas autocratic authoritarianism can implement environmental security strategy in a predominately unilateral manner, contemporary authoritarianism exists in a competitive system resembling a democratic society. Authoritarianism today does not exist in a system absent of democratic principles, but, rather, in a system where there is, at a bare minimum, limited democracy. In contemporary authoritarianism, these actors – politicians, judges, media groups, etc. – demonstrate various authoritarian tendencies or inclinations and frequently act on these, but the difference is these actors remain accountable to voters, opposition parties, media, and select democratic institutions similar to a democratic society. As a result, the approach to governance and securitization is altered to ensure the public and institutions remain favorable to government proceedings. This approach to governance is based in the short-term as authoritarians seek to appease those with the power to remove them to retain power.

This thesis argues short-term environmental security strategies are endemic to contemporary authoritarianism as will become clear. If the goal of contemporary authoritarianism is to retain power and appease voters, then the approach undertaken in regard to the environment will ignore long-term environmental implications in favor of ensuring the economy does not shrink or the population does not have to sacrifice their current standard of living. In fact, contemporary authoritarians will seek economic expansion in areas with tremendous long-term environmental consequences and raise the standard of living despite this resulting in further environmental degradation. Contemporary authoritarians assemble these short-term environmental security strategies because the regime needs to retain power now, not in the future. The difficult governing decisions – those entailing suffering and hardship for citizens – are disregarded in favor of those maintaining society’s relative stability and favorability to the authoritarians.

Before developing the linkage between environmental security and contemporary authoritarianism it is vital to examine each individually. For this research, right-wing authoritarianism, particularly the populist model, is the chief variety under examination. In regard to environmental security, the Cornucopian and sustainable development discourses will serve as the primary discussion points with the Cornucopian discourse being argued as the primary approach utilized by authoritarians and the sustainable development approach serving as the ideal. From comprehending what constitutes environmental security and contemporary authoritarianism, how this new age of authoritarianism affects environmental security can be theorized.

Issues related to environmental security arise in the post-Cold War world. Following the end of the Second World War, geopolitics was largely confined to the realm of capitalism versus communism. In that post-World War II world, realist security thinking was prevalent. For the US and Soviet Union, the national security threat – the us versus them that defined what needed to be

securitized – was relatively clear, but the post-Cold War world left the surviving United States in a state of disarray searching for the next threat.<sup>9</sup> Missing the easily definable national security risk would ultimately result in the development of new security threats.

A post-Cold War world shattered how geopolitics functioned. The resulting world rising after the collapse of the Soviet Union would prove more complex and fragmented.<sup>10</sup> As the Cold War was beginning to wind down in the 1980s, various other security issues began to come to light in academia. In 1983, Richard Ullman was arguing for the US to begin incorporating environmental threats alongside traditional military threats within the traditional national security framework.<sup>11</sup> The goal of Ullman and other scholars was to neatly fit environmental security within the traditional realist security narrative.

An environmental scientist by the name of Norman Myers would go on to expand this argument for incorporating environmental threats into the national security framework in his book, *Ultimate Security*. Myers argued the following: “national security is no longer about fighting forces and weaponry alone. It relates increasingly to watersheds, croplands, forests, genetic resources, climate, and other factors rarely considered by military experts and political leaders, but that taken together deserve to be viewed as equally crucial to a nation’s security as military prowess.”<sup>12</sup> Again, Myers was arguing for the placement of environmental threats within the national security framework along similar lines as military threats. The language is meant to portray environmental threats as the future. A future where, in realist terms, conflict and state

---

<sup>9</sup> Rita Floyd, “The Rise of US Environmental Security,” in *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy*, 61-86, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511730146.004, 65.

<sup>10</sup> Braden R. Allenby, "Environmental Security: Concept and Implementation," *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 21, no. 1 (2000): 5-21, (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publishing, 2000), [www.jstor.org/stable/1601426](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1601426), 6.

<sup>11</sup> Floyd, “The Rise of US Environmental Security,” 70.

<sup>12</sup> Norman Myers, *Ultimate Security: The Environmental Basis of Political Stability*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993), 21.

survival would be based on who has resources or who has arable land and how a state comes to acquire these things to maintain the security of the nation.

There arise a couple problems in environmental security when thinking of it from a purely realist perspective. First, some scholars, such as Buzan and Wæver, argue whether the environment can be explicitly securitized at all. For Buzan and Wæver, “environmental threats occur irrespective of actors’ wills; thus, it becomes precisely a question of how without actors’ wills – the notion of deliberate action that defines the structure of security as a field – can the issue of environmental threats be considered part of security.”<sup>13</sup> Without a threat to securitize against that actors can potentially exercise control over, which the environment tends to be, fitting environmental threats or degradation into the traditional, realist national security context runs into a problem.<sup>14</sup> Facing environmental threats, even resource scarcity to an extent, is not state against state competition. Rather, it is state against the environment; it is something a state cannot approach as though gaining control over a particular resource in direct competition with another state entirely securitizes. This brings up the second problem.

For environmental security to come into existence in the post-Cold War world, it had to be constructed. States, like the US, were searching for a new issue to frame as a national security threat.<sup>15</sup> Creating an inherent disconnect from realism. Realism portends state conflict in pursuit of power – in this case environmental security – is a natural, preexisting aspect of the international community that defines the system. Yet, when the Cold War dissipated, there was no natural threat for states to securitize against. Thus, states began to construct the threats in need of securitization.

---

<sup>13</sup> Ole Wæver, “Securitization and Desecuritization,” in *On Security*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 63; Barry Buzan, “Environment as a Security Issue,” in *Geopolitical Perspectives on Environmental Security* 92, no. 5 (1992), ed Paul Painchaud, (Québec: Studies and Research Center on Environmental Policies, 1992).

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Deudney, “The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 19, no. 3 (1990): 461–476, (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publishing, 1990), <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298900190031001>, 464.

<sup>15</sup> Floyd, “The Rise of US Environmental Security,” 65.

To securitize the environment an actor has to ask what exactly is to be secured, against which threat, and what methods to utilize. For environmental security discourse, it became a matter of whose interests should be secured: “the nation state, human beings (civilization), or ecosystems (the biosphere)? What is the threat: political instability, overpopulation, consumption of resources, unequal development, or nature? How should this threat be addressed: self-defense (conflict), cooperation, or technology?”<sup>16</sup> Environmental security by design requires states or the international community to discern and construct what the security threat is. Obviously, the notion of conflict – the belief that resource scarcity and acquiring resources could result in traditional, realist state against state security – is an aspect of the environmental security discourse. It simply does not fit into the intrinsic argument realism relies on. In the case of environmental security at least, the realist approach exists but arises only if it is constructed as such.

As outlined, environmental security is constructivist. It requires states and the international community to establish a norm around how to securitize the environment. For the international community – through the United Nations – this has become sustainable development as indicated by the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). For individual states, environmental security could be constructed along similar lines as the broader international community – fitting the international norm - with regard to the pursuit of sustainable development, but it does not have to be. There are three other views of environmental security outlined in the broader debate with the potential to become a state environmental security approach in practice. Each of these views and

---

<sup>16</sup> Karen T. Litfin, "Constructing Environmental Security and Ecological Interdependence," *Global Governance* 5, no. 3 (1999): 359-77, (Leiden: Brill, 1999), [www.jstor.org/stable/27800237](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27800237), 361; Rita Floyd, "The Moral Evaluation of Environmental Security," in *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy*, 174-187, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511730146.007, 179.

sustainable development will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs before moving into contemporary authoritarianism.

In 1986, C.S. Holling expounded four “myths of nature”: benign, tolerant, fragile, and capricious.<sup>17</sup> These four roughly correspond with the Cornucopian, Sustainable Development, Malthusian, and Radical views of environmental security respectively. In 1997, Andrew Jordan and Timothy O’Riordan would provide supplemental definitions. Cornucopian approaches view the environment as predictable and bountiful and view environmental management with a laissez-faire mentality. Sustainable development views environmental management as possible if the limits of the environment are accounted for and humanity strives to restrain itself. Malthusian approaches view the environment as precarious and unforgiving with the feasibility that humanity will ignore the constraints of the environment reaching a tipping point whereby life is threatened. Finally, radical views of the environment think nature is capricious and the real challenge is one of inequitable resource access making it necessary to focus instead on redistribution.<sup>18</sup> These remain the four aspects of the contemporary environmental security debate.

The radical view has the least amount of research in the field. The research available makes vague assertions without substantial context to support the claims. Simon Dalby and Johan Galtung are two scholars with published work in this field. Discussing an impending environmental crisis, Galtung states the following: “The crisis leaves mankind living under crowded conditions, in a poisoned environment, and short of resources. What is almost incredible is that it has not struck the LTG authors that these are exactly the three conditions under which a very high proportion of

---

<sup>17</sup> C.S. Holling, “The Resilience of Terrestrial Ecosystems,” in *Sustainable Development of the Biosphere*, ed. William C. Clark and R.E. Munn, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1986).

<sup>18</sup> Andrew Jordan and Timothy O’Riordan, “Social Institutions and Climate Change: Applying Cultural Theory to Practice,” *Center for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment*, (Norwich: University of East Anglia, 1997).

the population of the world... are already living and have been living for a long time.”<sup>19</sup> Dalby makes similar arguments. The issue is not the validity of the statements, but both assert this claim but do nothing to substantially support it. Work within the radical portion of the debate is largely hypothetical. As a result, the radical view remains on the fringes and will not be discussed further in this thesis.

Cornucopian views comprise a significant portion of the debate. Peter Haas summarizes the works of Wilfrid Beckerman, Herman Kahn, etc. as stating that nature is “boundless, and thus unlikely to exercise significant constraints over human action.”<sup>20</sup> Haas goes on to argue Cornucopian writers see economic growth as encouraging technological innovation and solutions to environmental changes.<sup>21</sup> Cornucopian scholars approach environmental issues with a sense of apathy reasoning the market economy will resolve all issues. This approach is relevant as it is based on core principles of capitalism still defining the contemporary world. Cornucopian approaches to environmental security are underscored by notions of free market capitalism, and the laissez-faire nature of the approach in combination with the view that nature is unlikely to constrain human action fits how contemporary authoritarian states approach environmental security as will be made evident when connecting environmental security to contemporary authoritarianism at the end of this chapter. For the purposes of this thesis, the Cornucopian discourse will be the chief discourse under discussion due to its relation to contemporary authoritarianism.

---

<sup>19</sup> Johan Galtung, “The Limits of Growth and Class Politics,” *Journal of Peace Research*, 10, no. ½ (1973), 101-114, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd., 1973), [https://www.jstor.org/stable/422714?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/422714?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).

<sup>20</sup> Peter M. Haas, “Constructing Environmental Conflicts from Resource Scarcity,” *Global Environmental Politics*, 2, no. 1 (2002), 1-11, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), <https://doi.org/10.1162/152638002317261436>, 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 3.



Malthusian views are the other significant part of the debate. In Malthusian arguments, resources are deemed finite resulting in constraints on human actions. Malthusian research focuses on how population growth may ultimately lead to resource scarcity. This stems from Thomas Malthus and his work based on 18<sup>th</sup> century British demographic data that argued as populations grows the production of food would be incapable of supporting the country.<sup>22</sup> This population growth versus production argument is quite simple and is the underlying argument in all Malthusian arguments. However, according to Haas and other scholars, these arguments have been incorrect. Carl Kaysen argued Malthusian assessments disregard market mechanisms and focus primarily on consumption and production.<sup>23</sup> Disregarding market mechanisms outright indicates Malthusian arguments do not appropriately account for any potential change; thus, the results of Malthusian research are characteristically pessimistic.

Malthusian views primarily align with the realist approach to environmental security. Malthusian arguments link traditional security concerns to the environment where the central focus is on the possibility of groups within society engaging in violent conflict as natural resource stocks diminish as a result of environmental degradation and population growth.<sup>24</sup> In Thomas Homer-Dixon's influential works, such as "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict", he frequently relied on Malthusian arguments to conclude the world was already in the midst of a resource scarcity epidemic with direct links to rising conflict.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Homer-Dixon, among others, expanded this notion to argue powerful states needed proactive steps to secure resources before

---

<sup>22</sup> Haas, "Constructing Environmental Conflicts from Resource Scarcity," 4.

<sup>23</sup> Carl Kaysen, "The Computer That Printed out W\*O\*L\*F\*," *Foreign Affairs*, 50, no. 4 (1972), 660-68, (Congers, NY: The Council on Foreign Affairs, 1972).

<sup>24</sup> Nicole Detraz and Michele M. Betsill, "Climate Change and Environmental Security: For Whom the Discourse Shifts," *International Studies Perspectives* 10, no. 3 (2009): 303-20, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), [www.jstor.org/stable/44218603](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44218603), 305.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 5-40, <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/447316>.

scarcity led to major state conflict. Malthusian approaches to environmental security exist primarily in an off branch referred to as environmental conflict. Environmental conflict entails a narrow view of the relationship between the environment and security focusing primarily on the potential for states to engage in violent conflict over resources threatening state security.<sup>26</sup> This reduces environmental security threats to a state against state issue disregarding any other factors or approaches capable of securitizing the environment.

The last aspect of the debate is sustainable development. Sustainable development is prevalent today with the obstacle of addressing climate change and maintaining equality. Sustainable development is embodied in the UN SDGs, yet the topic is not the prevailing theory in the environmental security debate. Sustainable development can be best understood as allowing current generations to produce while maintaining future generations capacity to do the same. It is a method thought to facilitate generational equity.

Anita Kiamba describes four conditions to achieve sustainable development: resources should be extracted at replenishable rates; harmful products should not be produced faster than decomposition rates; overproduction should be restricted; and electric and energy efficient technologies should be used to meet basic needs.<sup>27</sup> Sustainable development is not contradictory to economic growth; rather, sustainable development is capable of long-term growth and environmental preservation. Sustainable development could be implemented by states to slow environmental degradation and ensure economic vitality across generations. The potential for sustainable development to create an equitable contemporary and future society where generations can share economic stability and a viable planet has led to it becoming a prevalent aspect of the

---

<sup>26</sup> Detraz and Betsill, "Climate Change and Environmental Security: For Whom the Discourse Shifts,": 305-306.

<sup>27</sup> Anita Kiamba, "The Sustainability of Urban Development in Developing Economies," *Consilience*, no. 8 (2012), 20-25, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26188711>.

environmental security debate. As a result, sustainable development serves as the counter argument to the Cornucopian approach deployed by contemporary authoritarians.

Now that environmental security has been explored to clarify how it is constructed and what constitutes the broader debate within the field, it is vital to transition to the discussion on contemporary authoritarianism. As mentioned in the intro to the chapter, contemporary authoritarianism is not the traditional, autocratic variety often thought of when authoritarianism is mentioned. Unlike China or Iran where the state is capable of governing or implementing an environmental security strategy unilaterally, contemporary authoritarianism refers to a state where a competitive system resembling a democratic society exists. For this reason, the manner in which contemporary authoritarians securitize the environment is different than that of autocratic states. In order to fully comprehend this brand of authoritarianism's approach, what comprises this authoritarianism has to be understood first.

Contemporary authoritarianism is defined chiefly by the presence of democratic competitiveness. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way describe this variety of authoritarianism simply as competitive authoritarianism. Competitive authoritarianism is distinguished from other varieties of authoritarianism due to the existence of a multi-party system featuring elections following the guidelines of democracy but where systematic government interference skews the political arena against the opposition.<sup>28</sup> This system is not outright authoritarian. At least on the surface it appears to feature democratic characteristics. Those being free and fair elections, multiple political parties, civil liberties, etc.

---

<sup>28</sup> Steven Levitsky, "Competitive Authoritarianism," January 24, 2011, (Oslo Freedom Forum, Oslo, Norway), 14:04, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aIlSdVhfDM>.; For a more in-depth analysis see: Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511781353.

In this system, there are opposition parties that remain legal with the ability to compete for power. In some cases, the incumbents – enablers of the regime or the regime itself – may falter in elections.<sup>29</sup> Thus, bolstering the notion that the competitive authoritarian state is not simply utilizing democracy as a façade. However, there are some distinguishing characteristics making it easier to identify a competitive authoritarian regime. Typically competitive regimes rely on the façade of periodic elections and a diverse legislature, but this façade falls apart when taking into consideration the presence of fewer limits on the power of the executive; frequent violations of political and civil liberties; present harassment of journalists and opposition leaders; prevalent electoral fraud; and media bias in favor of ruling party.<sup>30</sup> The political arena appears and functions democratically, but it is deliberately designed to favor incumbents.

In these competitive authoritarian states, the ruling party is forced to play by some rules of democracy resulting in its appearance as a democratic state. The ruling party cannot outright ban opposition or cancel elections due to the necessity for maintaining the credentials of being a democracy in domestic and international politics.<sup>31</sup> Instead, the ruling party may resort to intimidating opposition and suppressing potential votes through democratic measures.<sup>32</sup> In a competitive authoritarian system, it is likely the ruling party possesses a majority in the legislature. Thus, it would be easy to institute measures preventing particular groups from voting or, at the very least, making the process tedious. Additionally, such measures may dissuade opposition

---

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Levitsky, “Competitive Authoritarianism.”; Andrea Cassani, "Hybrid What? Partial Consensus and Persistent Divergences in the Analysis of Hybrid Regimes," *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 35, no. 5 (2014): 542-58, (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publishing, 2014), [www.jstor.org/stable/24573424](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24573424), 550.

<sup>31</sup> Raul A. Sanchez Urribarri, "Courts between Democracy and Hybrid Authoritarianism: Evidence from the Venezuelan Supreme Court," *Law & Social Inquiry* 36, no. 4 (2011): 854-84, (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), [www.jstor.org/stable/41349660](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41349660), 858; Cassani, "Hybrid What? Partial Consensus and Persistent Divergences in the Analysis of Hybrid Regimes," 544.

<sup>32</sup> Levitsky, “Competitive Authoritarianism.”

supporters capable of voting from actually doing so. The guise of a legislative decision provides authoritarians a democratic cover for subversion efforts.

Further, competitive authoritarian states can deploy state institutions against the opposition. These state institutions may be utilized to deny access to financial resources or opportunities for opposition parties or media.<sup>33</sup> Institutions can be utilized to investigate opponents or censor media unfriendly to the state.<sup>34</sup> There remains a level of institutional independence as is required by democracy, but this independence is consistently blurred.

A critical aspect of democratic society essential to competitive authoritarian states is the judiciary. Similar to how competitive authoritarian states attempt to maintain the façade of democracy through not outright banning opposition, suppressing enfranchisement, or completely controlling independent institutions, these authoritarian states do not infringe entirely on judicial independence. Rather, to maintain legitimacy and comply with democratic commitments competitive authoritarianism entails keeping the judiciary “open”.<sup>35</sup> Doing so has benefits for the regime because the judiciary may rule in favor of the regime providing increased legitimacy.<sup>36</sup> Conversely, in an outright authoritarian state it would likely be that the courts are shuttered or heavily stunted in their scope.

However, this is not to say competitive authoritarian regimes do not interfere with the judiciary in any capacity. Instead, these states rely on subtle changes to alter the court to their advantage. In many cases, this alteration involves modifying the composition of the court, amending the rules of access or jurisdiction, and sanctioning or openly rewarding judges to alter

---

<sup>33</sup> Levitsky, “Competitive Authoritarianism.”

<sup>34</sup> Ryan Shirah, "Electoral Authoritarianism and Political Unrest," *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 37, no. 4 (2016): 470-84, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2016), [www.jstor.org/stable/44632319](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44632319), 471.

<sup>35</sup> Urribarri, "Courts between Democracy and Hybrid Authoritarianism: Evidence from the Venezuelan Supreme Court," 855.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 855.

judicial proclivity towards supporting the government.<sup>37</sup> Competitive authoritarian states exploit the norms of democracy to obtain an advantage over the opposition. It is not outright authoritarian rule, just an alteration to the rules governing the political arena to grant supremacy to one side.

Indeed, from this it should be evident systems of competitive authoritarianism can exist in fully developed democratic societies through political actors with authoritarian tendencies as opposed to an outright systematic version. In a developed democratic state, a political party could feasibly obtain a large enough majority to execute many of the above-mentioned aspects constituting competitive authoritarianism. These parties cannot ban opposition parties or eliminate the franchise, but they can rig the rules of the game to be more beneficial to their side. They cannot eliminate the free press, but they can deride facets of the free press they vehemently disagree with. It could also be possible for these parties to entirely prevent the opposition from appointing judges and then pack the various vacancies left when the opposition leaves power. The point is competitive authoritarianism does not simply exist in the context of states like Russia – where democracy was loosely established – but that it can exist in full-fledged democracies. What separates a full-fledged democratic state with political actors portraying authoritarian tendencies from an outright competitive authoritarian state is the institutional strength built up through years of democratic power sharing. A concern arises when there are indications of decay.

How do authoritarians get identified in a democratic society then? Juan Linz, a prominent political scientist born in Weimar Germany, devoted his life to understanding how and why democracies falter. His book, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, discussed how critical politicians are in preserving democracy. He argued the behavior of politicians can reinforce democracy or lead to decay; in essence, commitment to preserving democracy among politicians

---

<sup>37</sup>Urribarri, "Courts between Democracy and Hybrid Authoritarianism: Evidence from the Venezuelan Supreme Court," 855.

is critical to the survival of democratic society.<sup>38</sup> Linz went on to propose a test capable of identifying these actors before they succeeded in deteriorating democracy.

This notion of a test to identify such leaders was further expanded upon by Levitsky and Ziblatt. They propose a four-point system for identifying authoritarian tendencies in political actors. They write, “We should worry when a politician 1) rejects, in words or actions, the democratic rules of the game, 2) denies the legitimacy of opponents, 3) tolerates or encourages violence, 4) indicates a willingness to curtail the civil liberties of opponents, including the media.”<sup>39</sup>

With this four-point system, it is critical to take into account political actors capable of meeting any of these criteria should be considered a concern. Any of these factors could destabilize an otherwise stable democratic system. Levitsky and Ziblatt go on to ask what sort of political actors consistently demonstrate the qualities capable of receiving a positive test. The answer they provide is populists.<sup>40</sup>

Populists utilize rhetoric designed to generate “popular” dissent aimed at the powerful elite, commonly this is described as anti-establishment politics.<sup>41</sup> In order to successfully generate this “popular” dissent, the rhetoric deployed is typically catchy with an attractive nature playing on the emotional and irrational side of supporters.<sup>42</sup> Utilizing this brand of rhetoric allows populists to propose simplistic, short-term solutions to complicated problems requiring complex, hard to

---

<sup>38</sup> Juan J. Linz, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 29-30.

<sup>39</sup> Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, (New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018), 21-22

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 22.

<sup>41</sup> Aytac, S. Erdem, and Ziya Öniş, "Varieties of Populism in a Changing Global Context: The Divergent Paths of Erdoğan and Kirchnerismo," *Comparative Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 41-59, (New York: City University of New York, 2014), [www.jstor.org/stable/43664342](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43664342), 42.

<sup>42</sup> Rafal Riedel, "Populism and Its Democratic, Non-Democratic, and Anti-Democratic Potential," *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 199 (2017): 287-98, (Warsaw: Polish Sociological Association, 2017), [www.jstor.org/stable/26383076](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26383076), 289.

achieve solutions because the primary factor driving the solutions is derived from the enthusiasm shown by supporters, not practicality. Populists connect these simplistic solutions directly to the will of the majority they argue the powerful elite have traditionally been ignoring.<sup>43</sup>

Political actors propounding populist ideology adhere to simplicity to appeal to what they determine is the majority and this majority has a right to obtain control. Appealing to the right of the majority to exercise control is meant to inculcate distrust between people and elites.<sup>44</sup> Populists utilize this rhetorical and division strategy in order to argue they alone can repair the broken system and reestablish the will of common people. This potentially allows them to amass a following and gain control despite any nefarious arguments deployed.

Right-wing populism in particular attaches the people to notions of a nation under siege by some external enemy; some “other”. This “other” could be Islamic terrorism, refugees, other religious groups, different races, etc. Right-wing populism hinges on its ability to transform insecurity and anxiety, which it determines to be a “natural, favorable part of the capitalist system”, into fear of some “other”.<sup>45</sup> Right-wing populism is defined by its ability to do this. That is to say by the ability of populists on the right to position the “other” and their enablers within domestic elite groups against the will of the majority.<sup>46</sup> Right-wing populism utilizes fear and anxiety among the majority about present circumstances to target minority groups. It provides right-wing populists with a scapegoat for their own legislative incompetency.

---

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 289.

<sup>44</sup> Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 541-563, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), doi:10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x.

<sup>45</sup> Samir Gandesha, "Understanding Right and Left Populism," in *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*, ed. Morelock Jeremiah, 49-70, (London: University of Westminster Press, 2018), [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv9hvtcf.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv9hvtcf.7), 63; Samir Gandesha, “The Political Semiosis of Populism,” *Semiotic Review of Books* 13, no. 3 (2003): 1-7, (Ontario: Trent University, 2003), <http://projects.chass.utoronto.ca/semiotics/vol%2013.3.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup> David Landau, "Populist Constitutions," *The University of Chicago Law Review* 85, no. 2 (2018): 521-44, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Law Review, 2018), [www.jstor.org/stable/26455916](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26455916). 524-26.



Outside of the purely antagonistic nature of right-wing populism, there are other defining characteristics. Right-wing populism does not determine the redistributive and social equity policies of left-wing populism to be of particular import; rather, right-wing authoritarianism prioritizes stability in the economy and physical security.<sup>47</sup> Right-wing populism focuses efforts on reducing government regulatory functions, pro-capital policy, and neglects the rights of workers.<sup>48</sup> These three facets of right-wing populism entail transferring regulatory functions from the government to the private sector; opening up investments, reducing corporate tax rates, legal protections for foreign investors, etc.; and, workers losing protections, fixed schedules, the right to unionize, etc.<sup>49</sup> Right-wing populism's success hinges on a strong economy; thus, its approach to governance often revolves around freeing up the economy for maximum gain creating a system where short-term approaches to broad societal issues are preferred.

For the purposes of this thesis, contemporary authoritarianism refers to this brand of right-wing populism. In these contemporary authoritarian states there is always the broad characteristic of populism based on utilizing "popular" dissent and often the manufacturing of some "other" characteristic of right-wing populism. However, the most evident sign of this brand of authoritarianism comes from the prioritization of a stable economy and physical security. Additionally, it can refer to the more severe brand of competitive authoritarianism outlined by Levitsky and Way, but it can – as the case of the US will demonstrate – exist in a full-fledged democracy by way of political actors with authoritarian tendencies. These actors in full-fledged democratic states typically decay democracy over a longer period of time than their counterparts in the more severe cases, but the methods deployed to decay democracy are similar. For cases like

---

<sup>47</sup> Erdem, and Öniş, "Varieties of Populism in a Changing Global Context: The Divergent Paths of Erdoğan and Kirchnerismo," 45.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 49.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 50.

the US, the four identifiers proposed by Levitsky and Ziblatt become key to identifying potential authoritarians.

Now that there has been an in-depth discussion on environmental security and contemporary authoritarianism respectively, the conversation can move to developing the argument for how contemporary authoritarianism affects environmental security. A key aspect of this argument centers around not just how authoritarians affect environmental security, but how they come to be capable of affecting environmental security in this manner to begin with. Without comprehending how authoritarians are capable of securitizing this way, there can be no full comprehension of how they affect environmental security or how to alter these outcomes. By the end of this section, it should become clear how this thesis will proceed following the establishment of the theory deployed throughout.

Contemporary authoritarianism adheres to an environmental security strategy rooted in the Cornucopian discourse. As mentioned in the discussion on the right-wing populism, contemporary authoritarianism prioritizes economic stability. Success for these authoritarians is embedded in the state maintaining a strong, stable economy where the free market is capable of achieving maximum gain. Thus, there is an inherent laissez-faire mentality towards the environment engrained into contemporary authoritarianism. After all, the economy's ability to excel is tied to resource extraction and subsequent production of goods directly linked to environmental degradation. As a result, authoritarian regimes are removing restrictions on capitalist production by withdrawing from international agreements and standards, rolling back domestic environmental protections, and appointing heads of polluting corporations to head the agencies designed to regulate those

corporations.<sup>50</sup> Opening the market and removing constraints is meant to promote development and economic growth.

Aiming to maintain free-market capitalism and remove constraints preventing further economic growth makes it apparent contemporary authoritarians are constructing an environmental security strategy whereby environmental management and threats are viewed as predictable and unlikely to constrain. Characteristically, contemporary right-wing authoritarianism approaches environmental security with a sense of apathy as a result. To the extent environmental degradation could present challenges to the economy or the state, the economic growth precipitated by the laissez-faire strategy should have encouraged the development of technological innovation capable of curbing the threat.<sup>51</sup> The environment is not, at least on the surface, viewed as being a constraint on economic growth and state development. As a result, economic activity can continue along the path of growth without state involvement or regulations concerning the environmental implications.

Perhaps for the moment environmental factors remain relatively non-constraining, but the science on the matter makes it clear how incorrect this mentality is.<sup>52</sup> The planet is rapidly descending towards a climate and environmental crisis, if it is not already experiencing one. Non-renewable resources – oil, gas, coal, etc. – are diminishing at alarming rates. The planet is reaching the point where the necessary actions to reduce emissions to remain below the target of 2 degrees Celsius outlined in the Paris agreement is passing. Sea levels are rising, and the ice caps are rapidly

---

<sup>50</sup> James McCarthy, “Authoritarianism, Populism, and the Environment: Comparative Experiences, Insights, and Perspectives,” *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 109, no. 2 (2019): 301-313, (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2019), doi:[10.1080/24694452.2018.1554393](https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2018.1554393), 306.

<sup>51</sup> Haas, “Constructing Environmental Conflicts from Resource Scarcity,” 3.

<sup>52</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report, Contribution of Working Groups I, II, and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, ed. Core Writing Team, Leo Meyer, and Rajendra K. Pachauri, (Geneva: IPCC, 2014), [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/SYR\\_AR5\\_FINAL\\_full.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/SYR_AR5_FINAL_full.pdf).

deteriorating.<sup>53</sup> Environmental security strategies which opt to view the environment as non-constraining are based in short-term thinking. For now, the environment might not be at the worst-case scenario, but it will become constraining in a manner a purely laissez-faire mentality cannot react to.

These short-term environmental security strategies allow authoritarians to ignore long-term consequences for present economic growth. Heavy polluting industries can continue polluting because it guarantees jobs, oil and gas companies can increase drilling operations and the construction of pipelines, and transitioning to sustainable options can be stalled until the economy develops the technology and solutions. Ensuring the economic situation does not deteriorate by maintaining the economic status que preserves the short-term interests of authoritarians – remaining in power.

If the goal of contemporary authoritarianism is to retain power and appease voters, then the approach undertaken in regard to the environment will ignore long-term environmental implications of the strategy in favor of ensuring the economy does not shrink or the population does not have to sacrifice their current standard of living. Transitioning away from non-renewables or implementing new, substantial regulations related to the environment would entail a long-term development strategy implemented by the state. Right-wing authoritarians would be required to levy regulations against polluting industries, disregard the laissez-fair mentality, and utilize its influence to steer the market in the direction necessary for environmental security. Additionally, the right-wing authoritarians would be making difficult governing decisions entailing suffering and hardship for citizens. All of these are fundamentally divergent from the core tenants of right-wing authoritarianism's ideology.

---

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

Authoritarians approach environmental security in a manner meant to secure the state disguised as securing the population. The disguise is not designed to portray the state as securing the majority from environmental threats, but, rather, the state securing the “majority” from other actors wishing to ensure security from environmental threats by transitioning away from the current economic system. Authoritarians are securing the interests of the “majority” by ensuring economic growth proceeds, so the regimes supporters do not face negative economic consequences resulting from a transition to sustainable development.

The threat to the authoritarian state is economic instability, not the environment. Thus, contemporary authoritarians will construct an environmental security approach defining security as expanding the economy in areas with tremendous long-term environmental consequences and raising the standard of living despite this likely resulting in increased environmental degradation. Contemporary authoritarians assemble these short-term environmental security strategies because the regime needs to retain power now, not in the future. By the time authoritarians make the decision to act, it could be too late to effectively implement a strategy capable of combatting environmental threats. Ironically, the short-term approach meant to prevent the destabilization of the state and entrench authoritarians in power could rapidly become the very reason the state is destabilized.

What remains unclear is how contemporary authoritarians are capable of implementing a Cornucopian environmental security strategy. As will be made clear when discussing how authoritarians manage to ascend to power, the ability to implement this short-term approach to environmental security stems from gradual democratic decay. After all, many of these contemporary authoritarians exist within a democratic society making it difficult to rule unilaterally. By gradually decaying democracy and eventually controlling various levers of power

through consolidation – discussed in greater detail in chapter two – these authoritarians eliminate the options of recourse for opposition. Without substantial avenues of pushback on policies, these authoritarians are capable of implementing a short-term environmental security approach which can, and often does, bring with it detrimental environmental consequences.

Instead of approaching the environment with a sense of concern as is quickly becoming the constructed international norm through sustainable development, these authoritarians approach it with a sense of apathy characteristic of the Cornucopian discourse preferring to promote economic security. While contemporary authoritarians often exist within a democratic society, the process of gradually decaying democracy provides these authoritarians the capability to implement short-term environmental security strategies with restricted options for recourse. As a result, these authoritarians are able to prioritize economic security to preserve their control over implementing a long-term environmental security strategy that could upset economic security in the short-term. As has been mentioned, this short-term approach to environmental security can bring with it detrimental environmental degradation. The process by which authoritarians gradually decay democracy allows them to implement short-term approaches to environmental security ultimately resulting in authoritarians having a negative effect on the environment. This is how contemporary authoritarians affect environmental security.

## **Chapter II: Decaying Democracy and Authoritarian**

### **Ascendancy**

To examine how contemporary authoritarians are capable of implementing environmental security strategies grounded in the short-term and Cornucopian discourse outside of a purely theoretical framework, it is essential to comprehend how contemporary authoritarians ascend to power, gradually decay democracy, and inculcate themselves in democratic society. How these authoritarians manage to ascend within a society where democratic principles are present provides the essential background necessary to comprehend how these authoritarians are capable of taking short-term action on environmental security. Comprehending this is also a key factor in understanding what must be potentially accomplished in order to eventually implement a long-term environmental security strategy by way of building better democracy as will be brought up later in this thesis.

Not all authoritarians demonstrate their authoritarian inclinations prior to arriving in power. Leaders like Hitler with his failed putsch; Chavez with his failed leadership during a military coup; or Mussolini's Blackshirts demonstrating violent tendencies are no longer the norm of authoritarianism.<sup>54</sup> Contemporary politicians do not immediately reveal their authoritarianism or even come to power with preexisting authoritarian tendencies. Some strongly support the norms of democracy and it is only through their development as political actors that authoritarianism takes hold in their ideology. Following this, it still might be difficult to fully identify authoritarians in a democratic society.

---

<sup>54</sup> Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, (New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018), 21.

Democracy typically can falter on the following points: mutual toleration, institutional forbearance, altering the rules of the game, capturing referees, and turning on opponents. Mutual toleration is the notion that political actors assume their rivals follow the rules established in the constitution, and, as a result, have an equal right to exist, compete for power, and govern.<sup>55</sup> Mutual toleration entails the acceptance of not always being the party in power and being open to compromise to ensure the system functions. Institutional forbearance necessitates avoiding “actions, that while in the spirit of the law, obviously violate its spirit.”<sup>56</sup> Principally, if an action is technically legal, it does not mean political actors should exercise such power in order to preserve the system. Altering the rules of the game involves reforming the constitution, electoral system, and other institutions to disadvantage opposition and entrench those in power.<sup>57</sup> Capturing the referees refers to attempts to stifle or install loyalists in the judicial system, law enforcement bodies, and intelligence, tax, and regulatory agencies.<sup>58</sup> In effect, protecting the government from internal pressure potentially applied by these institutions when left independent. Finally, turning on opponents is straightforward. It entails assuring any potential opponents – politicians, business leaders, media, religious groups, etc. – remain on the sideline or in a state where they are incapable of influencing government actions.<sup>59</sup>

Ideally, mutual toleration and institutional forbearance are underlying principles of democracy, but these are not inherent aspects of a democratic system.<sup>60</sup> Democracy is grinding work. It requires compromise and acceptance of groups that do not share the same political ideology and policy agenda. Without the core principles of mutual toleration and institutional

---

<sup>55</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 102.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 106.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 88.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 78.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 81.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 102-106.



forbearance, parties can resort to continuous squabbles over personalities or policies resulting in a weak government incapable of solving complex issues similar to what occurred in the Weimar Republic in the 1930s.<sup>61</sup> Further, the other three do not exist in a healthy democratic society either. While just one of these can erode democracy, usually this process takes more than one as will be demonstrated by the examples of Peru, Hungary, and Turkey. Following the discussion of these three examples, this chapter will move into the case study of the United States to demonstrate the overlap between the US and these examples of contemporary authoritarianism

When Alberto Fujimori became the president in Peru in 1990, he was a political outsider seemingly winning the election by some mishap. His initial desire to run for the presidency was tied to his senate campaign being in dire need of funding, not grandiose desire to become president.<sup>62</sup> He was the product of running at the right time under the necessary conditions for an outsider to ascend. By 1990, Peru's promising democracy was on the cusp as the volatility of political and economic conditions reached a crossroads where public support for the nation's major parties had effectively imploded.<sup>63</sup> In addition to systematic turmoil, since 1980 the Maoist guerilla movement Shining Path had been terrorizing Peru.<sup>64</sup> Peruvians had lost faith in the political establishment's ability to effectively enact legislation and policy protecting and benefitting them. Fujimori would run on a platform promising he alone could fix what ailed Peruvians.

Fujimori's rhetoric during the campaign was laced with populism. He advocated for economic stabilization measures to minimize the job loss and recession affecting the poor and

---

<sup>61</sup> Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*. (New York: The Penguin Press, 2003), 83.

<sup>62</sup> Luis Jochamowitz, *Ciudadano Fujimori: La Construcción de un Politico*, (Lima: Peisa, 1993), 259-63.

<sup>63</sup> John Crabtree, "Democracy without Parties? Some Lessons from Peru," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 42, no. 2 (2010): 357-82, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), [www.jstor.org/stable/40784986](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40784986), 359.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid*, 362.

lower-middle classes.<sup>65</sup> It was tailored specifically to appeal to those with the most to lose should his opponent Mario Vargas Llosa manage to win. Fujimori went so far as to argue the state should play a larger role in the economy – something Vargas Llosa looked to dissociate from – where the state would increase the efficiency of public entities and provide incentives to select sectors of the economy to stimulate growth.<sup>66</sup> Fujimori’s rhetoric on economic issues and attempts to appeal to regular Peruvians worked.

In his inaugural address, Fujimori would continue to stoke fears of an impending collapse of Peruvian society. He stated Peruvian society was “broken by violence, corruption, terrorism, and drug trafficking.”<sup>67</sup> For Fujimori, the system – dominated by the elites – required drastic measures to fix and preserve it. However, in achieving these lofty goals, Fujimori faced obstacles from the establishment. His plans for resolving the accelerating problems remained vague; opposition parties remained in the majority in congress, and opposition appointees controlled the supreme court; and, the media persisted with staunch distrust of him.<sup>68</sup> His populist approach to politics won him the presidency, but it seemed unlikely to get him legislative victories.

Democracy requires compromise with the acceptance that one’s entire legislative agenda will not come to fruition. When Fujimori came into the presidency, he lacked this basic comprehension of legislative politics. One of Fujimori’s aides would state, he “couldn’t stand the idea of inviting the President of the Senate to the presidential palace every time he wanted Congress to approve a law.”<sup>69</sup> Fujimori initially followed the framework of governance outlined

---

<sup>65</sup> Susan C. Stokes, "Democratic Accountability and Policy Change: Economic Policy in Fujimori's Peru," *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2 (1997): 209-26, (New York: City University of New York, 1997), doi:10.2307/422080, 213.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 214.

<sup>67</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 73.

<sup>68</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 73; Charles Kenney, *Fujimori's Coup and the Breakdown of Democracy in Latin America*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 126-27.

<sup>69</sup> Cynthia McClintock, “La Voluntad Política Presidencial y la Ruptura Constitucional,” in *Los Enigmas Del Padre: Fujimori 1990-1996*, Ed. Fernando Tuesta, ( Lima: Fundacion Friedrich Ebert, 1996), 65.

in the constitution, but it was clear the work of democracy did not fit his ideal form of governance.<sup>70</sup> As a result, democratic decay began.

Peru's descent started similar to many states. Fujimori harnessed the popular distrust of elites to justify solutions to Peru's problems bordering on authoritarian and began relentlessly attacking opposition politicians, trade unions, human rights groups, democracy, and the judiciary.<sup>71</sup> He called leaders in congress "unproductive charlatans" and referred to judges as "jackals".<sup>72</sup> The attacks against his opponents in congress and the judiciary were only the beginning. When legislative opposition prevented Fujimori from enacting his economic agenda through constitutional pathways, Fujimori turned to presidential decrees.<sup>73</sup> Utilizing this decree power allowed Fujimori to sidestep congressional opposition. Despite the reality that congress passed a significant portion of his agenda and ceded significant legislative powers to him throughout the first two years, Fujimori still derided the institutions of government.<sup>74</sup> Thus, when opposition hardened in late 1991, the fate of Peru's republic rested on the decisions made by Fujimori.

The stage for Fujimori's autogolpe would be set when he delivered a set of 126 decrees to congress in November. Congress refuted the far-reaching nature of these decrees through directly repealing them or making them far more moderate than intended, and congress would take the

---

<sup>70</sup>Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, "Pathways to Authoritarian Rule," in *Dictators and Democrats: Masses, Elites, and Regime Change*, 270-300, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), doi:10.2307/j.ctt1q1xs6z.13, 284.

<sup>71</sup> Jo-Marie Burt, "'Quien habla es terrorista': The Political Use of Fear in Fujimori's Peru," *Latin American Research Review* 41, no. 3 (2006): 32-62, (Pittsburgh: The Latin American Studies Association, 2006), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3874688>, 43.

<sup>72</sup> Catherine Conaghan, *Fujimori's Peru: Deception in the Public Sphere*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 30; Kenney, *Fujimori's Coup and the Breakdown of Democracy in Latin America*, 132.

<sup>73</sup> Haggard and Kaufman, "Pathways to Authoritarian Rule," 284.

<sup>74</sup> Philip Mauceri, "Return of the Caudillo: Autocratic Democracy in Peru," *Third World Quarterly* 18, no. 5 (1997): 899-911, (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 1997), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3993106>, 901.

additional step of passing legislation to restrict Fujimori's power grabbing.<sup>75</sup> Come April 1992, Fujimori and his allies in the military carried out the autogolpe by suspending congress and constitutional rule.<sup>76</sup> Fujimori entered the presidency an outsider with a disdain for legislative politics and, after two years, would fully transition into an authoritarian.

Contemporary authoritarians, such as Fujimori, rarely come into power with authoritarianism as the goal. However, once authoritarian tendencies take hold, the process of decaying democracy is exacerbated. Even Fujimori and his allies established a new constitution whereby the president could exercise legislative decree powers without legislative oversight, the judiciary would lose power, be purged, and lose autonomy to the executive, and there would be superficial presidential term limits.<sup>77</sup> The events preceding the authoritarian turn seem as though they are politics as usual, and these can be difficult to foresee.

Even the authoritarian turn in a place like post-communist Hungary under Viktor Orbán was an unforeseen outcome until it occurred. From 1990 until 2010, Hungary appeared to be a relatively stable democracy. There were transitions of power, compromise, and the beginnings of a vibrant democracy. Between 1998 and 2002, Orbán's Fidesz party would govern in a conventional European conservative manner with Orbán as prime minister before losing to the rival socialist party.<sup>78</sup> In a traditional democratic transition of power, Orbán and Fidesz willingly stepped aside when it was time. However, the 2002 elections would mark the beginning of the authoritarian shift.

---

<sup>75</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 75.

<sup>76</sup> Mauceri, "Return of the Caudillo: Autocratic Democracy in Peru," 901; Burt, "'Quien habla es terrorista': The Political Use of Fear in Fujimori's Peru," 44.

<sup>77</sup> Mauceri, "Return of the Caudillo: Autocratic Democracy in Peru," 906-7.

<sup>78</sup> Zack Beauchamp, "It Happened There: How Democracy Died in Hungary," *Vox News*, (New York: Vox Media, LLC., 2018), <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/9/13/17823488/hungary-democracy-authoritarianism-trump>.

Fidesz never fully accepted the 2002 defeat indicating a lacking commitment to mutual toleration. Following 2002, the party began to accuse the opposition of fraud, claimed the results were illegitimate, and blamed the media environment for not being pro-Fidesz.<sup>79</sup> Fidesz began to transition to a more authoritarian messaging based on the illegitimacy of the opposition and nationalism. The argument being that Fidesz was the only party capable of fixing Hungary's problems.<sup>80</sup> Despite attacking opponents, elections, and launching a nationalist movement to dwell up the masses, 2006 would again result in defeat for Fidesz and Orbán.<sup>81</sup> Rather than restructuring the failed messaging, Orbán instead expanded upon it.

In 2010, Fidesz managed to secure a two-thirds parliamentary majority. The Hungarian Constitutional structure then allowed Fidesz to rewrite the constitution without opposition consent or consultation. Fidesz rewrote the constitution to gerrymander legislative districts, overhaul the Constitutional Court to ensure a Fidesz majority, eliminated the Fiscal Council, created a new press authority, halved the size of parliament, and made the two-round election system a single round, first-past-the-post election.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, the campaign finance laws were changed to directly benefit Fidesz which is amplified when considering Orbán's utilization of state laws and government contracts in order to create a Fidesz friendly business constituency capable of financing political campaigns, rewarding supporters, and operating friendly media outlets.<sup>83</sup>

Hungary's descent into an authoritarian state was unrecognizable prior to 2002 and even up to Fidesz's election victory in 2010. Following 2010, Orbán and Fidesz were capable of altering

---

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> Paul Krugman, "Hungary, An Election in Question, Part 2," *The New York Times*, (New York: The New York Times Company, 2014), <https://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/28/hungary-an-election-in-question-part-2/>; Arch Puddington, "Breaking Down Democracy," *Freedom House*, (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2020), <https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-report/2017/breaking-down-democracy>.

<sup>83</sup> Krugman, "Hungary, An Election in Question, Part 2"; Puddington, "Breaking Down Democracy."

the rules of the game, further attacking opposition, capturing the referees, and ignoring institutional forbearance. The warning signs were not always clear. Democracy seemed to be functioning appropriately before Fidesz secured the majority necessary to completely skew the game in their favor to ensure the retention of power.

Similar to Orbán, Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey did not arrive in 2003 as an authoritarian. His ascendancy was built around the promise of economic and political liberalization.<sup>84</sup> The Justice and Development party (AKP), founded by Erdogan and other reformers, secured a majority in 2001, and, as prime minister in 2003, Erdogan promised liberal reforms with the intent of enhancing the separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press, and rule of law.<sup>85</sup> The goal was not entirely for these reforms to manufacture a liberal society, but as a means to draw in foreign investment to an environment promising to adhere to Western liberalism.<sup>86</sup> While Erdogan and AKP were promising liberal reforms largely for the economic investment, Erdogan in 2003 had not fully shifted to being an authoritarian.

By 2007, the AKP had garnered a high enough percentage of vote to consolidate its power. This same year, Erdogan began orchestrating a series of prosecutions meant to eliminate some opposition from the political arena.<sup>87</sup> Five years later in 2012, Erdogan was beginning to complain about the separation of powers he had championed in 2003 as a direct obstacle to necessary change. To resolve this obstacle, Erdogan purged the judiciary effectively eliminating any illusion of judicial independence in Turkey.<sup>88</sup> To further complicate matters, by the end of 2012, there were

---

<sup>84</sup>Halil Karaveli, "Erdogan's Journey: Conservatism and Authoritarianism in Turkey," *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 6 (2016): 121-130, (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2016), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43948388>, 121.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*, 124.

<sup>86</sup> Aytaç S. Erdem, and Ziya Öniş, "Varieties of Populism in a Changing Global Context: The Divergent Paths of Erdoğan and Kirchnerismo," *Comparative Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 41-59, (New York: City University of New York, 2014), [www.jstor.org/stable/43664342](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43664342), 49-51.

<sup>87</sup> Karaveli, "Erdogan's Journey: Conservatism and Authoritarianism in Turkey," 125.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 125.

an estimated 9,000 people – mostly Erdogan’s opponents – serving prison sentences on dubious charges of terrorist activities decided by courts filled with Erdogan loyalists.<sup>89</sup> Erdogan’s first steps to becoming an authoritarian were attacking the opposition and capturing the referees to ensure the opposition was removed from the equation. Yet, this was only the beginning of Erdogan’s egregious actions.

Following Erdogan’s election as president in 2014, the descent to authoritarianism would escalate. He quickly established a bureaucratic structure operating from his presidential palace capable of challenging the other bureaucratic structures in Turkey.<sup>90</sup> Erdogan and his advisers became the chief authority related to domestic and foreign policy and, simultaneously, worked to replace dissenting voices within the AKP with Erdogan loyalists to provide his political agenda with increased legislative support.<sup>91</sup> Erdogan was rapidly expanding his influence in all political arenas. Dissenting voices were being purged, loyalists were being installed across the board, and Erdogan would soon dominate all facets of Turkish politics.

While Erdogan had taken egregious action prior to and following 2014 – specifically the 2015 law limiting demonstration and assembly rights<sup>92</sup> – his most blatant authoritarian tendencies have been his approach to unfriendly media. Erdogan has made bashing the media a common theme in his speeches. When he was still prime minister, Erdogan was prone to circling every speech in Turkey’s General Assembly back to his dissatisfaction with the media.<sup>93</sup> He targets individual journalists, and, regularly, singles out the owners of these media outlets. Seldom do

---

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, 125.

<sup>90</sup> Cengiz Günay, "Foreign Policy as a Source of Legitimation for "Competitive Authoritarian Regimes": The Case of Turkey's AKP," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 17, no. 2 (2016): 39-46, (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016), [www.jstor.org/stable/26396170](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26396170), 41.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

<sup>92</sup> Günay, "Foreign Policy as a Source of Legitimation for "Competitive Authoritarian Regimes": The Case of Turkey's AKP," 41.

<sup>93</sup> Oray Egin, "The Silence of Surrender: Erdogan's War on Independent Media," *World Affairs* 176, no. 4 (2013): 47-56, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2013), [www.jstor.org/stable/43554878](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43554878), 49.

these confrontations end with Erdogan deciding to use the bully pulpit on another journalist or media group. For journalists, it likely means they will have to pack their things and find work somewhere else, and for the owners of these media conglomerates, it means facing invasive government harassment.<sup>94</sup> One of the most extreme examples of this government harassment occurred in 2009 when the AKP controlled government levied a record multi-billion dollar tax fine on Dogan Media Group exceeding the group's net worth following a controlled outlets reporting on a story involving a charity with close connections to the AKP.<sup>95</sup>

Erdogan did not arrive in power an authoritarian. Erdogan and the AKP promised to institute liberal reforms until they consolidated power and began attacking any opposition by utilizing the power of the state. In the contemporary, this is how authoritarianism ascends. It begins by functioning within the democratic system. Then, once a level of authority is gained, begins to chip away at democracy until the authoritarian regime effectively has control without fully abolishing the democracy. As a result, at least on the outside the state appears to be a functioning democracy with political actors committed to democratic norms and institutions.

Fujimori, Orbán, and Erdogan all came to power within a democratic system. None of them demonstrated immediately that they would ultimately chip away at democracy. Instead, the process in each example was rather gradual. An authoritarian step here or there, but it never happened all at once until democracy had been successfully decayed. Fujimori attacked his opposition, captured referees, and ultimately altered the rules of the game. Orbán's playbook was to promote nationalism and then once in power completely skewed the rules of the game enshrined in the constitution to his benefit. For Erdogan, it started with seemingly positive steps towards a more liberal society before he began to completely erode mutual toleration and institutional forbearance.

---

<sup>94</sup> Egin, "The Silence of Surrender: Erdogan's War on Independent Media," 48.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, 48-52.



All of these examples deployed the five points on which democracy falter discussed earlier. All of them also appeared at first to be operating entirely in the democratic system. Adhering to the norms and principles of democracy. Even following a depleted democracy, each maintained a resemblance to democracy. The difference was that they had successfully consolidated power to limit the opportunity for any opposition to have an avenue of recourse against them. The process by which contemporary authoritarianism comes to power gradually and inculcates itself in the democratic system is alarming and is similar to what has been occurring in the United States.

The 1950s in the US had unified the country against common enemies. In the early stages of the Cold War, US citizens and politicians adhered to a sense of congenial conformity and duty in order to combat the communist threat posed by the Soviet Union. By the 1960s, this conformity would begin to erode under the pressures of the Vietnam War and Civil Rights Movement. Sensing a political opportunity, the Republicans began to deploy a strategy portraying society as being in a constant state of conflict.<sup>96</sup> This strategy was designed to pull in Southern Democrats, evangelicals, Catholics, and working-class Americans. To appeal to these groups, Republicans began to assault cultural libertarianism – chiefly those seeking civil rights – as outsiders and un-American.<sup>97</sup> The 1960s set the Republicans on a path of constantly creating an “other” for their base to fear and blame for changing social norms.

When the Republicans began to shift their party towards a more conservative agenda, the Democrats went in the opposite direction. For the Democrats in the 1960s, the platform propounded was based on civil rights, equality, and social progress alienating the disaffected voters

---

<sup>96</sup> David H. Kamens, “From Consensus to Culture Wars,” in *A New American Creed: The Eclipse of Citizenship and Rise of Populism*, 201-222, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=5788247>, 204.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, 204.

Republicans were attempting to seize.<sup>98</sup> Despite the efforts of Republicans to capture those voters who adhered to traditional, conservative values being left behind, the Democrats from the 1960s through the 1980s continued their relative dominance of Congress by controlling one or both chambers.<sup>99</sup> The Democrats seldom managed to control Congress and the presidency, but they always managed to retain at least one position of power. In contrast, the Republicans never controlled all three. Until 1978, politics had shifted in terms of platform, but the status quo of mutual toleration between the parties remained.

By 1978, a cohort of young Republicans had grown disenchanted with the status quo. After all, this approach meant Republicans were losing opportunities to govern according to their conservative ideology instead relying on compromise with the Democrats to achieve minute policy goals. In June 1978, an obscure professor named Newt Gingrich gave a speech to College Republicans where he lamented the following, “One of the great problems we have in the Republican Party is that we don’t encourage you to be nasty. We encourage you to be neat, obedient, and loyal, and faithful, and all those Boy Scout words, which would be great around the campfire but are lousy in politics.”<sup>100</sup> For Gingrich, Republicans had become passive in Congress and destined to remain permanently in the minority unless altering course to be combative.

Gingrich would go on to win a seat in the House in the midterm election of 1978. Upon arriving to Congress, Gingrich had developed a strategy to secure a Republican majority. His strategy entailed nationalizing congressional election processes, expanding the hatred of Congress by the public until both legislative bodies were viewed as corrupt and dysfunctional, and

---

<sup>98</sup> Amanda Taub, “The Rise of American Authoritarianism,” *Vox News*, (New York: Vox Media, LLC., 2016), <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>.

<sup>99</sup> Alan I. Abramowitz, “From Dealignment to Alignment,” in *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump*, 43-71, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvhrczh3.8](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvhrczh3.8), 44.

<sup>100</sup> McKay Coppins, “The Man Who Broke Politics,” *The Atlantic*, (Washington, DC: The Atlantic Monthly Group, 2018), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/11/newt-gingrich-says-youre-welcome/570832/>.

dramatizing the legislative process.<sup>101</sup> In effect, Gingrich would turn the House into an arena for conflict and drama as opposed to one of legislating.<sup>102</sup> If the public saw the House as not being an effective governing body with the Democrats in control, the potential for voters to turn to the Republicans was increased. Manufacturing this Republican disdain for Democrats and Congress would be the true beginning of democratic decay.

The strategy deployed by Gingrich would have not even resulted in marginal success without the media. The introduction of C-SPAN to televise Congressional proceedings and the deregulation of the media beginning in 1968 created the perfect conditions for Gingrich's assault on institutional forbearance. With C-SPAN, Republicans frequently resorted to offering floor amendments to bills to embarrass Democrats and delivering grand speeches bashing the majority.<sup>103</sup> Additionally, the media's negotiations to obtain more open print and broadcasts regulations meant these organizations were free to report whatever stories they deemed worthy – usually those receiving the highest ratings and profits.<sup>104</sup> Congressional dysfunction, conspiracy theories, conflict, etc. became dominant aspects of America's media climate due to the correlation with ratings and profit. Thus, the stage was inadvertently tilted to benefit Gingrich's scorched earth approach. It was a fundamental break from normal proceedings.

Gingrich's strategy would be a significant success for the Republicans. With the election of Reagan, Republicans took control of the Senate and gained 33 seats in the House.<sup>105</sup> These victories inched Republicans closer to controlling both chambers of Congress and the White House. The election of 1980 also achieved another of Gingrich's goals. Facing constant

---

<sup>101</sup> Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, "The Seeds of the Contemporary Problem, 1969-1994," in *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get it Back on Track*, 40-68, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=430543>, 51.

<sup>102</sup> Coppins, "The Man Who Broke Politics."

<sup>103</sup> Mann and Ornstein, "The Seeds of the Contemporary Problem, 1969-1994," 52.

<sup>104</sup> Kamens, "From Consensus to Culture Wars," 208-211.

<sup>105</sup> Mann and Ornstein, "The Seeds of the Contemporary Problem, 1969-1994," 53.

Republican obstruction, the House Democrats resorted to eroding institutional forbearance by utilizing the rules process and committee caucuses to write legislation with limited to no consultation of Republicans.<sup>106</sup> Gingrich wanted Democrats to take steps to decay the regular functioning of Congress in order to paint the Democrats as the true obstructionists to legislative effectiveness. Following the elections in 1980, Democrats embarked unwittingly down a path playing directly into Gingrich's hand.

The success of Gingrich's obstruction strategy in the early 1980s diminished in some respects when Democrats reclaimed the Senate in 1986, yet Gingrich would continue to ascend in Republican politics despite this slight refute of the Gingrich strategy culminating in his position as Republican Whip. The strongest challenge to combative Republican strategy in Congress would come with the election of President Bill Clinton and a Democrat controlled Congress in 1992.

By the election of 1992, Gingrich had successfully transformed the Republicans in the House into ideological radicals. The controversies of the 1980s, House Democrats refusal to include Republicans in legislative processes, and the arrogance of the Democratic majority resulted in a Republican House increasingly convinced compromising would be incapable of delivering desired results, and Gingrich was able to capitalize on this sentiment to get Republicans to refuse to support any legislation proposed by the Democrats.<sup>107</sup> If Clinton and Democratic leadership wanted to fulfill their policy agenda, they would have to rely solely on the Democratic coalition. The issue, as Gingrich was undoubtedly aware, was that the Democratic party was not as homogenous as the Republican party. Democrats beginning with the transition to championing social progress in the 1960s had become an extensively diverse party representing various ideologies.

---

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, 56.

<sup>107</sup> Mann and Ornstein, "The Seeds of the Contemporary Problem, 1969-1994," 67.

This issue would plague the early years of the Clinton administration. Clinton's signature economic plan took almost seven months to pass through a Democratic controlled Congress by the narrow margin of 218 to 216.<sup>108</sup> The one major success of the era was the North American Free Trade Agreement which received significant support from Republicans while angering Democrats in Congress and organized labor.<sup>109</sup> Unless Clinton was willing to further fracture his fractured coalition to appease Gingrich and the Republicans, the Republicans would refuse to participate in the legislative process. The unwavering Republican obstruction in combination with the fracture of the Democratic coalition resulted in a Democratic party that appeared as incapable of governing.<sup>110</sup> Gingrich's long game of subverting democracy and making Congress ineffective had succeeded. Gingrich would finally shatter the Democratic majority in 1994. His term as Speaker of the House as a result would only exacerbate the erosion of American democracy.

Once he assumed the role of Speaker of the House, Gingrich developed a precise strategy he believed would result in Clinton facing a severe dilemma. The Republican controlled House would pass conservative measures on the economy, budget, and social policy and send them to Clinton, and Clinton could either sign the legislation further fracturing the Democratic party or veto them and be seen as an ineffective leader.<sup>111</sup> The strategy was one building off the successes of the 1980s. Make the opposition seem ineffective and the public will further deride them. However, Gingrich seemingly never realized the pressure to compromise and make legislative politics function resides with the majority. The strategy of the 1980s was effective because it forced the Democratic majority to either compromise or go it alone. When Gingrich refused to

---

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>111</sup> Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, "A Decade of Republican Control," in *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get it Back on Track*, 69-95, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=430543>, 74.

compromise with Democrats once in control of the House, it was the Republicans who looked incapable of effective leadership.

Clinton was able to capitalize on this reality, not face some career ending dilemma. His conflicts with Gingrich and the House Republicans, specifically their eagerness to shut down the government if Clinton did not agree to their budgetary demands, worked to reestablish Clinton's political position on firmer ground and gave him his reelection.<sup>112</sup> In response, Gingrich resorted increasingly to ignoring institutional forbearance. He proceeded with efforts to consolidate power in the Speaker's office; dismantle congressional institutions with substantial professional staff; pushed the impeachment of Clinton despite Republicans and Democrats agreeing the punishment would not fit the crime; and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee during this time issued around 1,052 subpoenas to the Clinton Administration and other Democratic targets between 1997 and 2002.<sup>113</sup> Rather than compromising with Democrats, Republicans attempted to shift power in the House into the Speaker's office, increased attacks on opponents, and began using the majority powers to pry for information to defame their opponents resulting, as it did with impeachment, in overstepping standard congressional procedures to portray the Democrats as corrupt and anti-American.

Beginning in the 1980s, Republicans began to radicalize their approach to legislative politics. The result of this rightward shift was the creation of an increasingly polarized party system in America.<sup>114</sup> The decay of mutual toleration and institutional forbearance and the vehement attacks on opponents became an engrained aspect of American political life. While this process

---

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, 74.

<sup>113</sup> Joseph Fishkin and David E. Pozen, "Asymmetric Constitutional Hardball," *Columbia Law Review* 118, no. 3 (2018): 915-82, (New York: Columbia Law Review Association, Inc., 2018), [www.jstor.org/stable/26397699](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26397699), 930; Mann and Ornstein, "A Decade of Republican Control," 84.

<sup>114</sup> "Congress at a Glance: Major Party Ideology," *UCLA Social Sciences Division*, (Los Angeles: UCLA Department of Political Science, 2020), <https://voteview.com/parties/all>.

has included both parties, the Republicans have drifted the furthest from how politics functioned prior to the 1980s. Republicans have been the primary drivers of democratic decay. The 1990s provided a glimpse at how far America had come since Gingrich arrived in Congress. By the end of President Clinton's second term, there was cause for concern, but the worst was yet to come.

The Bush presidency did not lack party polarization and democratic decay. However, the period between 2008 and 2016 was vastly different in how quickly it exacerbated the problems with American democracy.<sup>115</sup> The turmoil encapsulated in American Democracy following 2008 directly correlates to how the United States reached its contemporary authoritarian moment come 2016 and after.

The election of 2008 appeared at first to be a political shift in American politics towards progressivism. Barack Obama would assume office in 2009 and Democrats took control of the Senate and House, meaning the Democratic party had at least two years to set a progressive agenda and get it passed into law. To some across the US, Obama represented an opportunity to be the first "post-partisan" president capable of transitioning the nation away from the hyper-partisanship that had come to define American politics – Obama could trigger the end of the culture wars in America that began nearly three decades prior.<sup>116</sup> While the early days of Obama's presidency fit neatly into this narrative, before long a conservative movement known as the Tea Party would be humming with the expressed objective to put an end to Obama's presidency.

Now, the Tea Party was not a new phenomenon in American politics. Movements similar to the Tea Party – those espousing reverence for Constitutional purity, pushing back against

---

<sup>115</sup> "Congress at a Glance: Major Party Ideology.," *UCLA Social Sciences Division*, (Los Angeles: UCLA Department of Political Science, 2020), <https://voteview.com/parties/all>.

<sup>116</sup> John Dombink, "Liberalization and Backlash in the Obama Era," in *The Twilight of Social Conservatism: American Culture Wars in the Obama Era*, 9-28, New York: NYU Press, 2015, [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.5](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.5), 11.

supposed tyranny of big government, susceptibility to conspiracy theories, etc. – seemingly come about whenever a Democrat becomes president.<sup>117</sup> Along with the conservative concern for the American “status quo” that underlines these movements, these movements often bring with them charges that the Democratic president is a socialist. This occurred with Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s and with Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s, and, as a result, leaves no surprise that around 67% of Republicans in 2010 surmised that Obama was a socialist.<sup>118</sup> Conservative backlash towards progressive politics in America is surprisingly predictable. The difference in 2009 and 2010 was that American democracy was vulnerable to a movement like this successfully altering the political landscape as a result of decaying democracy.

The Tea Party was founded on being against President Obama. As with Roosevelt and Johnson, this conservative coalition was fundamentally against the policy agenda of the Obama administration. For these conservatives, Obama was representative of some foreign presence which could directly harm traditional values.<sup>119</sup> The policy of being against Obama resulted on numerous contradictions and conspiracies being manufactured. These ranged from the Tea Party protests featuring signs protesting “rampant” fiscal irresponsibility related to debt and health care while simultaneously telling government to “keep your hands off Medicare” to the now infamous birther movement propounding the idea that Obama was not an American and could not serve legitimately as president.<sup>120</sup> Tea Party concerns were never substantive. No policy proposals were made to counter those put forth by the Democrats. Rather, Tea Party conservatives were arguing

---

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, 16-17.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

<sup>119</sup> Dombrink, "Liberalization and Backlash in the Obama Era," 18.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, 18; John Dombrink, "Anger and Resentment Anew: Tea Parties and the Obama Backlash," in *The Twilight of Social Conservatism: American Culture Wars in the Obama Era*, 29-68, (New York: NYU Press, 2015), [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.6](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.6), 32.



solely on the basis that Obama and Democratic control of government was fundamentally harmful to the status quo. Democrats were the enemy.

This sort of approach only exacerbated the pre-existing fissures in American politics as is seen in the healthcare debates from 2009-2010. As is typical in American politics when discussing healthcare, abortion became a controversial, heated topic of discussion. Oddly, abortion was not a central aspect of the 2008 campaign, and it only returned to discussions with the reform debate that resulted in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).<sup>121</sup> This would become a tumultuous time in American politics. The ACA would receive no bipartisan support in Congress, Congressman Joe Wilson would shout “You lie!” at President Obama during a speech on the bill, and a Texas Republican would yell “baby killer” at Congressman Bart Stupak following his announcement of support for the bill.<sup>122</sup> Following these debates and the subsequent passing of the ACA, polarization became the norm of American political discourse throughout the remainder of the Obama era resulting in Tea Party dominance in the 2010 midterm elections.

When the Tea Party wave ascended, the transition from a fully Democratic Congress to a split Congress – with Republicans controlling the House – would have traditionally resulted in compromise, but the Republicans, in line with a Gingrich approach, opted to continue the path of resistance. Rand Paul, then Senator-elect, stated the objective of this conservative wave best when he said, “We’ve come to take our government back.”<sup>123</sup> For newly elected conservatives, the primary objective once in office was to promote this populist message. The government had been hijacked by people expressing anti-American values and these conservatives were there to restore order and power to the people.<sup>124</sup> While populist movements do not always result in the decay of

---

<sup>121</sup> Dombrink, "Anger and Resentment Anew: Tea Parties and the Obama Backlash," 44.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, 44-45.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, 50.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, 50.

democracy, this populist movement would shatter every perceived norm of American democracy with detrimental consequences.

The Republican strategy was to withhold bipartisanship in an effort to “kick the hell” out of Obama’s agenda and his presidency.<sup>125</sup> Unanimous partisan resistance to his policies could result in the president looking incapable of achieving compromise and potentially deliver increased political power to Republicans. Before John Boehner became Speaker of the House he said, in reference to opposition to Obama’s agenda, “Republicans would do everything in their power to kill, stop, slow down, and whatever they could to prevent Obama from finding legislative success.”<sup>126</sup> Likewise, Mitch McConnell, then Senate minority leader, said “The single most important thing we want to achieve is for President Obama to be a one-term president.”<sup>127</sup> Republicans in Congress resorted to being purely obstructionist. They opted to abdicate their responsibility to govern and compromise with democrats in hopes it would deliver political power. Unlike Gingrich’s attempt to use this strategy in the 1990s with Clinton, this time Republicans would be successful.

By the midterms of 2014, Republicans had eroded America’s trust in government enough to successfully flip the Senate giving Mitch McConnell control. Widely considered the grim reaper of progressive legislation, McConnell’s no-compromise approach to the Senate since 2009 has proven detrimental to American democratic principles. While McConnell is undoubtedly a conservative politician, his true political ideology is securing political power regardless of what

---

<sup>125</sup> Michael Grunwald, “The Victory of ‘No’,” *Politico Magazine*, (Arlington County, VA: Politico LLC, 2016), <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/12/republican-party-obstructionism-victory-trump-214498>.

<sup>126</sup> Andy Barr, “The GOP’s No-Compromise Pledge,” *Politico*, (Arlington County, VA: Politico LLC, 2010), <https://www.politico.com/story/2010/10/the-gops-no-compromise-pledge-044311>.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

this pursuit costs democratic institutions, the nation, or constituents – he wants to “win”.<sup>128</sup> For McConnell, the price of winning is never too high. His political party retaining power is the only measure of success.

To accomplish this objective, McConnell has done untold damage to the Senate. When Republicans were the Senate minority, McConnell favored abusing the filibuster to stall Obama’s agenda before being opposed to its utilization when in the majority; extolled Senate gridlock; and has deployed the tactic of legislative terrorism regarding debt-ceiling showdowns and government shutdowns if his demands were not met.<sup>129</sup> McConnell is not interested in effective government; instead, he thrives when Congress is in disarray. As Dana Milbank of the Washington Post stated, Mitch McConnell is breaking American democracy.<sup>130</sup>

McConnell’s approach to presidential nominees may be his most notorious work. Between 2009 and 2013, McConnell and Senate Republicans deployed the filibuster to block 79 Obama nominees – the entire history of the US at that point had only seen 68 presidential nominees blocked.<sup>131</sup> As a result of this abuse of the filibuster, Senate Democrats altered the rules over some presidential nominees to only require simple majorities in order to prevent Republicans from obstructing natural processes of the Senate. McConnell’s response to this measure was that “breaking the rules to change the rules is un-American.”<sup>132</sup> In a stable democracy, Democrats changing the rules in this manner would be seen as problematic – indeed it is concerning – but the

---

<sup>128</sup> Robert Schlesinger, “Donald Trump has Done Less to Destroy Democratic Norms than Mitch McConnell,” *NBC News*, (New York: NBC Universal, 2019), <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/donald-trump-has-done-less-destroy-democratic-norms-mitch-mcconnell-ncna1011451>.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Robert Reich, “Mitch McConnell is Destroying the Senate – and American Government,” *The Guardian*, (London: Guardian News & Media Group, 2019), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/06/mitch-mcconnell-senate-republicans-donald-trump-judges>.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

abuse of Senate rules by Republicans was the trigger for this change so that the Senate could fulfill its role in government.

By 2014, McConnell would only intensify this undemocratic shift in the Senate once in the majority. Arguably the biggest example of this came in 2016 when President Obama nominated Merrick Garland to fill a Supreme Court Vacancy during an election year. Besides the nomination of Garland, a Supreme Court vacancy in an election year had only occurred one other time in 1888. That year a Democratic president's nomination was confirmed overwhelmingly by a Republican Senate.<sup>133</sup> If there was a precedent for this scenario with Garland, it is one where the Senate would, at the very least, begin the process of reviewing the nomination. However, this was not the route McConnell took; rather, McConnell resorted to refusing to even consider filling the vacancy. He would state, "It is a president's constitutional right to nominate a Supreme Court justice, and it is the Senate's constitutional right to act as a check on a president and withhold its consent" and would later say one of his proudest moments was telling Obama he would not be filling the vacancy.<sup>134</sup> This move was unprecedented. The Senate was objecting to carrying out its constitutional duty under the guise of precedent and the Senate's prescribed powers in the Constitution despite these powers never being interpreted this way. McConnell was effectively disregarding established norms of American democracy in favor of political agenda.

When Barack Obama assumed the Office of the President, the United States was a relatively stable democracy. By his final year in 2016, Freedom House – an independent group charting freedom around the world – indicated the US was on a downward trend losing points

---

<sup>133</sup> Schlesinger, "Donald Trump has Done Less to Destroy Democratic Norms than Mitch McConnell."

<sup>134</sup> Ron Elving, "What Happened with Merrick Garland in 2016 and Why it Matters Now," NPR, (Washington, DC: National Public Radio, 2018), <https://www.npr.org/2018/06/29/624467256/what-happened-with-merrick-garland-in-2016-and-why-it-matters-now?t=1595591284645>; Amita Kelly, "McConnell: Blocking Supreme Court Nomination 'About a Principle, Not a Person'," NPR, (Washington, DC: National Public Radio, 2016), <https://www.nprillinois.org/post/mcconnell-blocking-supreme-court-nomination-about-principle-not-person#stream/0>.

across the board as a result of legislative gridlock, electoral system flaws, the influence of private money in elections, and Obama's failure to enhance the openness of the government.<sup>135</sup> The Republican decision in Congress to abnegate its responsibility to legislate and opt to obstruct Obama's agenda in return for gaining political power directly correlates to this downward trend in American democracy. Choosing the path of winning elections over fulfilling the duties prescribed in the Constitution charted a course for the Republican party where executing the powers of their office to govern would result in abject defeat.

Since the 1980s, democracy in the United States has gradually been decaying. Republicans have depleted the mutual toleration present prior to the 1980s. Beginning in 1990s, Republicans began to turn their political power against their political opponents to hobble them and this was only exacerbated during the Obama presidency. Throughout the last couple decades, the US has also witnessed a decay of institutional forbearance as Republicans opted to utilize their political power in unprecedented ways, such as the refusal by McConnell in 2016 to consider Obama's Supreme Court nominee. Democracy in the United States has become infused with a political discourse comprised of many of the ways democracy falters as exemplified by Peru, Hungary, and Turkey.

In order to retain and expand power beyond 2016, Republicans had to continue developing this broader emphasis on authoritarian tendencies and on a refusal to compromise regardless of cost.<sup>136</sup> As a result, the decay of American democracy during the Trump presidency has only intensified. The further decay of American democracy under Trump will be discussed in chapter

---

<sup>135</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2016*, (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2016), [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Freedom\\_in\\_the\\_World\\_2016\\_complete\\_book.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Freedom_in_the_World_2016_complete_book.pdf); Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2019- United States*, (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2019), <https://freedomhouse.org/country/united-states/freedom-world/2019>.

<sup>136</sup> Amanda Taub, "The Rise of American Authoritarianism," *Vox News*, (New York: Vox Media, LLC., 2016), <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>.

four along with how this is allowing Trump to securitize the environment along similar lines as other contemporary authoritarians. In order to conduct this analysis, the thesis will now transition to discussing how contemporary authoritarians securitize the environment and how exactly they are capable of doing so.

## **Chapter III: How Contemporary Authoritarians Secure the Environment**

Through disregarding democratic principles – mutual toleration and institutional forbearance – and the process by which political actors with authoritarian tendencies begin altering democracy – capturing referees, altering the rules of the game, and attacking opponents – authoritarians gradually decay democracy. Gradualism serves a unique purpose for authoritarians. By taking action against the traditional functioning of the system or recognizably egregious authoritarian actions gradually, these actions become inculcated in how democracy functions. On a fundamental level, this gradual process is dangerous to democracy because although each step is recognized as presenting a certain danger, it happens so gradually it never fully appears as threatening.<sup>137</sup> Every authoritarian tendency acted upon is done separate of the others. By the time another step is taken, the previous action is entrenched in how the system functions. Certain authoritarian actions become part of the status quo manufacturing an illusion of politics as usual.

Gradually decaying democracy allows authoritarians to consolidate power. Consolidation of power through gradual decay allows authoritarians to implement short-term policy solutions. In a functioning democracy, opposition could take grievances to referees or utilize the rules governing democracy as recourse. However, in contemporary authoritarian states, these avenues are controlled, not always entirely, by the very individuals being challenged. Thus, the pathway to successfully combating contemporary authoritarians can be challenging.

---

<sup>137</sup>Frank Trommler, "Between Normality and Resistance: Catastrophic Gradualism in Nazi Germany," *The Journal of Modern History* 64 (1992): 82-101, (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1992), [www.jstor.org/stable/2124970](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2124970), 92.

A perfect example of short-term policy solutions arises from Fujimori. Throughout his decade in power Peru's government sold around 220 state enterprises in privatization efforts designed to salvage the Peruvian economy. One enterprise, the Condestable copper mine, was auctioned off in 1992 for two-thirds its assessed value despite being among the few profitable mining operations owned by the state.<sup>138</sup> The wave of privatization in Peru was driven by opinion polls indicating widespread support for privatization and removing state bureaucracy from economic functions, so Fujimori and his advisers determined this approach to be both necessary and capable of providing renewed legitimacy to the state.<sup>139</sup> However, these privatization efforts only managed to net some short-term monetary benefits. Thus, there was not substantial long-term advantage to divesting from public assets.<sup>140</sup>

Privatization was one aspect of Fujimori's efforts to stabilize the economy, draw in foreign creditors, and fund development. Of these public sector sales – estimated at around 9.2 billion USD – only 6.4 billion USD made it into the treasury.<sup>141</sup> The amount that did make it into the treasury was utilized by the state chiefly as payment of foreign debts, military spending, and to fund Fujimori's perpetual campaigning.<sup>142</sup> The money acquired from these efforts yielded no long-term benefit for ordinary Peruvians, only those in power or in the business sector.

While privatization gave Fujimori sufficient funding to campaign on and do the basic work necessary to retain power permanently, this utilization of funds did nothing to further secure the marginalized groups in the country that secured his election. As a result, Fujimori began

---

<sup>138</sup>Bruce H. Kay, "'Fujipopulism' and the Liberal State in Peru, 1990-1995," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 38, no. 4 (1996): 55-98, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/166259>, 63.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>141</sup>Nick Caistor and Susana Villarán, "Privatization and Corruption," in *Picking up the Pieces: Corruption and Democracy in Peru*, 31-45, (London Latin American Bureau, 2006), [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1hj57dd.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1hj57dd.7), 36.

<sup>142</sup> Caistor and Villarán, "Privatization and Corruption," 36.



championing social programs in order to secure the votes of these groups. His social program was necessarily expansive – including new schools, community kitchens, roads, electricity schemes, etc. – with the stated goal being to “reduce” poverty, but the underlying goal of these efforts was to implement projects in parts of the country that would win votes.<sup>143</sup> Again, similar to privatization, these social programs were designed only for the short-term. There was no long-term strategy to maintain these programs. Once privatization ended and the economy contracted, funding for these programs was drastically reduced or outright eliminated.<sup>144</sup> By this point, they had largely served their purpose with Fujimori being secured in his presidency.

The case of Peru serves as a principal case of general short-termism within contemporary authoritarianism. How contemporary authoritarianism implements environmental security strategies follows a similar short-term strategy. Contemporary authoritarians can be held accountable and resort to environmental security strategies designed to hold power over the short-term with limited regard for long-term environmental consequences. Contemporary authoritarians may make concessions to environmental groups and seek to develop somewhat long-term environmental security strategies when these concessions do not harm short-term interests. However, if their short-term interests – chiefly economic security – could be harmed, they will resort to environmental security measures based in the short-term as discussed in chapter one. This short-term environmental security strategy is endemic to contemporary authoritarians as the cases of Russia and Brazil will demonstrate. In contrast, when examining environmental security in the US from Clinton to Obama at the end of this chapter, there was relative stability with long-term considerations. As a result, when discussing the further decay of America’s democracy alongside

---

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>144</sup> Steve Ellner, "The Contrasting Variants of the Populism of Hugo Chávez and Alberto Fujimori," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35, no. 1 (2003): 139-62, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), [www.jstor.org/stable/3875581](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3875581), 152.

Trump's environmental security strategy in chapter four, it should be clear how Trump has strayed away from the long-term considerations of his predecessors and has opted to implement a strategy more in line with his contemporary authoritarian counterparts.

In Russia, Vladimir Putin rose through politics in 1999 when Yeltsin appointed him prime minister. Putin's ascendancy to the presidency was a product of well-timed political maneuvering. Yeltsin resigned at the end of 1999 making Putin acting president and required the presidential election scheduled for June to be changed to March which left potential opponents disarrayed.<sup>145</sup> Additionally by this time, Russia's economy had finally been salvaged giving the incumbent an increase in popularity despite Putin not having significant involvement in this stabilization.<sup>146</sup> The timing of Yeltsin's resignation and the economic stabilization resulted in Putin winning the presidency.

Putin moved quickly to consolidate power. By the end of 2001, parliament had shifted to a legislature controlled by Putin's party, United Russia, resulting in a legislature whereby opposition was virtually incapacitated and stripped of influence.<sup>147</sup> From this, Putin made the legislature an extension of the executive which could also provide him with the pretense of democracy. Putin's consolidation efforts allowed the state to reassert some control of the economy. Reasserting control afforded the state the opportunity to nationalize crucial economic sectors, such as energy, and to tighten control over the gas monopoly, Gazprom.<sup>148</sup> Following this nationalization process, Putin was in a position to influence environmental security in Russia. The

---

<sup>145</sup>Timothy J. Colton and Henry E. Hale, "The Putin Vote: Presidential Electorates in a Hybrid Regime," *Slavic Review* 68, no. 3 (2009): 473-503, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), [www.jstor.org/stable/25621652](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25621652), 477-78.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, 478.

<sup>147</sup>Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Evolution of Post-Soviet Competitive Authoritarianism," in *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, 183-235, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511781353, 197.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid*, 197.

consolidation of power and control over many of the state's polluting industries meant Putin was in a position to either implement sustainable environmental practices or continue with degrading the environment.

Putin was never overly committed to the environment. During his time in power, energy sector production has expanded to around 11% higher than it was towards the end of the Soviet Union.<sup>149</sup> Stabilization of the economy initiated remarkable growth, but this growth creates long-term consequences for the economy and state. Global focus regarding economic stability has steadily shifted towards viewing sustainability as the prospective future of economic growth and development.<sup>150</sup> For a state where non-renewable energy production accounted for 25% of the GDP, 39% of the federal budget revenues, 65% of foreign earnings from exports, and 25% of investments in the economy in 2017, the shift towards a more sustainable future should be cause for concern.<sup>151</sup> The sustainability of the Russian economy is based on the energy sector. Consequently, Russia faces the same dilemma all countries relying heavily on energy exports for economic growth and stability are: either transition away from non-renewable energy production and create economic challenges or continue with present economic growth and overall economic security.<sup>152</sup> The choice comes down to choosing a long-term transition strategy entailing future long-term economic stability or choosing a short-term strategy with short-term economic incentives and security.

Putin has opted for the short-term. With the economy's dependence on the energy sector to sustain it, this short-term approach makes sense for a competitive authoritarian state. Currently,

---

<sup>149</sup> "Russia," *International Energy Agency*, (Paris: International Energy Agency, 2020), <https://www.iea.org/countries/Russia>.

<sup>150</sup> Tatiana Mitrova and Yuriy Melnikov, "Energy Transition in Russia.," *Energy Transit*, no. 3 (2019): 73-80, (Berlin: Springer, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41825-019-00016-8>, 74.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid*, 74.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*, 74.

Russia is the second largest gas and third largest oil producer in the world with each accounting for 17% and 12% of global output, respectively.<sup>153</sup> Additionally, gas and oil exports both grew in 2018.<sup>154</sup> Transitioning away from these profitable sectors would likely have detrimental implications for the national economy and the state. By 2017, there were 288 oil companies conducting extraction operations in Russia.<sup>155</sup> If Putin opted for a long-term strategy necessitating the closing of many of these operations, the result would be a rise in unemployment, erosion of economic stability, and significant loss of state revenue. Certainly, the environmental security of the state would improve, but economic security would be hindered. Thus, transitioning creates a situation where Putin could face rising opposition and be ousted from power due to the loss of public support. For Putin's power aspirations and need to sustain economic growth, maintaining the current economic situation is desirable compared to being committed to a long-term environmental security strategy whereby economic security would suffer briefly.

Putin has taken some action involving the environment. Not an overly effective environmental security approach in preventing environmental degradation – especially as the Russians expand further into and continue developing the Arctic for economic gain which will have detrimental impacts on the environment<sup>156</sup> – but measurable progress from viewing the environment as entirely un-constraining. Putin has spoken out against an increase in the process

---

<sup>153</sup> “BP Statistical Review- 2019: Russia’s Energy Market in 2018,” *BP Energy Economic*, (London: BP p.l.c., 2019), <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-russia-insights.pdf>.

<sup>154</sup>“BP Statistical Review- 2019: Russia’s Energy Market in 2018.”

<sup>155</sup>“Fossil Fuel Support Country Note: Russia,” *Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development*, (Paris: OECD, 2020), <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiA5qaC7OPqAhWPqqQKHew0A88QFjABegQIBRAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fstats.oecd.org%2Fwbos%2Ffileview2.aspx%3FIDFile%3D09aac246-c7ef-4159-898e-2a287deb3341%2520%2520&usg=AOvVaw0jK-UYYWM8uIrigHzzeohoj>.

<sup>156</sup>Ekaterina Klimenko, “Russia’s Arctic Aspirations,” in *Russia’s Arctic Security Policy: Still Quiet in the High North?*, 3-12, Report, (Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2016), [www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19179.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19179.7).

of fracking around the globe as it has detrimental consequences for the environment, and he has argued the process turns water in the vicinity black.<sup>157</sup> In 2019, Russia finally ended a three year effort to officially become party to the Paris climate agreement.<sup>158</sup> The state has also produced a plan stating climate change poses a risk to public health, endangers vital permafrost, increases likelihood of infections, and leads to natural disasters with the expressed intent of preparing the economy and population for the effects of climate change.<sup>159</sup> These developments are, on the surface, a positive advancement of environmental security away from a Cornucopian approach, but the underlying motivation has less to do with the environment than it does economic interests.

In reality, these steps were not taken out of concern for the long-term environmental consequences. These steps reflect a short-term determination where deploying environmental rhetoric and agreeing to the bare minimum to prevent environmental collapse will secure Putin's interests. When Putin spoke out against fracking, his biggest concern was not potential environmental hazards, but that nations allowing the process would eventually be capable of producing enough natural gas to destabilize the Russian monopoly, and, as a result, trigger a revision of export rules, increase the supply, and reduce the price.<sup>160</sup> His concern resided solely with how the process would adversely affect the economy. Significant price reduction of natural gas or nations having options available could impair Russia's energy sector causing problems in the state.

---

<sup>157</sup>Herbert London, "Putin the Environmentalist," *The Hill*, (Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2015), <https://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/energy-environment/244373-putin-the-environmentalist>.

<sup>158</sup> Leonid Bershidsky, "Even Putin is Now Worried About Climate Change," *Bloomberg*, (New York: Bloomberg News, 2019), <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-09-24/putin-is-finally-worried-about-climate-change>.

<sup>159</sup>Agence France-Presse, "Russia Announces Plan to 'Use the Advantages' of Climate Change," *The Guardian*, (London: Guardian News & Media Limited, 2020), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/05/russia-announces-plan-to-use-the-advantages-of-climate-change>.

<sup>160</sup>London, "Putin the Environmentalist."

Joining the Paris agreement was done out of similar concern. Russia is dependent on non-renewable resource extraction, and the European Union is the state's largest export market.<sup>161</sup> The EU's intent to lower emissions and transition to new energy sources could severely slow economic growth in Russia. Agreeing to the stipulations in the Paris agreement allows Russia to demonstrate commitment to international environmental goals providing some leverage in getting the EU to continue being a major export market for natural gas and oil from Russia for the time being. Additionally, following the collapse of the Soviet Union's environmentally destructive industry, Russia's emissions dropped significantly, and the state is estimated to meet, if not exceed, the required target for emissions in the Paris agreement before the target date.<sup>162</sup> Consequently, the agreement requires little implementation efforts for Russia. Thus, Russia can have the benefit of partaking in the Paris agreement and having states more willing to import energy from them, while not needing to fundamentally alter the state economy in the moment.

The plan released by Russia on climate change discusses fully how the state will seek to securitize the nation from a changing environment. Similar to other proposals and successions to environmental regimes, this plan centers primarily around the economy. Including the endangerment climate change poses to permafrost is extremely important as permafrost is vital to Russia's economic interests. Northern Russia is the location of the state's oil and gas development and production, and these industries exist in an area where a warming climate will drastically alter the permafrost making it difficult to continue economic activity in the region.<sup>163</sup> The infrastructure

---

<sup>161</sup>Bershidsky, "Even Putin is Now Worried About Climate Change."

<sup>162</sup>Bershidsky, "Even Putin is Now Worried About Climate Change"; United Nations Environmental Programme, *Emissions Gap Report 2019*, (Nairobi: United Nations Environment Programme, 2019), <https://www.unenvironment.org/interactive/emissions-gap-report/2019/>.

<sup>163</sup>Julian Lee, "Why Vladimir Putin Suddenly Believes in Global Warming," *Bloomberg*, (Washington, DC: Bloomberg, News, 2019), <https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/why-vladimir-putin-suddenly-believes-in-global-warming-1.1323657>.

in the region is susceptible to collapse as permafrost thaws due to warming.<sup>164</sup> As a result, it is essential to Russia's continued economic growth to implement an environmental security strategy with the expressed intent to prevent or slow permafrost from thawing to the extent the oil and gas industry halts.

Russia's environmental security strategy is not particularly concerned with the environment, but with preserving economic security. In essence, the approach is to continue economic growth through the extraction of natural resources before ultimately prioritizing the environment once the state has acquired "necessary" wealth.<sup>165</sup> On one hand, increasing the state's wealth could allow the state to transition to a more sustainable economy while managing to reduce the impacts this transition would have on the population. However, this does nothing to combat the reality that environmental problems are a real and present danger. Where there are environmental protections proposed it is tied directly to economic interest related to sustaining the current makeup of the economy, as with the need to preserve the permafrost. It is fundamentally Cornucopian and short-term. Stabilize the state for the moment to retain power and when the time comes the state will work to prevent further environmental degradation. By the time the state decides to solve environmental problems, the economy may have created the required solutions. It is simultaneously saying that Russia recognizes the constraints of the environment but is opting to allow the economy to function at the highest capacity until it potentially develops solutions.

Short-term environmental security strategy in favor of economic security is not only present when examining Putin's approach in Russia. As discussed previously, it is endemic to contemporary authoritarians. Therefore, it should be expected that various contemporary

---

<sup>164</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup>Joseph F. Dresen, "Economic Growth and Environmental Security in Russia," *The Wilson Center*, (Washington, DC: The Wilson Center, 2020), <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/economic-growth-and-environmental-security-russia>.

authoritarians would adopt a similar approach as Putin. With Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, this is certainly the case.

Jair Bolsonaro is more brazen in terms of expressing authoritarian tendencies. Before he ascended to the presidency, Bolsonaro was a relatively unsuccessful political actor. In the late 1980s, he was forced to retire from the army following his threat to bomb army barracks until salary increases were obtained.<sup>166</sup> After his exit from military service, he would spend 27 years in Congress where he would accomplish little apart from deploying controversial and aggressive rhetoric – only one of the 150 bills he presented ultimately passed.<sup>167</sup> His political career would have been a story of abject failure if it were not for rampant unemployment and corruption scandals. The political reality in Brazil manufactured prime conditions for a political actor to exploit national fears of gun violence, crime, unemployment, etc. to inculcate the necessity of a more authoritarian approach to governance, and Bolsonaro primed his entire campaign to utilize this strategy.<sup>168</sup> Bolsonaro's authoritarian tendencies were on full display throughout the campaign and have become more apparent in office.

Bolsonaro has spent his political career revering Brazil's military dictatorship going as far as outright attacking Brazil's democratic institutions. In November 2019, it was suggested by Bolsonaro's economic minister, Paulo Guedes, that the government would not hesitate to stifle unrest by invoking a new version of a law passed during the dictatorship allowing for congress to be closed and the suspension of constitutional rights.<sup>169</sup> Bolsonaro himself has attended a pro-

---

<sup>166</sup>Fabricao H. Chagas-Bastos, "Political Realignment in Brazil: Jair Bolsonaro and the Right Turn," *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, no. 69 (2019): 92- 100, (Bogotá: Universidad de Los Andes- Colombia, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.7440/res69.2019.08>.

<sup>167</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup>Raphael Tsavkko Garcia, "Bolsonaro is Laying the Foundations of a New Dictatorship," *Al Jazeera*, (Doha: Al Jazeera Media Network, 2019), <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/bolsonaro-laying-foundations-dictatorship-191209153455904.html>.



dictatorship rally, and, when questioned about his attacks on democracy, stated, “I am actually the constitution.”<sup>170</sup> These actions and sentiments are not surprising since Bolsonaro has been cited as saying the presidency was essentially a slave to the constitution.<sup>171</sup> Bolsonaro is not reserved about his contempt for democracy, and his disdain for democratic principles is on display when examining his environmental security approach.

Brazil has a disastrous record concerning the environment. The military dictatorship began to view the Amazon as a potential source for economic development, and the ensuing destruction brought from road and dam construction, cattle ranches, logging, and mining drew the ire of the international environmental movements of the day as a clear disregard for environmental concerns.<sup>172</sup> Following the collapse of the dictatorship and reestablishment of democracy in 1988, Brazil’s environmental approach remained committed to developing the Amazon over implementing stringent regulations. In the early 2000s, the Sustainable Amazon Plan (PAS) was established. PAS was designed to move development in the Amazon in the direction of sustainability while simultaneously increasing exports from the region, and the program excelled at increasing exports – from 55 billion USD in 2000 to 242 billion USD in 2013.<sup>173</sup> A sustainable program which increases exports is likely not entirely accomplishing its designed sustainability goal. Brazil has not been superb on environmental issues, but Brazil under Bolsonaro has experienced an exacerbation of the state’s preexisting environmental problems.

---

<sup>170</sup>Tom Phillips, “Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro Denounced for Joining Pro-Dictatorship Rally,” *The Guardian*, (London: Guardian News & Media Group, 2020), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/20/jair-bolsonaro-dictatorship-rally-protest-brazil-president-denounced>.

<sup>171</sup>Tom Daly, “Populism, Public Law, and Democratic Decay in Brazil: Understanding the Rise of Jair Bolsonaro,” *Law & Ethics of Human Rights*, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2019), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3350098>, 18-19.

<sup>172</sup> Candace Slater, “VISIONS OF THE AMAZON: What Has Shifted, What Persists, and Why This Matters,” *Latin American Research Review* 50, no. 3 (2015): 3-23, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015), [www.jstor.org/stable/43670307](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43670307), 6-7.

<sup>173</sup>William H. Fisher, “Victims of the Economic Miracle Forty Years Later: Brazil's Indigenous Lands in the Post-Earth Summit Era,” *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 44, no. 3/4 (2015): 197-260, (New York: The Institute, Inc., 2015), [www.jstor.org/stable/26384868](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26384868), 219-220.

One of Bolsonaro's first acts was to halt the demarcation of indigenous lands. The process of demarcation gives indigenous peoples legal titles to their land, and by ending the process, Bolsonaro effectively opened vast swaths of land for economic development. Legalizing commercial exploitation of natural resources invites encroachment on and deforestation of indigenous land.<sup>174</sup> Ending demarcation brings environmental consequences. The proposed mining and large-scale infrastructure projects require the construction of roads, which in turn fuels further deforestation and, simultaneously, grants increased access to the interior of the Amazon to illegal loggers and cattle ranchers.<sup>175</sup> This act indicates a desire to ignore environmental concerns in favor of the economic security such developments provide for the short-term.

He also took drastic action to ensure agriculture and livestock operations would have an easier time expanding. Funding for forest inspection and control agencies were drastically cut to curb effectiveness; agrochemicals and pesticide regulations were loosened to increase crop yields; and, the process of granted environmental licenses was made easier.<sup>176</sup> International demand for beef and agricultural goods has become a chief driver of deforestation in the Amazon. Beef linked to deforestation – over 17,400 hectares worth with China alone – is shipped to some major food corporations that then export these goods globally – the European Union imports around 600 million USD worth of Brazilian beef yearly.<sup>177</sup> Bolsonaro's campaign and presidency has centered around economic growth. Looking to expand and make the livestock and agricultural industries

---

<sup>174</sup>Maria L. Canineu and Andrea Carvalho, "Bolsonaro's Plan to Legalize Crimes Against Indigenous Peoples," *Human Rights Watch*, (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2020), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/01/bolsonaros-plan-legalize-crimes-against-indigenous-peoples#>.

<sup>175</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>176</sup>Eder Johnson Pereira, Luiz Ribeiro, Lucio de Silva Freitas, and Hernane Barros Pereira, "Brazilian Policy and Agribusiness Damage the Amazon Rainforest," *Land Use Policy* 92, (2020): 1-6, (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2020) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0264837719314899>, 1.

<sup>177</sup>Dom Phillips, Daniel Camargos, Andre Campos, Andrew Wasley, and Alexandra Heal, "Revealed: Rampant Deforestation of Amazon Driven by Global Greed for Meat," *The Guardian*, (London: Guardian News & Media Limited, 2019), <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/02/revealed-amazon-deforestation-driven-global-greed-meat-brazil>.

more profitable than fits into this agenda. These actions in the moment may work to make Bolsonaro more popular as he manages to keep his chief campaign promise, but the long-term environmental impacts of these actions could be disastrous for Brazil and the international community.

In 2019, Brazil had the worst levels of deforestation since 2008. A network of non-governmental organizations known as Brazil's Climate Observatory argued this was the fastest percentage of deforestation since the 1990s and the third all-time.<sup>178</sup> A key driver of this deforestation was the intentionally set fires to clear land for new ranches and farming in the Amazon.<sup>179</sup> Fires in the Amazon are naturally recurring during the Amazonian dry season. On its own, these fires would present a risk, but the state could maintain the blazes when necessary. What makes these fires different is that there were over seventy thousand in 2019 marking an 86% increase from the same dry season period in 2018, and the Brazilian government essentially consented to the expansion and utilization of these fires for economic development in the region.<sup>180</sup> Bolsonaro and his government opted to condone the process rather than stop it. Economic development is more important for Bolsonaro than ensuring the environment is not adversely harmed.

Bolsonaro has taken steps to ensure economic development is not hindered by the government. The new leadership he installed in Ibama – the agency responsible for protecting the Amazon – have reversed the steps taken to prevent illegal logging, farming, and mining in the

---

<sup>178</sup>“Brazil Amazon Deforestation Soars to 11-Year High Under Bolsonaro,” *Al Jazeera*, (Doha: Al Jazeera Media Network, 2019), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/brazil-amazon-deforestation-soars-11-year-high-bolsonaro-191118140604466.html>.

<sup>179</sup>John Lee Anderson, “At the U.N., Jair Bolsonaro Presents a Surreal Defense of His Amazon Policies,” *The New Yorker*, (New York: Condé Nast, 2019), <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/at-the-un-jair-bolsonaro-presents-a-surreal-defense-of-his-amazon-policies>.

<sup>180</sup>“Brazil Amazon Deforestation Soars to 11-Year High Under Bolsonaro”; Anderson, “At the U.N., Jair Bolsonaro Presents a Surreal Defense of His Amazon Policies.”

Amazon going so far as to issue new restrictions limiting the ability of field agents to destroy heavy equipment discovered at scenes of environmental crimes carried out by these illegal activities.<sup>181</sup> Additionally, Ibama's issuance of fines has fallen 29% since 2018 meaning environmental criminals are facing significantly less punishment than prior to Bolsonaro's presidency.<sup>182</sup>

Bolsonaro's environmental security strategy is to ensure economic security. It is short-term in nature. If economic security means letting the Amazon burn or letting illegal activities proceed unhindered, then it will be permitted. So long as the economic incentives to environmental degradation of the Amazon outweigh the long-term strategy necessary to implement sustainability, Bolsonaro's government will choose economic development. Following Bolsonaro's comments on the Amazon fires, international backlash and threats of economic consequences – including potential loss of a long-pending agreement between Mercosur which is dominated by Brazil and the EU – Bolsonaro dispatched troops to stop the spread of fires.<sup>183</sup> Removing economic incentives to destroying the Amazon then may very well be the only means to establish any sort of environmental security policy that takes long-term consequences of present activity into account. Bolsonaro's ability to retain economic security is derived from the short-term approach on the environment that treats environmental threats as a non-factor. In essence, it is cornucopian much like Russia's.

In contrast to the short-term environmental security approach found in Russia and Brazil, the United States from the Clinton administration to the Obama administration was not fundamentally short-term with the focus solely on economic security. Throughout the three

---

<sup>181</sup>Jake Spring and Stephen Eisenhammer, "Exclusive: As Fires Race Through Amazon, Brazil's Bolsonaro Weakens Environment Agency," *Reuters*, (London: Reuters, 2019), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-environment-ibama-exclusive/exclusive-as-fires-race-through-amazon-brazils-bolsonaro-weakens-environment-agency-idUSKCN1VI14I>.

<sup>182</sup> Spring and Eisenhammer, "Exclusive: As Fires Race Through Amazon, Brazil's Bolsonaro Weakens Environment Agency."

<sup>183</sup> Anderson, "At the U.N., Jair Bolsonaro Presents a Surreal Defense of His Amazon Policies."

presidencies in this era, there was often an emphasis on long-term environmental security strategy. This strategy was not always the most effective, but it was not one solely focused on economic security like those found in Russia and Brazil. Despite the ongoing decay of democracy in America during this time, the manner in which the US approached environmental security during this period was in direct contrast to that of contemporary authoritarian states and the approach opted for by Donald Trump.

Environmental security exits the periphery of the US' security concerns following the Cold War under Clinton. Without the evident danger of the Soviet Union to occupy what the US must securitize; Clinton was able to construct the security agenda on more unconventional security threats. Environmental issues then became a key focus of US national security and were a major piece of policy for the Clinton administration.

Transition to environmental security under Clinton occurred early in his presidency. Clinton on Earth Day 1993 said, "In an era of global economics, global pandemics, and global environmental hazards, a central challenge of our time is to promote our national interest in the context of its connectedness with the rest of the world. We share an atmosphere, our planet, our destiny with all the peoples of the world."<sup>184</sup> Clinton recognized early on the vital part environmental security would play in international politics moving forward, and he was arguing for the US to become a leader in addressing this new security threat. It was essential for the US to assume a leading role in protecting the environment.

---

<sup>184</sup>Gerald B. Thomas, "U.S. Environmental Security Policy: Broad Concern or Narrow Interests," *The Journal of Environment & Development* 6, no. 4 (1997): 397-425, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 1997), [www.jstor.org/stable/44319288](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44319288), 405; William J. Clinton, Remarks on Earth Day, Quoted in *The Woodrow Wilson Center Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Spring 1995, (Washington, DC: The Wilson Center, 1995), 50.

National Security Strategy (NSS) briefs from the Clinton presidency highlight the emphasis the administration was placing on environmental security as national and global security. The preface of the 1996 NSS references in the opening paragraph that “large-scale environmental degradation, exacerbated by rapid population growth, threatens to undermine political stability in many countries and regions.”<sup>185</sup> This NSS also mentioned transnational and natural resource issues – chiefly the instability of these resource bases – as rapidly becoming security risks in the near future.<sup>186</sup>

The administration’s 2000 NSS devoted an entire section to the notion of sustainable development as the future of international social and economic progress. The brief states progress must be sustainable and meet the human and environmental needs to ensure long-term growth.<sup>187</sup> Pollution, environmental degradation, and unsustainable resource exploitation are noted as being key impediments to this sustainable future.<sup>188</sup> While the NSS is what the US will promote as part of its national security agenda, the language utilized provides a serious tone to the implications of successfully implementing an environmental security strategy. The difference between the NSS in 1996 and 2000 also offers a look at how US environmental security transitioned in that four-year period from an expressly Malthusian view on environmental security threats to one recognizing the potential for the international community to promote and implement sustainable development as an alternative.

The Clinton administration also took decisive steps towards making the US more environmentally friendly. The Department of Defense – the largest polluter in the government –

---

<sup>185</sup>White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, (Washington, DC: White House, 1996), <https://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-1996/>.

<sup>186</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup>White House, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age*, (Washington, DC: White House, 2000), <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2000/>.

<sup>188</sup>*Ibid.*

increased its expenditures on meeting environmental regulations from \$1.4 billion in 1990 to just below \$5 billion by 1995 following the passage of the Federal Facilities Environmental Compliance Act which removed loopholes allowing defense activities to be excluded from environmental regulations.<sup>189</sup> Further, the Clinton administration began making programmatic changes that entailed deploying notions of dual-use and defense conversion to get some experimental projects and classified historical data collected by defense or intelligence operations into the hands of environmental researchers outside of the federal apparatus, such as the usage of the Integrated Undersea Surveillance System to track fishing vessels and their compliance with regulations.<sup>190</sup> These environmental security steps were not the only ones undertaken by the US during the 1990s – NAFTA had air and water pollution reductions built in and the US was essential to the Kyoto Protocol<sup>191</sup> – yet these were only the initial steps required to really establish a strong environmental security policy.

Bush's administration followed initiatives undertaken by Clinton, such as information disclosure as part of Toxic Release Inventory given to the EPA or the program for certifying organic foods.<sup>192</sup> Despite this, the administration perused policy with potential adverse effects on the environment. These policies typically sought to undermine the more sustainable approaches pushed during the end of the Clinton years and were initially successful.

One reversal of Clinton era environmental security policy undertaken by the Bush administration was the withdrawal of the US from the Kyoto Protocol. In announcing the withdrawal, Bush argued implementing the environmental measures outlined could cost the US

---

<sup>189</sup> Thomas, "U.S. Environmental Security Policy: Broad Concern or Narrow Interests," 406.

<sup>190</sup> Thomas, "U.S. Environmental Security Policy: Broad Concern or Narrow Interests," 408-9.

<sup>191</sup> White House, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, 1996; White House, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age*, 2000.

<sup>192</sup> Barton H. Thompson, "Conservative Environmental Thought: The Bush Administration and Environmental Policy," *Ecology Law Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2005): 307-47, (Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, 2005), [www.jstor.org/stable/24114452](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24114452), 333-34.

around 5 million jobs.<sup>193</sup> For Bush, this was the first indication of a slightly more Cornucopian approach than the sustainable development approach Clinton built to in the 1990s.

This was not the first indication of a more Cornucopian approach. On the campaign trail, Bush and Dick Cheney made it evident they would push for energy policy centered around increasing domestic production by proposing opening 1.5 million-acres of the Alaskan ANWR for oil drilling.<sup>194</sup> Thus, when the National Energy Policy Development Group was established in 2001 shortly after Bush was inaugurated, the administration was on its way to realizing some of these production goals.

The final report of the task force was delivered in May 2001. Surprisingly, there were market-based approaches in the report emphasizing the need of cap-and-trade emissions programs and tax credits for fuel-efficient cars; however, there was a recommendation to reduce or eliminate regulations related to exploration, coal burning, and the construction of pipelines and refineries going as far as to recommend expediting permits for new energy plant construction.<sup>195</sup> The Bush administration was clearly taking an environmental security approach with particular attention on the economy. The standout case of this approach came during the time when Cheney was in the initial phases of exploring market-based energy policies.

In 1999, the Clinton administration began enforcing a long-ignored EPA regulation requiring companies upgrading their facilities to install pollution controls. The EPA cited a total of 51 power plants with non-compliance related to this regulation in the final Clinton years

---

<sup>193</sup>Hugh Atkinson, "Climate Change and Environmental Policy in the US: Lessons in Political Action," in *The Challenge of Sustainability: Linking Politics, Education and Learning*, Ed. Atkinson Hugh and Wade Ros, 89-104, (Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, 2015), <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctt1t894qh.12>, 97.

<sup>194</sup>Meg Jacobs, "WREAKING HAVOC FROM WITHIN: George W. Bush's Energy Policy in Historical Perspective," in *The Presidency of George W. Bush: A First Historical Assessment*, Ed. Zelizer Julian E., 139-68, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctvc4m4h45.11>, 147.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid*, 154.



resulting in many of these being held up in court proceedings into the Bush administration.<sup>196</sup> With Bush and his advisors' ties to the energy sector, these companies had allies in the White House. Following a series of complaints from energy companies citing the danger this regulation posed to the nation's energy supply, the task force ordered a 90-day review of the regulation resulting in the legal cases being halted and the ultimate changing of this regulation to effectively kill it.<sup>197</sup> By changing this regulation, the Bush administration effectively made energy companies free to ignore environmental concerns and ensured new pollution controls would never take effect. In response, a career EPA enforcement lawyer said, "I don't know of anything like this in 30 years."<sup>198</sup> Within Bush's first year he clearly shifted away from Clinton's environmental security policy culminating in the 2005 passage of the Energy Policy Act providing tax incentives to boost production of fossil fuels.

While the Bush administration had initial success at implementing a more Cornucopian environmental security approach, there were major setbacks to this approach in later years. In 2006, the changes made to the EPA regulations governing pollution controls were overturned, and the Supreme Court a year later ruled the EPA had the authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>199</sup> The biggest blow to the Bush environmental security policy came in mid-2007 with the passage of the Energy Independence and Security Act. The act increased fuel efficiency standards for cars, trucks, and SUVs and included mandates for renewable fuel production.<sup>200</sup> Despite the efforts of the Bush administration to shift environmental security towards Cornucopian policies, the nature of American democracy kept more egregious policies in check.

---

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid*, 157.

<sup>197</sup> Jacobs, "WREAKING HAVOC FROM WITHIN: George W. Bush's Energy Policy in Historical Perspective," 159.

<sup>198</sup> Jacobs, "WREAKING HAVOC FROM WITHIN: George W. Bush's Energy Policy in Historical Perspective," 160.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*, 164.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid*, 164.

With the election of Barack Obama, it seemed as though the US would revert to the environmental security path initiated by Clinton with emphasis on sustainability and the increasing threat of climate change. Within the first week, the Obama White House released the New Energy for America plan setting a target of an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and outlined a plan to invest \$150 billion in the new green economy estimated to generate around 5 million new jobs has investment in these new industries expanded over a 10-year period.<sup>201</sup> Obama recognized the path the US was on – reliance on fossil fuels and increasing production of non-renewable energy – would likely result in increased environmental degradation and destabilization of the nation’s economy. In 2011, the White House referred to US clean energy production as “winning the future.”<sup>202</sup> The administration was charting a course to transition the US towards an economy based on sustainable development and treating environmental issues as serious security threats.

A clear indication of the desire of Obama to begin the transition to sustainability and actively fighting climate change comes in mid-2009 when addressing the National Academy of the Sciences. Obama would make clear in his address that his proposed budget would make the research and experimentation tax credit a permanent fixture on the grounds the credit made it “possible for businesses to plan the kinds of projects that create jobs and economic growth.”<sup>203</sup> The credit was designed to fuel the production of new ideas, technologies, and products. By making the tax credit a permanent part of the national budget, the administration was aiming to spur the sort of advancements necessary to successfully transition to sustainability and fight climate change. Rather than focusing on a Cornucopian approach similar to the Bush

---

<sup>201</sup> Atkinson, "Climate Change and Environmental Policy in the US: Lessons in Political Action," 99.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*, 99.

<sup>203</sup> Barack Obama, "What Science Can Do," *Issues in Science and Technology* 25, no. 4 (2009): 23-30, )Dallas: University of Texas at Dallas, 2009), [www.jstor.org/stable/43314908](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43314908), 26.

administration that would leave it to producers to implement advancements to solve environmental problems, Obama was seeking to actively steer the economy in that direction.

Ultimately, Obama's rhetoric on environmental issues and proposed policies hit a roadblock in Congress as party polarization increased making legislation difficult to accomplish. As a result, Obama turned to executive orders to implement his environmental policies. He would put in place more rigorous standards for energy efficiency in appliances, vehicles, and new power plants with the fuel efficiency standards implemented for the auto industry requiring more than doubling the previous gas mileage.<sup>204</sup> Obama also issued executive orders to require the EPA to establish his Clean Power Plan aimed at substantially reducing carbon emissions stemming from powerplants and create a Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience.<sup>205</sup> Obama's executive action indicated a commitment to doing what he could with executive power in order to accomplish his environmental agenda. Certain actions taken by the Obama administration demonstrate that while Obama was taking positive steps, he was simultaneously taking action directly harming the environment.

Under the Obama administration, the environmentally hazardous process of fracking expanded exponentially. Despite Obama's stated commitment to transitioning the US to renewable resource usage, he essentially welcomed the natural gas boom in the US – created as a result of the fracking of shale gas – as a transitional fuel.<sup>206</sup> Due to the rise of fracking, gas and oil drilling began to expand, and this expansion could have detrimental implications long-term.<sup>207</sup> Obama may

---

<sup>204</sup>Meg Jacobs, "Obama's Fight against Global Warming," in *The Presidency of Barack Obama: A First Historical Assessment*, Ed. Zelizer Julian E., 62-77, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctvc777dh.9>, 69.

<sup>205</sup>Atkinson, "Climate Change and Environmental Policy in the US: Lessons in Political Action," 100; Jacobs, "Obama's Fight against Global Warming," 73.

<sup>206</sup>Atkinson, "Climate Change and Environmental Policy in the US: Lessons in Political Action," 100.

<sup>207</sup>*Ibid*, 100.

have been arguing for the need to transition the US away from non-renewable resources, but his actions indicate there were times where the economy outweighed environmental concerns.

Obama allowed for the expansion of fracking as a practice in the US, but he showed greater concern regarding the proposed Keystone XL pipeline that was going to transport oil from Canada to oil refineries in the Gulf of Mexico. Following a protest in front of the White House in 2011, Obama announced he would delay his decision on the pipeline until after the 2012 election, and he would continue to delay the decision until rejecting the proposal in 2015.<sup>208</sup> Obama partially rectified his persona as a president deeply concerned with the threat environmental issues present to US national security, but he did not achieve the heights he himself argued for in 2009.

By the time Obama left office, the US was the greatest producer of oil and had become a massive exporter of coal while simultaneously emissions in the US fell due to the economic recession of 2008.<sup>209</sup> However, what makes the approach from Clinton to Obama different than Russia or Brazil then is not that the US never emphasizes economic concerns over the environmental, but the US has been willing to take environmental action without recognizable short-term economic gain. As a result, the US environmental security strategy has featured long-term environmental security concerns in a relatively stable fashion where the strategy in contemporary authoritarian states does not. For example, even though the Bush administration attempted to transition to a more Cornucopian approach, Bush still passed the Energy Independence and Security Act mandating the energy sector in part look to renewable energy sources as opposed to fossil fuels. A Cornucopian response would have meant Bush vetoes this bill as it stipulates the US government is requiring business to forgo economic growth to transition, even if only slightly, away from nonrenewable resources. The US environmental security policy

---

<sup>208</sup>Jacobs, "Obama's Fight against Global Warming," 71-4.

<sup>209</sup>*Ibid*, 76.

from Clinton to Obama certainly was not the most effective at getting the US to think solely in the long-term, but there is evidence some of the policies ignored short-term growth in favor of preserving the environment. This relative stability remained even through the political party of the president changed, which makes President Trump's departure from this normalcy all the more alarming as will be discussed in-depth in chapter four.

## **Chapter IV: The Triumph of Trump’s Brand of Authoritarianism and Subsequent Environmental Security Strategy**

Donald Trump is a product of the contemporary American political discourse. More than just being a product of this distinctive era in American political discourse, Donald Trump is the product of the far-right shift following the election of America’s first Black president Barack Obama. Donald Trump did not manage to simply descend down an escalator and a year later become the Republican nominee for president. The turmoil encapsulated in American Democracy following 2008 correlates to how the United States reached its contemporary authoritarian moment. Once the “beacon on the hill” in regard to the development of the global democratic society, the US has elected an individual with various authoritarian tendencies to its highest office. Donald Trump’s type of authoritarianism will be discussed in this chapter alongside the further decay of democracy throughout his tenure to fully comprehend how exactly he is capable of altering US environmental security strategy so drastically. The final portion of the chapter will then examine the subsequent environmental security strategy that stems from this authoritarian approach to completely tie together what has been discussed in chapters two and three.

Donald Trump demonstrated all four identifiers for an authoritarian outlined by Levitsky and Ziblatt during the 2016 campaign. He showcased a profoundly weak commitment to the democratic rules of the game when he indicated his belief that there was large scale voter fraud occurring before election day without proof or the various times he signaled he may not accept the results of the election should it result in his defeat.<sup>210</sup> When it came to denying the legitimacy of

---

<sup>210</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 62; Jeremy Diamond, “Trump ‘I’m Afraid the Election’s Going to be Rigged’,” CNN, (Atlanta: Cable News Network, 2016), <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/08/01/politics/donald-trump-election-2016-rigged/index.html>; “U.S. Election 2016: Trump Says Election ‘Rigged at Polling Places’,”

his opponents, Trump was egregious. For starters, he was a “birther” from the early days of the movement claiming President Obama was not an American.<sup>211</sup> On the campaign trail, he became even more blatant in his abhorrent attacks on his opponents when he arraigned Hillary Clinton for being a “criminal” and stated she “has to go to jail.”<sup>212</sup> In a functioning democracy where political parties were committed to maintaining democratic principles, these attacks would have been enough to disqualify Trump from winning the nomination. Yet, Trump’s authoritarian behavior would only be cultivated further as a result of insignificant backlash and Republican commitment to winning power.

Trump’s support of violence against opposition was unprecedented. In fact, no major-party candidate over the last century has endorsed violence besides Trump.<sup>213</sup> When discussing protestors on the campaign, Trump advocated for violence going as far as telling his supporters to “knock the crap out of them” or stating protestors in the old days “would be carried out on stretchers”, and he would add that he was willing to defend supporters in court.<sup>214</sup> At a rally in August, Trump even hinted that to prevent Clinton from making a Supreme Court nomination perhaps his supporters would have to resort to the Second Amendment.<sup>215</sup> However, encouraging violence and denying the legitimacy of opponents was only the beginning of his authoritarian approach to opposition.

---

BBC, (London: The BBC, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-37673797>; Loraine C. Minnite, *The Myth of Voter Fraud*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010).

<sup>211</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 62.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*, 62; Lisa Hagen, “Trump: Clinton ‘Has to Go to Jail’,” *The Hill*, (Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2016), <https://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/presidential-races/300709-trump-clinton-has-to-go-to-jail>.

<sup>213</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 62.

<sup>214</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 63.

<sup>215</sup> “Donald Trump Suggests ‘Second Amendment People’ Could Act Against Hillary Clinton,” *New York Times*, (New York: The New York Times Company, 2016), <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/us/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton.html>.

The final authoritarian identifier for Trump was his enthusiasm for curtailing the civil liberties of opposition. Not only did Trump state Hillary Clinton belonged in prison for her supposed crimes, but he went so far as saying he would appoint a special prosecutor to investigate her to ensure it happens.<sup>216</sup> His lambasting of civil liberties did not end there. Trump's primary target of these attacks – as it has remained during his presidency – was media he deemed antagonistic. At rallies, Trump told supporters the media responsible for criticizing him would “have such problems” should he be elected and would in another incident state that media was “amongst the most dishonest groups of people I’ve ever met.”<sup>217</sup> For any democratic society, these authoritarian tendencies should have been flashing warning signs that this particular political actor was unfit and too dangerous to serve in public office. For Republicans in the US, these were not literal sentiments espoused by Trump but merely words.<sup>218</sup> As a result of establishment Republicans needing to court Trump oriented voters to retain power, Republicans have further subverted the norms of democracy, and made it possible for Trump to act as a contemporary authoritarian in regard to the environment.

Throughout 2017 and 2018, Republicans controlled Congress and legislated in a traditional congressional routine; however, following the 2018 elections where Democrats managed to retake control over the House, legislative effectiveness dissipated. McConnell has promised to reject a progressive legislative agenda should Democrats regain control over Congress and the executive in 2020.<sup>219</sup> Again, in democratic society this should be concerning. A major political actor has

---

<sup>216</sup> Stephen Collinson, “Trump: Clinton ‘Has to Go to Jail’,” *CNN*, (Atlanta: Cable News Network, 2016), <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/10/12/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-podesta-emails/index.html>.

<sup>217</sup> Pamela Engel, “Donald Trump Threatens to Rewrite Libel Laws to Make it Easier to Sue the Media,” *Business Insider*, (Hamburg: Axel Springer SE, 2016), <https://www.businessinsider.com/donald-trump-libel-laws-sue-media-2016-2?international=true&r=US&IR=T>.

<sup>218</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 60.

<sup>219</sup> Jordain Carney, “McConnell Pledges to be ‘Grim Reaper’ for Progressive Policies,” *The Hill*, (Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2019), <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/440041-mcconnell-pledges-to-be-grim-reaper-for-progressive-policies>.



committed to a dereliction of duty under the Constitution based on his view that the opposing side is not a legitimate source of power. Now, this action is already occurring as it has been with McConnell and Senate Republicans since 2009.

At the end of 2019, there were over 200 House-passed bills awaiting a Senate process. Of these bills, around 90% of them garnered bipartisan support.<sup>220</sup> Despite the broad support of these bills, they remain dead in the Senate because McConnell refuses to give his political opponents legislative “victories”. The intent of such measures is to paint Democrats as incapable of effectively executing governance powers. Nowhere was this more evident than at the height of impeachment in late 2019 when Republicans began claiming the reason bills and legislative processes were stalled directly correlated with Democrats’ “impeachment obsessions”.<sup>221</sup> Regardless of the dubious nature of these claims, there are over 200 bills passed in the House awaiting the Senate process, but the goal of McConnell is to win and to win it is necessary to redirect blame for ineffectiveness.

The actions of the Senate following 2018 may have further decayed American democracy on their own, but, outside of Congress, the congressional abdication of power by Republicans has resulted in Trump being capable of exercising expansive executive authority and privilege without sufficient congressional oversight. In general, the Trump administration has consistently made policy decisions without properly consulting relevant agencies and career civil servants responsible for coordinating the policy; removed information from government websites deemed contradictory to the administration’s agenda; has denied access to the White House visitor logs;

---

<sup>220</sup> Aris Folley, “McCaskill: ‘Mitch McConnell has Presided Over Absolutely Destroying Senate Norms,’” *The Hill*, (Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2019), <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/475711-mccaskill-mitch-mcconnell-has-presided-over-absolutely-destroying-senate>.

<sup>221</sup> Folley, “McCaskill: ‘Mitch McConnell has Presided Over Absolutely Destroying Senate Norms.’”

and has abstained from the presidential precedent of releasing tax records.<sup>222</sup> Trump has also resorted to utilizing the presidential pardon in a politicized manner and went as far as indicating he would be willing to deploy the pardon power to provide protection to himself and his political allies should they be implicated during Robert Mueller’s investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.<sup>223</sup> By themselves, these realities in the US should be of deep concern, but the situation is more extensive than just these actions.

Senate Republicans and Trump are directly linked to one of the most expansive attempts to capture the referees in US history. As a result of Senate Republicans refusing to begin the process for judicial nominations in the final Obama years, there were a substantial number of vacancies for Trump to fill. By the end of 2018, Trump filled 83 federal appellate and district court vacancies – a record in the modern era – meaning one in six federal appeals court judges were Trump appointees.<sup>224</sup> Since 2018, the number of appointees has likely expanded making America’s federal court system abnormally skewed to advantage conservatives. Stealing court appointees because one party refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of its opponent is dangerous for democracy, and it allows Trump to further disregard checks on his power.

Trump’s attempts to impede the investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election offers an early indication of Trump’s authoritarian tendencies and democratic decay. Following Trump’s inauguration, he held a meeting with then FBI director James Comey in which he told Comey he wanted loyalty from him as FBI director, but Comey only responded with a promise to be honest with the President.<sup>225</sup> What these events indicate is that Trump desired early on for the

---

<sup>222</sup> Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2019- United States*, (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2019), <https://freedomhouse.org/country/united-states/freedom-world/2019>.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> George Packer, “The President is Winning His War on American Institutions,” *The Atlantic*, (Washington, DC: The Atlantic Monthly Group, 2020), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/04/how-to-destroy-a-government/606793/>.

FBI to be a political tool, not an independent institution as it traditionally has. Securing the FBI's loyalty could result in expansive investigations into Clinton or other political opponents, undermine the Russia investigation, and potentially absolve his allies. Trump's attempts to meet this goal did not end with the FBI; rather, they developed further once Bill Barr became Attorney General.

Barr is an advocate of the unitary executive theory arguing the power of the executive in the Constitution entails jurisdiction over all aspects of the executive branch. In an 18-page memo on the Mueller probe before becoming attorney general, Barr argued obstruction of justice was limited to specific instances, such as destroying evidence, that a president has "complete authority to start or stop a law enforcement proceeding", and "Mueller should not be permitted to demand that the President submit to interrogation about alleged obstruction."<sup>226</sup> Barr argued contradictory points. Mueller could investigate and potentially charge Trump with obstruction if it was for destroying evidence or tampering with witnesses, but he could not "interrogate" Trump about alleged obstruction to discover if it met Barr's stringent guidelines. In essence, Trump cannot be investigated because his actions are based on firm constitutional grounds.

When the Mueller report was to be made public, Barr again acted in an unprecedented manner. Rather than allow the Mueller report to be released to the public, Barr would conduct a news conference beforehand. In the news conference, he would seek to defend the president from what was established in the report by mischaracterizing the findings going so far as attempting to explain Trump's illicit behavior by stating Trump was "frustrated and angered by his sincere belief that the investigation was undermining his presidency."<sup>227</sup> Again, Barr was arguing the actions of

---

<sup>226</sup>William Barr, *Memorandum on Mueller's "Obstruction" Theory*, (Washington, DC: Personal Office of Bill Barr, 2018), <https://www.lawfareblog.com/bill-barrs-very-strange-memo-obstruction-justice>.

<sup>227</sup> Eliana Johnson, "The Real Reason Bill Barr is Defending Trump," *Politico*, (Arlington County, VA: Politico LLC, 2019), <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/05/01/william-barr-donald-trump-mueller-report-1295273>.

the president were valid and even if there were illicit actions that took place, the president had good reason for conducting his campaign and administration in this manner. Barr believes the executive has expansive authority. The more alarming aspect of the news conference was that the Attorney General of the United States – long established as independent from the president – was acting in a manner regularly associated with personal attorneys. Opting to defend the president’s actions over letting the process play out as the attorney general should.

Barr’s defense of Trump’s actions is cause for concern in a democratic society. However, Barr’s statements in a speech to the Federalist Society in 2019 indicated just how politicized this particular attorney general is. In the speech, he derided Democrats for effectively withdrawing from the business of legislating and choosing to “drown the Executive Branch with ‘oversight’ demands for testimony and documents.”<sup>228</sup> An attorney general indicating in a speech that he is biased towards one political party is concerning. The position of attorney general entails acting apolitically. Deploying political rhetoric indicates an incapability of Barr to adjudicate in a manner separated from the personal desires of Trump and Republicans.

When you combine the sentiments and actions of Bill Barr, institutional decay within the Senate, the capturing of referees by Republicans, and the decline of mutual toleration within the political landscape, it is clear why Trump is able to act similar to those examples of contemporary authoritarianism found in Peru, Hungary, Turkey, Russia, and Brazil. As a result of all of this, there are fewer options of recourse for any opposition when Trump takes detrimental actions or indicates further authoritarian tendencies, specifically with his environmental security approach.

---

<sup>228</sup> William Barr, *Remarks at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Barbara L. Olson Memorial Lecture at the Federalist Society’s 2019 National Lawyers Convention*, (Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2019), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-william-p-barr-delivers-19th-annual-barbara-k-olson-memorial-lecture>.

Donald Trump is not committed to a long-term environmental security approach transitioning the US towards one centered around sustainability. At the World Economic Forum in Davos where sustainability was the main theme, Trump expressed his belief that environmental activists were “alarmists” seeking to “control every aspect of our lives”.<sup>229</sup> On the topic of climate change, Trump has expressed contradictory opinions. He has referred to climate change as “mythical”, “nonexistent”, and “an expensive hoax”, but he has also said it is a “serious subject” that he deems “very important”.<sup>230</sup> While his comments on climate change alone can be cause for confusion, Trump’s environmental security approach in office indicates exactly where he is on the matter.

When examining the only National Security Strategy to be released by Trump’s administration, it becomes clear the approach to the environment is opting to view the environment in a Cornucopian manner. In the NSS, the “environmental strategy” is encompassed under a section headlined with the title “Embrace Energy Dominance”. The section begins with the following: “For the first time in generations, the United States will be an energy-dominant nation.”<sup>231</sup> Following this, the report states that energy dominance refers to making US energy infrastructure resilient and secure before arguing that “unleashing these abundant energy sources” – coal, natural gas, petroleum, renewables, and nuclear – will effectively stimulate the economy and establish firm foundations for future economic growth.<sup>232</sup>

In becoming energy dominant, the US will seek to continue using and expanding the production of energy sources with detrimental implications for the environment. While the NSS

---

<sup>229</sup> Helier Cheung, “What Does Trump Actually Believe on Climate Change?,” *BBC News*, (London: The BBC, 2020), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-51213003>.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>231</sup> White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

does go on to state the US is “committed to supporting energy initiatives that will attract investments, safeguard the environment, strengthen the energy sector, and unlock enormous potential of the shared region”, the underlying principle enshrined in this is not environmental safeguards, but continuing to grow the economy.<sup>233</sup> Similar to all Cornucopian approaches, such as those in Russia and Brazil, the goal is to avoid any impediments to economic growth with the expressed belief that eventually the economy will self-regulate and manufacture the processes to safeguard the environment.

To ensure the US meets this goal of increased economic development and growth, Trump has rescinded regulations and signed executive orders to remove impediments. For starters, in June 2017, the Trump administration moved to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement indicating the US was likely to withdraw itself from international environmental leadership.<sup>234</sup> With this move, Trump effectively ensured the US would approach environmental security from an increasingly individualistic point of view. The stage for Trump to drastically alter the environmental security approach of the US free of any potential international influence was effectively set.

By August 2017, Trump would begin changing and revoking various policies. He started with revoking the Obama-era executive order requiring federally funded projects to factor rising sea levels into construction.<sup>235</sup> While a miniscule alteration for now, his other actions could prove far more detrimental sooner. Upon entering the White House, Trump set out to dismantle the Clean Power Plan that mandated power plants to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and the Trump EPA

---

<sup>233</sup>White House, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*.

<sup>234</sup> Sarah Gibbens, “15 Ways the Trump Administration has Changed Environmental Policies,” *National Geographic*, (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2019), <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/02/15-ways-trump-administration-impacted-environment/>.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

would repeal the policy in 2018 before putting forward a plan likely to result in \$30 billion in health damages per year.<sup>236</sup> What makes this action puzzling is that it is inefficient to maintain the current energy sector. With wind and solar energy driving the costs of energy down, closing the coal plants in the US and replacing them with renewable energy sources is cost-effective.<sup>237</sup> Trump campaigned promising to maintain America's coal sector – a dying industry – so dismantling the Clean Power Plan likely has more to do with the retention of his base and political power through economic stability than it does with stringent restrictions preventing economic growth.

Another key regulation the Trump EPA eliminated related to methane pollution from oil and gas infrastructure. The regulation required oil and gas companies to monitor and repair any methane leaks from equipment.<sup>238</sup> Repealing the regulation drew the ire of oil and gas industry giants BP, Exxon, and Shell who would join environmental scientists in opposing the rule change.<sup>239</sup> With industry leaders in opposition, repealing the regulation seems illogical. The industry is on board, so what remains as an argument for carrying out deregulation? Perhaps it allows for smaller oil and gas companies to avoid costly repair to prevent the leaking of methane, which means the idea is that it could stimulate some economic growth while disregarding the adverse environmental impacts. Regardless, on the surface, dismantling the regulation is a short-term solution to an issue the industry did not have.

While it has been noted chapter 3 that President Obama utilized executive orders to protect the environment, President Trump has deployed executive orders to accomplish the opposite. In April 2019, Trump signed two executive orders effectively making the pathway for companies to

---

<sup>236</sup> Tyler Clevenger and Matt Herbert, “7 Ways the Trump Administration is Harming the Climate,” *World Resources Institute*, (Washington, DC: The World Resources Institute, 2020), <https://www.wri.org/blog/2020/04/7-ways-trump-administration-harming-climate>.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*

build oil and gas pipelines easier while limiting the tools states possess to prevent them.<sup>240</sup> Trump has also issued executive orders expanding logging operations on federal land and removed the environmental review of major projects which serves to expedite the granting of permits on construction and energy projects with federal oversight while avoiding environmental regulations.<sup>241</sup> The latter of which would harm the requirements of several landmark environmental laws, such as the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water and National Environmental Policy Act, which stipulate any new infrastructure projects must undergo environmental review to meet the established standards.<sup>242</sup> In defense of the decisions, Trump argued the executive order was reforming an “outdated” regulatory system that had been holding back economic growth.<sup>243</sup> Despite the nature of these regulations being designed to protect and preserve the environment, Trump viewed them purely as impeding “necessary” economic development. For Trump, the short-term economic benefits outweigh protecting endangered animals or ensuring clean water.

Trump’s usage of executive orders and the actions taken by his administration regarding the environment are alarming when considering how far they stray from the norms of the previous three administrations. However, the more subtle actions taken by the Trump administration may be of even more harmful to long-term environmental security. The EPA has long sought external advice from apolitical science-based advisory boards headed by prominent scientists, but the Trump EPA has dissolved these boards and barred any scientists receiving EPA grant funding

---

<sup>240</sup> Michael Greshko, Laura Parker, Brian Clark Howard, Daniel Stone, Alejandra Borunda, and Sarah Gibbens, “A Running List of How President Trump is Changing Environmental Policy,” *National Geographic*, (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2019), <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/03/how-trump-is-changing-science-environment/>.

<sup>241</sup> Rebecca Beitsch, “Trump Signs Order Removing Environmental Review of Major Projects,” *The Hill*, (Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2020), <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/501258-trump-signs-order-removing-environmental-review-for-major-projects>.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*



from serving on these boards leading to greater influence from business interest groups.<sup>244</sup> Additionally, the administration blocked a State Department scientist's testimony to Congress on the potential threat posed by climate change on national security – traditionally an aspect of US environmental security – and has inserted climate denial language into official scientific reports.<sup>245</sup> Not only is the Trump administration committed to dismantling the US environmental regime to “stimulate” economic growth, the administration is taking steps to ensure the necessary information related to climate change and environmental degradation is kept from the public arena. Even when reports are published under the administration, the scientific accuracy of the reports and viability as sources of information is hindered by Trump's political agenda relating to climate change denial being interjected into them.

The implications of Trump's environmental security policy are uncertain at the moment. With at least 4 months remaining in his presidency, Trump could further hinder efforts at environmental security in the US and erode progress towards sustainability.<sup>246</sup> During the Trump administration's tenure, EPA criminal enforcement has already hit a 30-year low.<sup>247</sup> Dr. Elizabeth Southerland, a member of the Environmental Protection Network and former director of the Office of Science and Technology with the EPA's Office of Water, stated the Trump EPA has either repealed or weakened 100 environmental regulation so far and warns that “the EPA has been transformed from an agency of environmental protection to an accommodating servant of special

---

<sup>244</sup> Clevenger and Herbert, “7 Ways the Trump Administration is Harming the Climate.”

<sup>245</sup> Clevenger and Herbert, “7 Ways the Trump Administration is Harming the Climate.”

<sup>246</sup> “Environmental Performance Index 2010,” *EPI*, (New haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, 2010), [http://www.ciesin.org/documents/EPI\\_2010\\_report.pdf](http://www.ciesin.org/documents/EPI_2010_report.pdf); “Environmental Performance Index 2014,” *EPI*, (New haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, 2014), [http://www.ciesin.org/documents/2014\\_epi\\_report.pdf](http://www.ciesin.org/documents/2014_epi_report.pdf); “Environmental Performance Index 2020,” *EPI*, (New haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, 2020), <https://epi.yale.edu/epi-results/2020/component/epi>.

<sup>247</sup> Greshko, Parker, Howard, Stone, Borunda, and Gibbens, “A Running List of How President Trump is Changing Environmental Policy.”

interests.”<sup>248</sup> Trump’s efforts to deregulate environmental protection measures are similar to those discussed in Russia and Brazil. The deregulation appears designed to cut operating costs, promote continued development of environmentally degrading industries, and stimulate increased economic growth. It prioritizes short-term economic security over long-term environmental security. While this strategy may yield short-term economic benefits – such as rising employment – the process of opting for a strong economy in the short-term does nothing to actively secure the environment so this economic security can be sustained beyond.

Opting for the short-term, Cornucopian approach to environmental security as the US and other contemporary authoritarians have will likely result in a weaker economy and increased environmental decay. As Anita Kiamba argued, transitioning from the current model of economic growth and development towards a more sustainable model is not contradictory to growth and development goals.<sup>249</sup> As a matter of fact, sustainable development that considers long-term environmental security has the potential to achieve the stabilization of economic growth and development across generations.<sup>250</sup> Unlike the Cornucopian approach deployed by Trump, this approach may just be the way to ensure economic security long-term. What contemporary authoritarians have seemingly gotten wrong is they conflate economic security with environmental insecurity. If a state wants economic growth and development, then the best approach is to disregard environmental constraints and approach environmental issues with a sense of apathy. However, when considering Kiamba and other experts, the reality seems to be that in order to achieve economic security long-term, a state should be working towards environmental security

---

<sup>248</sup> Elizabeth Southerland, “We Can’t Let Trump Roll Back 50 Years of Environmental Progress,” *The Guardian*, (London: Guardian News & Media Group, 2020), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/22/earth-day-50-years-anniversary-environment-trump>.

<sup>249</sup> Anita Kiamba, “The Sustainability of Urban Development in Developing Economies,” *Consilience*, no. 8 (2012), 20-25, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26188711>.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*

along the lines of sustainable development. Thus, economic security and environmental security are not mutually exclusive as contemporary authoritarians view them.

## Conclusion

President Trump and his administration are not the first authoritarians to exist in the American context. There is a precedent in the United States for authoritarianism. The history of authoritarianism is often neglected and misconstrued resulting from the American endeavor to author a history of exceptionalism for the nation as the “beacon on the hill”. For the US, authoritarianism is a distant notion; something that occurs in far off regions of the world, not at home. Despite these sentiments and attempts to distort America’s historical precedence for authoritarianism, the evidence of its existence is there.

The KKK is conceivably the first iteration of America’s brand of authoritarianism. Throughout the Reconstruction era, the Klan intimidated and murdered Black and White Republicans striving to establish the normalcy of a multiracial America, and the group would build on these homogenous sentiments in the 1930s through the 1960s by integrating anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia into its agenda.<sup>251</sup> For the KKK, white people as the majority have a divine right to govern while the groups not fitting this ideal are portrayed as some “other”. It is a sentiment of authoritarian populism that drives the underlying ideology of the Klan. The KKK may be a blatantly abhorrent group and, thus, seemingly abnormal, but US history has numerous figures espousing right-wing authoritarianism.

During the height of America’s fears of communism, Senator Joseph McCarthy filled the authoritarian void in the US. Utilizing the nation’s acute fear of communist subversion, McCarthy promoted blacklisting, censorship, and book banning while being widely supported by the

---

<sup>251</sup> Matt Ford. “The ‘Far Right’ in America: A Brief Taxonomy,” *The Atlantic*, (Washington D.C.: The Atlantic Monthly Group, 2017), <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/far-right-taxonomy/509282/>.

American Public.<sup>252</sup> Following the era of McCarthyism, George Wallace took up the authoritarian mantle in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Wallace's presidential bids in 1968 and 1972 exploited the victimhood and economic anger of working-class white Americans by merging racism and populism.<sup>253</sup> For Wallace, white Americans were the people being left behind, exploited, and facing injustice at the hands of an emerging multiracial and multicultural US. The extent to which Wallace viewed the "people" as the ultimate source of power in the US is best described by him when he said, "There is one thing more powerful than the Constitution... That's the will of the people."<sup>254</sup> In various ways, Wallace's presidential bids and rhetoric serve as a prelude to the Trump era.

The difference between Trump's ascendancy and the failures of past authoritarians to gain power comes down to democratic decay. Similar to most contemporary authoritarian states, the rise of authoritarianism in the US was not the product of a coup or the lack of pre-existing principles of democracy; rather, it results from the attention paid by Republicans to the pursuit of power. The decay allowing for Trump to be successful stems directly from Newt Gingrich's arrival in Congress in the late 1970s, and the subsequent refusal by Republicans to participate in and follow the established democratic norms.

Trump's success in his presidential bid is the direct result of decades of democratic decay brought about by the Republicans. His ascendancy is emblematic of contemporary authoritarianism. It is a gradual decay to the extent it is difficult to notice. The norm breaking,

---

<sup>252</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Rabb, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 21.

<sup>253</sup> Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, (New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018), 36.

<sup>254</sup> Lipset and Rabb, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970*, 355-56.

dissolution of mutual toleration, and withering of institutional forbearance becomes an engrained aspect of the system when it has been an ongoing feature of a democratic society.

By the time it is recognizable, it is often difficult to reverse course. For the political actors that have grown accustomed to utilizing this strategy in the pursuit of power, it is likely impossible to reverse course at all – assuming the party would even have such a desire. This gradual decay occurring over the previous four decades is how Donald Trump became president, and it is the precise reason him and his administration are able implement a short-term environmental security strategy resembling those of other contemporary authoritarians.

If the US and, indeed, the international community are to successfully implement long-term environmental security strategies, it will have to happen in two distinct phases. First, there has to be a strengthening of any existing democratic principles to reverse democratic decay and an establishment or re-establishment of a stable democratic system. Following the reestablishment of a stable democracy, democratic society needs to be improved for the current era. Second, the stabilization of democracy and improvement to functionality allows for the implementation of an environmental security strategy not only firmly established within a long-term framework, but a strategy encompassing the best security approach – sustainable development – with the potential to be fundamentally transformational for the approach in the US and the international community. However, achieving this transformation requires a strong, stable democracy or else it will likely never occur.

How is democratic decay reversed? First, consider that democracy is grinding work. It takes a level of commitment to principles and norms. Similar to all forms of government, democracies are not perfect. Democratic states can suffer from short-termism – all be it not at the same level as authoritarian states – due to the requisite need to avoid making decisions adversely

impacting their specific electorate; are at risk of being captured by elite, wealthy citizens because operating frequent election cycles necessitates a constant need for an influx of money; are prone to an exacerbation of societal divisions that impair national unity; and are potentially in a position where voter ignorance and irrationality leads to the election of officials purely based on obscure policy preference and performance instead of the overall effectiveness and positive consequences of policies.<sup>255</sup> These issues are not always true for democracies. Perhaps one or two of them are prevalent in the system, but it is not a bygone conclusion that democracy will maintain these flaws.

For the US, these are indisputably present aspects of the system in the contemporary. Political actors in the US have been incapable of sufficient focus on long-term challenges that may entail short-term, adverse problems.<sup>256</sup> There is undeniably an extensive, problematic influence of money in American politics. Rapidly increasing party polarization has been documented within this thesis. Lastly, voter ignorance and irrationality are chief concerns in American politics as voters frequently opt for politicians demonstrating a weak commitment to democracy and the rules governing American politics.<sup>257</sup> These problems plague American democracy, but each of them can be fixed to strengthen democracy.

The process of revitalizing American democracy begins with a renewed commitment to mutual toleration and institutional forbearance. To properly reverse the rising tide of authoritarianism in the US, it is essential for political actors to begin viewing the opposition as legitimate and capable of exercising the power invested in their office by the Constitution. Until Republicans in particular reverse their desire for power and willingness to obstruct the legitimate

---

<sup>255</sup> Thomas Carothers, "Is Democracy the Problem?," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019), <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/01/16/is-democracy-problem-pub-78137>.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*

legislative prerogatives of Democrats, democracy will remain in a state of decay. Further, Congress and the executive must revert back to a strict adherence to institutional forbearance. These two branches of American government must again underutilize the powers invested in their institutions to maintain the balance of power and America's system of checks and balances enshrined in the Constitution.<sup>258</sup> The Constitution of the US does not include the necessity of mutual toleration and institutional forbearance, yet this is how the democracy has survived; it is how the democracy will move forward.

From this reversal of the trends developing over the previous four decades, the Democrats and Republicans will also need to evolve. For Democrats, this evolution is a natural expansion of the current emphasis on coalition building. The new coalition – one capable of dislodging authoritarian leaning Republicans – entails expanding the coalition to include those that are not natural allies to progressive causes. To accomplish this task, Democrats will have to accept that progressive causes will be delayed, concessions will have to be made to more conservative actors, and the fight has to be restricted to adherence to fairness and within the confines of traditional democratic norms.<sup>259</sup> Democrats do not have to abandon these progressive causes, but, rather, make the difficult choice to make preserving democracy the leading item on the agenda. This broad coalition could potentially serve as a strong rebuke of Trump, his administration, and Republicans in Congress. If it does, it could usher in a reform era to American democracy not witnessed since the reforms following Nixon and Watergate.

In order for Democrats and this coalition to succeed in preserving democracy over the long-term, there will also have to be a Republican reckoning with their recent history and role in the decay of America's democracy. The party needs to be reformed. Republicans will have to begin

---

<sup>258</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 212.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid*, 219.



building a new establishment that has dissipated since the 1980s. To accomplish this, the party will need to regain control over party finances, grassroots organizing, messaging, and candidate selection.<sup>260</sup> If the Republicans are to be reformed, leadership in the party has to take necessary steps to limit the extremist elements in the party; establish a more diverse electorate; and must resort to political tactics that do not rely on appeals to white nationalism and populism.<sup>261</sup> In short, Republicans will have to alter their entire approach to politics. They will have to drop the authoritarian appeal and begin appealing to a diverse electorate. With a reformed Republican party and a revitalized democracy defined by mutual toleration and institutional forbearance, American democracy can be improved.

First, democracy can be improved through averting rampant short-termism. There was a period of American history where long-term thinking was a reality; where there was an apparent strategy to assist Americans and solve national challenges. This long-term approach to challenges began to fade when Republicans became homogenous and overly committed to the notion that regulatory powers of the Federal government or government involvement in the lives of Americans was inherently bad.<sup>262</sup> Without this ideological obstacle to effective governance, the United States is capable of addressing some of the serious issues facing the nation.<sup>263</sup> Short-term political thinking in the US can, at the very least, be reduced by the Republican approach to politics being reformed.

By averting short-termism as it has been established, it could become possible for American politics to progress in a shared format. Instead of the divide and conquer strategies stereotypical of contemporary America politics, perhaps political actors could establish an

---

<sup>260</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 223.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>262</sup> Carothers, "Is Democracy the Problem?"

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*

enduring social policy along the lines of the universalistic models demonstrated by much of Europe.<sup>264</sup> These social policies could be tailored to benefit all members of American society. In turn, this could help diminish broad resentment of various groups, build bridges between the diverse American electorate, and establish a social support system that is capable of reducing income inequality.<sup>265</sup> This system could include broad labor market policies – job training, wage subsidies, or work-study programs to learn trades<sup>266</sup> – could improve America’s education system to make it more equitable, and could make health care accessible.

Establishing an equitable and fair social policy benefitting all Americans could bring about a fundamental shift in American politics. Labor market policies could alter the job market and make it more accessible to groups previously excluded. These policies could also have the potential to reduce income inequality. Making the education system more equitable provides students across the country with educational opportunities and could improve the awareness of Americans on political issues reducing the problem of voter ignorance. Lastly, access to health care would make Americans healthier and improve quality of life. All these social policies aim to do one thing: create a fair, just, and equitable society. Reducing inequality in America which is a chief driver of resentment, division, and political polarization could fundamentally alter American politics and establish a secure, improved democracy. A secure and improved democracy is potentially capable of addressing environmental security concerns with an effective, long-term strategy. More specifically, implementing policies benefitting all Americans could provide the safety net required to avert any short-term economic insecurity as a result of a long-term environmental security strategy.

---

<sup>264</sup> Gosta Esping-Anderson, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

<sup>265</sup> Levitsky and Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die*, 228-29.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*

The first step in implementing an environmental security strategy with a long-term focus following the revitalization and improvement of democracy overall, comes with broad acceptance of climate change and environmental degradation by political actors and their constituents. While in some states these environmental politics are widely accepted as being veridical, in states, chiefly the US, Brazil, and Russia, these issues are engaged with as though they are another subjective political matter as opposed to an objective fact. Further, to the extent these issues are accepted in these states, it is often in a generalized manner with varying degrees of expressed concern that result in a reluctance to engage in a full debate about how to properly address the problem.<sup>267</sup> However, with a stable, secure, and improved democracy these states, specifically the US, may be more willing and capable of addressing environmental security threats.

Establishing the broad belief and acceptance of environmental issues as security risks necessitates a fundamental shift in a state's approach to environmental security. The US, among other states, must begin shifting away from current economic models that emphasize economic growth, resource consumption, and resource hoarding as the path to further development and future state success. These approaches rely too much on Malthusian and Cornucopian environmental security strategies.

Focusing environmental security strategy on the belief that the free-market and modern technology can prevent increased environmental degradation simply by maintaining the system as is or that there are few viable paths states can take in addressing environmental threats not necessitating conflict disregards the current reality.<sup>268</sup> Environmental degradation is an ongoing

---

<sup>267</sup> Rebecca Willis, "A Strategy for the Climate Emergency," in *Too Hot to Handle?: The Democratic Challenge of Climate Change*, 101-18, (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2020), doi:10.2307/j.ctvz938kb.10, 106-107.

<sup>268</sup> Chandran Nair, *The Sustainable State: The Future of Government, Economy, and Society*, (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018), <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.uu.nl/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1811612&site=ehost-live>, 37-52.

and present threat to security that markets and technology have thus far proved incapable of fully addressing. Adherents to the Malthusian approach argue environmental threats are already causing state conflict on a minor scale with the potential to expand, yet most of the arguments disregard other factors contributing to conflict.<sup>269</sup> What this revitalized democracy then must be capable of doing is shifting away from these environmental security approaches to one founded on sustainability – a sustainable state – and it can accomplish the task.

The concept of a sustainable state stems from Nair Chandran. His description of a sustainable state was that it “needs to be competent, committed to the task of nation building through self-sufficiency (not dependent on aid), and strong but trusted by the people by virtue of results – not by ways that appease posturing political leaders from the West or the international media. The government has obligations toward its whole population; its legitimacy and accountability derive from its ability to universally provide these basic rights without overextending its use of resources in an unsustainable manner. In a resource-constrained era, this means directly working to provide these rights among the poor and middle classes, while constraining the consumption of the upper classes to ensure that resources are not overexploited, or mismanaged by elites.”<sup>270</sup> He follows this up by stating the state must have the ability and the will to intervene in and guide the economy – that is to involve itself deeply in economic proceedings.<sup>271</sup> Now Chandran, is discussing this from the standpoint of developing states, but his notion of a sustainable state also pertains to the West.

---

<sup>269</sup>Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, “Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases.,” *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 5-40, (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994), [https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539147?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539147?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).

<sup>270</sup> Chandran Nair, *The Sustainable State : The Future of Government, Economy, and Society*, (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018), <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.uu.nl/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1811612&site=ehost-live>, 78.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid*, 78.

In the West, states need to step away from the traditional notions of how economics and markets function, provide fundamental rights – food, water, housing, medical care, etc. – to citizens in a sustainable manner, utilize taxation to influence more environmentally friendly practices, and to ensure that resources are not being exploited and misused by elites.<sup>272</sup> This harkens back to how a nation improves democracy. The objective of the sustainable state is to establish a fair, just, and equitable society for all. Thus, working towards a sustainable state could also further improve democracy by allowing often excluded groups to partake in the process. For example, these conversations on a sustainable state could include the voices of young people incapable of participating in the political process via elections by allowing their voices to be a prominent aspect in decision making.<sup>273</sup> After all, the decisions the international community and individual states make now will undoubtedly affect the lives of these young people. Working towards a sustainable state – one capable of maintaining a just, fair, and equitable society – will improve democracy for the long-term.

Without the revitalization and improvement of democracy, however, achieving the sustainable state is likely impossible. Contemporary authoritarian states will continue to approach environmental security with a sense of apathy preferring to preserve short-term economic growth over implementing a long-term environmental security strategy that necessitates a dip in growth or economic stagnation. Turning the tide against rising authoritarianism then and building an improved and more stable democracy is the way to secure the environment and implement transformative sustainable development. The manner in which the international community and

---

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid*, 78-79; Rebecca Willis, "Twenty Years of Climate Action – but Still Emissions Rise," in *Too Hot to Handle?: The Democratic Challenge of Climate Change*, 69-80, (Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, 2020), doi:10.2307/j.ctvz938kb.8, 72-74.

<sup>273</sup> Roman Krznaric, "Why We Need to Reinvent Democracy for the Long-Term," *BBC*, (London: The BBC, 2019), <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20190318-can-we-reinvent-democracy-for-the-long-term>.

the US accomplish these two lofty objectives may vary from what is written in this conclusion, but it provides an idea of how this can be accomplished.

Donald Trump and many Republicans in Congress have at least 4 months left in office. The tide could turn if they are defeated. In a world where every day the international community witnesses in real time the decay of American democracy, the prospect of restoring democracy in the US and around the globe in the face of rising authoritarianism is bleak. The world's oldest democratic state is withering, and the work to be done to restore it is uncertain. It can be done. It must be done. American democracy is not at its end. However, when the work at restoring American democracy is accomplished there must be steps that follow to secure the environment based in the long-term and to ensure future generations in the US and globally can continue to evolve democracy to meet future environmental security needs. The moment right now entails transitioning towards an environmental security strategy with long-term objectives and one based on sustainability. It entails transitioning away from non-renewable security.

## **Bibliography**

### **Introduction:**

- Authoritarian Brazil: Origins, Policies, and Future*. Edited by Alfred Stepan. London: Yale University Press, 1973.
- Feuchtwanger, E.J. *From Weimar to Hitler*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.  
doi:10.1017/CBO9780511781353.

### **Chapter 1:**

- Allenby, Braden R. "Environmental Security: Concept and Implementation." *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 21, no. 1 (2000): 5-21. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publishing, 2000. [www.jstor.org/stable/1601426](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1601426).
- Buzan, Barry. "Environment as a Security Issue." In *Geopolitical Perspectives on Environmental Security* 92, no. 5 (1992). Edited by Paul Painchaud. Québec: Studies and Research Center on Environmental Policies, 1992.
- Cassani, Andrea. "Hybrid What? Partial Consensus and Persistent Divergences in the Analysis of Hybrid Regimes." *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 35, no. 5 (2014): 542-58. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publishing, 2014. [www.jstor.org/stable/24573424](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24573424).
- Detraz, Nicole, and Michele M. Betsill. "Climate Change and Environmental Security: For Whom the Discourse Shifts." *International Studies Perspectives* 10, no. 3 (2009): 303-20. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. [www.jstor.org/stable/44218603](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44218603).
- Deudney, Daniel. "The Case Against Linking Environmental Degradation and National Security." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*. 19, no. 3 (1990): 461-476. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage Publishing, 1990. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298900190031001>.
- Erdem, Aytaç S., and Ziya Öniş. "Varieties of Populism in a Changing Global Context: The Divergent Paths of Erdoğan and Kirchnerismo." *Comparative Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 41-59. New York: City University of New York, 2014. [www.jstor.org/stable/43664342](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43664342).
- Floyd, Rita. "The Moral Evaluation of Environmental Security." In *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy*, 174-187. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511730146.007.
- Floyd, Rita. "The Rise of US Environmental Security." In *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy*, 61-86. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511730146.004.
- Galtung, Johan. "The Limits of Growth and Class Politics." *Journal of Peace Research* 10, no. ½ (1973): 101-114. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1973. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/422714?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/422714?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).

- Gandesha, Samir. "The Political Semiosis of Populism." *Semiotic Review of Books* 13, no. 3 (2003): 1-7. Ontario: Trent University, 2003.  
<http://projects.chass.utoronto.ca/semiotics/vol%2013.3.pdf>.
- Gandesha, Samir. "Understanding Right and Left Populism." In *Critical Theory and Authoritarian Populism*, edited by Morelock Jeremiah, 49-70. London: University of Westminster Press, 2018. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv9hvtcf.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv9hvtcf.7).
- Haas, Peter M. "Constructing Environmental Conflicts from Resource Scarcity." *Global Environmental Politics* 2, no. 1 (2002): 1-11. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.  
<https://doi.org/10.1162/152638002317261436>.
- Holling, C.S. "The Resilience of Terrestrial Ecosystems." In *Sustainable Development of the Biosphere*, edited by William C. Clark and R.E. Munn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Homer-Dixon, Thomas F. "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases." *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 5-40. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539147?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539147?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report, Contribution of Working Groups I, II, and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Edited by Core Writing Team, Leo Meyer, and Rajendra K. Pachauri. Geneva: IPCC, 2014.  
[https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/SYR\\_AR5\\_FINAL\\_full.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/SYR_AR5_FINAL_full.pdf).
- Jordan, Andrew, and Timothy O'Riordan. "Social Institutions and Climate Change: Applying Cultural Theory to Practice." *Center for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment*. Norwich: University of East Anglia, 1997.
- Kaysen, Carl. "The Computer That Printed out W\*O\*L\*F\*." *Foreign Affairs*, 50, no. 4 (1972): 660-68. Congers, NY: The Council on Foreign Affairs, 1972.
- Kiamba, Anita. "The Sustainability of Urban Development in Developing Economies." *Consilience*, no. 8 (2012): 20-25. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/26188711>.
- Landau, David. "Populist Constitutions." *The University of Chicago Law Review* 85, no. 2 (2018): 521-44. Chicago: The University of Chicago Law Review, 2018.  
[www.jstor.org/stable/26455916](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26455916).
- Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.  
doi:10.1017/CBO9780511781353.
- Levitsky, Steven. "Competitive Authoritarianism." January 24, 2011. Oslo Freedom Forum, Oslo, Norway, 14:04. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6allSdVhfDM>.
- Linz, Juan J. *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- Litfin, Karen T. "Constructing Environmental Security and Ecological Interdependence." *Global Governance* 5, no. 3 (1999): 359-77. Leiden: Brill, 1999.  
[www.jstor.org/stable/27800237](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27800237).
- McCarthy, James. "Authoritarianism, Populism, and the Environment: Comparative Experiences, Insights, and Perspectives." *Annals of the American Association of*



- Geographers* 109, no. 2 (2019): 301-313. Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2019. doi:[10.1080/24694452.2018.1554393](https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2018.1554393).
- Mudde, Cas. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 541-563. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. doi:[10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x).
- Myers, Norman. *Ultimate Security: The Environmental Basis of Political Stability*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993.
- Riedel, Rafal. "Populism and Its Democratic, Non-Democratic, and Anti-Democratic Potential." *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 199 (2017): 287-98. Warsaw: Polish Sociological Association, 2017. [www.jstor.org/stable/26383076](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26383076).
- Shirah, Ryan. "Electoral Authoritarianism and Political Unrest." *International Political Science Review / Revue Internationale De Science Politique* 37, no. 4 (2016): 470-84. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2016. [www.jstor.org/stable/44632319](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44632319).
- Urribarri, Raul A. Sanchez. "Courts between Democracy and Hybrid Authoritarianism: Evidence from the Venezuelan Supreme Court." *Law & Social Inquiry* 36, no. 4 (2011): 854-84. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. [www.jstor.org/stable/41349660](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41349660).
- Wæver, Ole. "Securitization and Desecuritization." In *On Security*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.

## **Chapter 2:**

- Abramowitz, Alan I. "From Dealignment to Alignment." In *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump*, 43-71. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvhrczh3.8](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvhrczh3.8).
- Barr, Andy. "The GOP's No-Compromise Pledge." *Politico*. Arlington County, VA: Politico LLC, 2010. <https://www.politico.com/story/2010/10/the-gops-no-compromise-pledge-044311>.
- Beauchamp, Zack. "It Happened There: How Democracy Died in Hungary." *Vox News*. New York: Vox Media, LLC., 2018. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/9/13/17823488/hungary-democracy-authoritarianism-trump>.
- Burt, Jo-Marie. "'Quien habla es terrorista': The Political Use of Fear in Fujimori's Peru." *Latin American Research Review* 41, no. 3 (2006): 32-62. Pittsburgh: The Latin American Studies Association, 2006. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/3874688](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3874688).
- Conaghan, Catherine. *Fujimori's Peru: Deception in the Public Sphere*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005.
- "Congress at a Glance: Major Party Ideology." *UCLA Social Sciences Division*. Los Angeles: UCLA Department of Political Science, 2020. <https://voteview.com/parties/all>.
- Coppins, McKay. "The Man Who Broke Politics." *The Atlantic*. Washington, DC: The Atlantic Monthly Group, 2018. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/11/newt-gingrich-says-youre-welcome/570832/>.
- Crabtree, John. "Democracy without Parties? Some Lessons from Peru." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 42, no. 2 (2010): 357-82. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. [www.jstor.org/stable/40784986](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40784986).
- Dombrink, John. "Liberalization and Backlash in the Obama Era." In *The Twilight of Social Conservatism: American Culture Wars in the Obama Era*, 9-28. New York: NYU Press, 2015. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.5](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.5).

- Dombrink, John. "Anger and Resentment Anew: Tea Parties and the Obama Backlash." In *The Twilight of Social Conservatism: American Culture Wars in the Obama Era*, 29-68. New York: NYU Press, 2015. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.6](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15zc5x2.6).
- Egin, Oray. "The Silence of Surrender: Erdogan's War on Independent Media." *World Affairs* 176, no. 4 (2013): 47-56. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 2013. [www.jstor.org/stable/43554878](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43554878).
- Elving, Ron. "What Happened with Merrick Garland in 2016 and Why it Matters Now." *NPR*. Washington, DC: National Public Radio, 2018. <https://www.npr.org/2018/06/29/624467256/what-happened-with-merrick-garland-in-2016-and-why-it-matters-now?t=1595591284645>.
- Erdem, Aytaç S., and Ziya Öniş. "Varieties of Populism in a Changing Global Context: The Divergent Paths of Erdoğan and Kirchnerismo." *Comparative Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 41-59. New York: City University of New York, 2014. [www.jstor.org/stable/43664342](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43664342).
- Evans, Richard J. *The Coming of the Third Reich*. New York: The Penguin Press, 2003.
- Fishkin, Joseph, and David E. Pozen. "Asymmetric Constitutional Hardball." *Columbia Law Review* 118, no. 3 (2018): 915-82. New York: Columbia Law Review Association, Inc., 2018. [www.jstor.org/stable/26397699](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26397699).
- Freedom House. *Freedom in the World 2016*. Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2016. [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Freedom in the World 2016 complete book.pdf](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Freedom%20in%20the%20World%202016%20complete%20book.pdf).
- Freedom House. *Freedom in the World 2019- United States*. Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2019. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/united-states/freedom-world/2019>.
- Grunwald, Michael. "The Victory of 'No'." *Politico Magazine*. Arlington County, VA: Politico LLC, 2016. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/12/republican-party-obstructionism-victory-trump-214498>.
- Günay, Cengiz. "Foreign Policy as a Source of Legitimation for "Competitive Authoritarian Regimes": The Case of Turkey's AKP." *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 17, no. 2 (2016): 39-46. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016. [www.jstor.org/stable/26396170](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26396170).
- Haggard, Stephan, and Robert R. Kaufman. "Pathways to Authoritarian Rule." In *Dictators and Democrats: Masses, Elites, and Regime Change*, 270-300. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. doi:10.2307/j.ctt1q1xs6z.13.
- Jochamowitz, Luis. *Ciudadano Fujimori: La Construcción de un Politico*. Lima: Peisa, 1993.
- Kamens, David H. "From Consensus to Culture Wars." In *A New American Creed: The Eclipse of Citizenship and Rise of Populism*, 201-222. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2019. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=5788247>.
- Karaveli, Halil. "Erdogan's Journey: Conservatism and Authoritarianism in Turkey." *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 6 (2016): 121-130. Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43948388>.
- Kelly, Amita. "McConnell: Blocking Supreme Court Nomination 'About a Principle, Not a Person'." *NPR*. Washington, DC: National Public Radio, 2016. <https://www.nprillinois.org/post/mcconnell-blocking-supreme-court-nomination-about-principle-not-person#stream/0>.
- Kenney, Charles. *Fujimori's Coup and the Breakdown of Democracy in Latin America*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004.

- Krugman, Paul. "Hungary, An Election in Question, Part 2." *The New York Times*. New York: The New York Times Company, 2014.  
<https://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/02/28/hungary-an-election-in-question-part-2/>.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018.
- Mann, Thomas E., and Norman J. Ornstein. "The Seeds of the Contemporary Problem, 1969-1994." In *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get it Back on Track*, 40-68. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.  
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=430543>.
- Mann, Thomas E., and Norman J. Ornstein. "A Decade of Republican Control." In *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get it Back on Track*, 69-95. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.  
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uunl/detail.action?docID=430543>.
- Mauceri, Philip. "Return of the Caudillo: Autocratic Democracy in Peru." *Third World Quarterly* 18, no. 5 (1997): 899-911. Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 1997.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3993106>.
- McClintock, Cynthia. "La Voluntad Política Presidencial y la Ruptura Constitucional." In *Los Enigmas Del Poder: Fujimori 1990-1996*, Edited by Fernando Tuesta. Lima: Fundación Friedrich Ebert, 1996.
- Puddington, Arch. "Breaking Down Democracy." *Freedom House*. Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2020. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-report/2017/breaking-down-democracy>.
- Reich, Robert. "Mitch McConnell is Destroying the Senate – and American Government." *The Guardian*. London: Guardian News & Media Group, 2019.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/06/mitch-mcconnell-senate-republicans-donald-trump-judges>.
- Schlesinger, Robert. "Donald Trump has Done Less to Destroy Democratic Norms than Mitch McConnell." *NBC News*. New York: NBC Universal, 2019.  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/donald-trump-has-done-less-destroy-democratic-norms-mitch-mcconnell-ncna1011451>.
- Stokes, Susan C. "Democratic Accountability and Policy Change: Economic Policy in Fujimori's Peru." *Comparative Politics* 29, no. 2 (1997): 209-26. New York: City University of New York, 1997. doi:10.2307/422080.
- Taub, Amanda. "The Rise of American Authoritarianism." *Vox News*. New York: Vox Media, LLC., 2016. <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>.

### **Chapter 3:**

- Agence France-Presse. "Russia Announces Plan to 'Use the Advantages' of Climate Change." *The Guardian*. London: Guardian News & Media Limited, 2020.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/05/russia-announces-plan-to-use-the-advantages-of-climate-change>.
- Anderson, John Lee. "At the U.N., Jair Bolsonaro Presents a Surreal Defense of His Amazon Policies." *The New Yorker*. New York: Condé Nast, 2019.  
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/at-the-united-nations-jair-bolsonaro-presents-a-surreal-defense-of-his-amazon-policies>.

- Atkinson, Hugh. "Climate Change and Environmental Policy in the US: Lessons in Political Action." In *The Challenge of Sustainability: Linking Politics, Education and Learning*, edited by Atkinson Hugh and Wade Ros, 89-104. Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, 2015. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctt1t894qh.12>.
- Bershidsky, Leonid. "Even Putin is Now Worried About Climate Change." *Bloomberg*. New York: Bloomberg News, 2019. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2019-09-24/putin-is-finally-worried-about-climate-change>.
- "BP Statistical Review- 2019: Russia's Energy Market in 2018." *BP Energy Economics*. London: BP p.l.c., 2019. <https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-russia-insights.pdf>.
- "Brazil Amazon Deforestation Soars to 11-Year High Under Bolsonaro." *Al Jazeera*. Doha: Al Jazeera Media Network, 2019. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/brazil-amazon-deforestation-soars-11-year-high-bolsonaro-191118140604466.html>.
- Caistor, Nick, and Susana Villarán. "Privatization and Corruption." In *Picking up the Pieces: Corruption and Democracy in Peru*, 31-45. London Latin American Bureau, 2006. [www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1hj57dd.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1hj57dd.7).
- Canineu, Maria L., and Andrea Carvalho. "Bolsonaro's Plan to Legalize Crimes Against Indigenous Peoples." *Human Rights Watch*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/01/bolsonaros-plan-legalize-crimes-against-indigenous-peoples#>.
- Chagas-Bastos, Fabrício H. "Political Realignment in Brazil: Jair Bolsonaro and the Right Turn." *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, no. 69 (2019): 92- 100. Bogotá: Universidad de Los Andes-Colombia, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.7440/res69.2019.08>.
- Clinton, William J. Remarks on Earth Day. Quoted in *The Woodrow Wilson Center Environmental Change and Security Project Report*. Spring 1995. Washington, DC: The Wilson Center, 1995.
- Colton, Timothy J., and Henry E. Hale. "The Putin Vote: Presidential Electorates in a Hybrid Regime." *Slavic Review* 68, no. 3 (2009): 473-503. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. [www.jstor.org/stable/25621652](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25621652).
- Daly, Tom. "Populism, Public Law, and Democratic Decay in Brazil: Understanding the Rise of Jair Bolsonaro." *Law & Ethics of Human Rights*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3350098>.
- Dresen, Joseph F. "Economic Growth and Environmental Security in Russia." *The Wilson Center*. Washington, DC: The Wilson Center, 2020. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/economic-growth-and-environmental-security-russia>.
- Ellner, Steve. "The Contrasting Variants of the Populism of Hugo Chávez and Alberto Fujimori." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 35, no. 1 (2003): 139-62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. [www.jstor.org/stable/3875581](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3875581).
- Fisher, William H. "Victims of the Economic Miracle Forty Years Later: Brazil's Indigenous Lands in the Post-Earth Summit Era." *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 44, no. 3/4 (2015): 197-260. New York: The Institute, Inc., 2015. [www.jstor.org/stable/26384868](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26384868).
- "Fossil Fuel Support Country Note: Russia." *Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development*. Paris: OECD, 2020.

- <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiA5qaC7OPqAhWPqqQKHew0A88QFjABegQIBRAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fstats.oecd.org%2Fwbos%2Ffileview2.aspx%3FIDFile%3D09aac246-c7ef-4159-898e-2a287deb3341%2520%2520&usg=AOvVaw0jK-UYWM8uIrigHzzeohoj>
- Garcia, Raphael Tsavkko. "Bolsonaro is Laying the Foundations of a New Dictatorship." *Al Jazeera*. Doha: Al Jazeera Media Network, 2019.  
<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/bolsonaro-laying-foundations-dictatorship-191209153455904.html>.
- Jacobs, Meg. "WREAKING HAVOC FROM WITHIN: George W. Bush's Energy Policy in Historical Perspective." In *The Presidency of George W. Bush: A First Historical Assessment*, edited by Zelizer Julian E., 139-68. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctvc4h45.11>.
- Jacobs, Meg. "Obama's Fight against Global Warming." In *The Presidency of Barack Obama: A First Historical Assessment*, edited by Zelizer Julian E., 62-77. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctvc777dh.9>.
- Kay, Bruce H. "'Fujipopulism' and the Liberal State in Peru, 1990-1995." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 38, no. 4 (1996): 55-98. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/166259>
- Klimenko, Ekaterina. "Russia's Arctic Aspirations." In *Russia's Arctic Security Policy: Still Quiet in the High North?*, 3-12. Report. Stockholm: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2016. [www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19179.7](http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19179.7).
- Lee, Julian. "Why Vladimir Putin Suddenly Believes in Global Warming." *Bloomberg*. Washington, DC: Bloomberg, News, 2019. <https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/why-vladimir-putin-suddenly-believes-in-global-warming-1.1323657>.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. "The Evolution of Post-Soviet Competitive Authoritarianism." In *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, 183-235. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.  
doi:10.1017/CBO9780511781353.
- London, Herbert. "Putin the Environmentalist." *The Hill*. Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2015. <https://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/energy-environment/244373-putin-the-environmentalist>.
- Mitrova, Tatiana, and Yuriy Melnikov. "Energy Transition in Russia." *Energy Transit*, no. 3 (2019): 73-80. Berlin: Springer, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41825-019-00016-8>.
- Obama, Barack. "What Science Can Do." *Issues in Science and Technology* 25, no. 4 (2009): 23-30. Dallas: University of Texas at Dallas, 2009. [www.jstor.org/stable/43314908](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43314908).
- Pereira, Eder Johnson, Luiz Ribeiro, Lucio de Silva Freitas, and Hernane Barros Pereira. "Brazilian Policy and Agribusiness Damage the Amazon Rainforest." *Land Use Policy* 92, (2020): 1-6. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2020.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0264837719314899>.
- Phillips, Dom, Daniel Camargos, Andre Campos, Andrew Wasley, and Alexandra Heal. "Revealed: Rampant Deforestation of Amazon Driven by Global Greed for Meat." *The Guardian*. London: Guardian News & Media Limited, 2019.  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/02/revealed-amazon-deforestation-driven-global-greed-meat-brazil>.
- Phillips, Tom. "Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro Denounced for Joining Pro-Dictatorship Rally." *The Guardian*. London: Guardian News & Media Group, 2020.

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/20/jair-bolsonaro-dictatorship-rally-protest-brazil-president-denounced>.
- “Russia.” *International Energy Agency*. Paris: International Energy Agency, 2020. <https://www.iea.org/countries/Russia>.
- Slater, Candace. "VISIONS OF THE AMAZON: What Has Shifted, What Persists, and Why This Matters." *Latin American Research Review* 50, no. 3 (2015): 3-23. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015. [www.jstor.org/stable/43670307](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43670307).
- Spring, Jake, and Stephen Eisenhammer. “Exclusive: As Fires Race Through Amazon, Brazil’s Bolsonaro Weakens Environment Agency.” *Reuters*. London: Reuters, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-brazil-environment-ibama-exclusive/exclusive-as-fires-race-through-amazon-brazils-bolsonaro-weakens-environment-agency-idUSKCN1V14I>.
- Thomas, Gerald B. "U.S. Environmental Security Policy: Broad Concern or Narrow Interests." *The Journal of Environment & Development* 6, no. 4 (1997): 397-425. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishing, 1997. [www.jstor.org/stable/44319288](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44319288).
- Thompson, Barton H. "Conservative Environmental Thought: The Bush Administration and Environmental Policy." *Ecology Law Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2005): 307-47. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, 2005. [www.jstor.org/stable/24114452](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24114452).
- Trommler, Frank. "Between Normality and Resistance: Catastrophic Gradualism in Nazi Germany." *The Journal of Modern History* 64 (1992): S82-101. Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1992. [www.jstor.org/stable/2124970](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2124970).
- United Nations Environmental Programme. *Emissions Gap Report 2019*. Nairobi: United Nations Environment Programme, 2019. <https://www.unenvironment.org/interactive/emissions-gap-report/2019/>.
- White House. *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*. Washington, DC: White House, 1996. <https://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-1996/>.
- White House. *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age*. Washington, DC: White House, 2000. <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2000/>.

#### **Chapter 4:**

- Barr, William. *Memorandum on Mueller’s “Obstruction” Theory*. Washington, DC: Personal Office of Bill Barr, 2018. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/bill-barrs-very-strange-memo-obstruction-justice>.
- Barr, William. *Remarks at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Barbara L. Olson Memorial Lecture at the Federalist Society’s 2019 National Lawyers Convention*. Washington, DC: Department of Justice, 2019. <https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-william-p-barr-delivers-19th-annual-barbara-k-olson-memorial-lecture>.
- Beitsch, Rebecca. “Trump Signs Order Removing Environmental Review of Major Projects.” *The Hill*. Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2020. <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/501258-trump-signs-order-removing-environmental-review-for-major-projects>.
- Carney, Jordain. “McConnell Pledges to be ‘Grim Reaper’ for Progressive Policies.” *The Hill*. Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2019. <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/440041-mcconnell-pledges-to-be-grim-reaper-for-progressive-policies>.

- Cheung, Helier. "What Does Trump Actually Believe on Climate Change?" *BBC News*. London: The BBC, 2020. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-51213003>.
- Clevenger, Tyler, and Matt Herbert. "7 Ways the Trump Administration is Harming the Climate." *World Resources Institute*. Washington, DC: The World Resources Institute, 2020. <https://www.wri.org/blog/2020/04/7-ways-trump-administration-harming-climate>.
- Collinson, Stephen. "Trump: Clinton 'Has to Go to Jail'." *CNN*. Atlanta: Cable News Network, 2016. <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/10/12/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-podesta-emails/index.html>.
- Diamond, Jeremy. "Trump 'I'm Afraid the Election's Going to be Rigged'." *CNN*. Atlanta: Cable News Network, 2016. <https://edition.cnn.com/2016/08/01/politics/donald-trump-election-2016-rigged/index.html>.
- "Donald Trump Suggests 'Second Amendment People' Could Act Against Hillary Clinton." *New York Times*. New York: The New York Times Company, 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/10/us/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton.html>.
- Engel, Pamela. "Donald Trump Threatens to Rewrite Libel Laws to Make it Easier to Sue the Media." *Business Insider*. Hamburg: Axel Springer SE, 2016. <https://www.businessinsider.com/donald-trump-libel-laws-sue-media-2016-2?international=true&r=US&IR=T>.
- "Environmental Performance Index 2010." *EPI*. New haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, 2010. [http://www.ciesin.org/documents/EPI\\_2010\\_report.pdf](http://www.ciesin.org/documents/EPI_2010_report.pdf).
- "Environmental Performance Index 2014." *EPI*. New haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, 2014. [http://www.ciesin.org/documents/2014\\_epi\\_report.pdf](http://www.ciesin.org/documents/2014_epi_report.pdf).
- "Environmental Performance Index 2020." *EPI*. New haven, CT: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy, 2020. <https://epi.yale.edu/epi-results/2020/component/epi>.
- Folley, Aris. "McCaskill: 'Mitch McConnell has Presided Over Absolutely Destroying Senate Norms.'" *The Hill*. Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2019. <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/475711-mccaskill-mitch-mcconnell-has-presided-over-absolutely-destroying-senate>.
- Freedom House. *Freedom in the World 2019- United States*. Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2019. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/united-states/freedom-world/2019>.
- Gibbens, Sarah. "15 Ways the Trump Administration has Changed Environmental Policies." *National Geographic*. Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2019. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/02/15-ways-trump-administration-impacted-environment/>.
- Greshko, Michael, Laura Parker, Brian Clark Howard, Daniel Stone, Alejandra Borunda, and Sarah Gibbens. "A Running List of How President Trump is Changing Environmental Policy." *National Geographic*. Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2019. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/03/how-trump-is-changing-science-environment/>.
- Hagen, Lisa. "Trump: Clinton 'Has to Go to Jail'." *The Hill*. Washington, DC: Capitol Hill Publishing Corp., 2016. <https://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/presidential-races/300709-trump-clinton-has-to-go-to-jail>.
- Johnson, Eliana. "The Real Reason Bill Barr is Defending Trump." *Politico*. Arlington County, VA: Politico LLC, 2019. <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/05/01/william-barr-donald-trump-mueller-report-1295273>.

- Kiamba, Anita. "The Sustainability of Urban Development in Developing Economies." *Consilience*, no. 8 (2012): 20-25. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26188711>.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018.
- Minnite, Loraine C. *The Myth of Voter Fraud*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- Packer, George. "The President is Winning His War n American Institutions." *The Atlantic*. Washington, DC: The Atlantic Monthly Group, 2020. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/04/how-to-destroy-a-government/606793/>.
- Southerland, Elizabeth. "We Can't Let Trump Roll Back 50 Years of Environmental Progress." *The Guardian*. London: Guardian News & Media Group, 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/22/earth-day-50-years-anniversary-environment-trump>.
- "U.S. Election 2016: Trump Says Election 'Rigged at Polling Places'." *BBC*. London: The BBC, 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2016-37673797>.
- White House. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington, DC: White House, 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

### **Conclusion:**

- Carothers, Thomas. "Is Democracy the Problem?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/01/16/is-democracy-problem-pub-78137>.
- Esping-Anderson, Gosta. *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Ford, Matt. "The 'Far Right' in America: A Brief Taxonomy." *The Atlantic*. Washington D.C.: The Atlantic Monthly Group, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/far-right-taxonomy/509282/>.
- Homer-Dixon, Thomas F. "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases." *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 5-40. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994. [https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539147?seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2539147?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents).
- Krznicar, Roman. "Why We Need to Reinvent Democracy for the Long-Term." *BBC*. London: The BBC, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20190318-can-we-reinvent-democracy-for-the-long-term>.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. New York: Penguin Random House LLC., 2018.
- Lipset, Seymour Martin, and Earl Rabb. *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970*. New York: Harper & Row, 1970.
- Nair, Chandran. *The Sustainable State : The Future of Government, Economy, and Society*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018. <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.uu.nl/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1811612&site=ehost-live>.



- Willis, Rebecca. "Twenty Years of Climate Action – but Still Emissions Rise." In *Too Hot to Handle?: The Democratic Challenge of Climate Change*, 69-80. Bristol, UK: Bristol University Press, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctvz938kb.8.
- Willis, Rebecca. "A Strategy for the Climate Emergency." In *Too Hot to Handle?: The Democratic Challenge of Climate Change*, 101-18. Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2020. doi:10.2307/j.ctvz938kb.10.

## PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

### **Fraud and Plagiarism**

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.

The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.

Name:

Alex Hampton

Student number:

6774903

Date and signature:

Alex Hampton

06-19-2020

Submit this form to your supervisor when you begin writing your Bachelor's final paper or your Master's thesis.

Failure to submit or sign this form does not mean that no sanctions can be imposed if it appears that plagiarism has been committed in the paper.