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## **WILL AUTHORITARIAN DEVELOPMENTALISM DOMINATE THE WORLD?**

### **Abstract:**

More and more often we encounter the opinion that democracy is not necessarily the optimum system of government. It is particularly visible in turbulent times, when the ability to make quick decisions becomes one of the key factors determining a country's ability to gain a competitive edge. As a result, in numerous discussions concerning the future of democracy we can also hear voices which advocate that the democratic system must be reformed or else it will collapse. In the light of the above, we should ask ourselves if there are any alternatives which would be more capable of successfully facing the challenges of the contemporary world.

The best candidate seems to be authoritarian developmentalism, which is the dominant system of government in East Asia. However, the analysis of the system shows that its implementation requires special characteristics which are not necessarily common for most societies. Moreover, after a country reaches a certain stage of civilisational development, the system stops being adequate for the developing civil society and as a result it requires many modifications – as many as in the case of democracy.

**Keywords:** authoritarian developmentalism, democracy, world in 2050

### **Streszczenie:**

Coraz częściej pojawia się opinia, że demokracja niekoniecznie musi być optymalnym systemem sprawowania władzy. W szczególności jest to widoczne w turbulentnych czasach, kiedy to szybkość podejmowania decyzji staje się jednym z kluczowych czynników osiągnięcia przewagi konkurencyjnej. W efekcie, w licznych dyskusjach dotyczących przyszłości demokracji, pojawiają się głosy o konieczności reformowania tego systemu lub rychłym jego upadku. Wobec powyższego warto zadać sobie pytanie: czy istnieją alternatywne rozwiązania, które mogłyby skuteczniej stawiać czoła wyzwaniom charakterystycznym dla współczesności?

Najlepszym kandydatem wydaje się być autorytarny dewelopmentalizm, czyli dominujący sposób sprawowania władzy w Azji Wschodniej. Jednakże

analiza tego systemu pokazuje, że jego zastosowanie wymaga szczególnych cech, które niekoniecznie są powszechne w większości społeczeństw. Ponadto, wraz z rozwojem cywilizacyjnym system ten przestaje być adekwatnym dla rozbudowującego się społeczeństwa obywatelskiego i w efekcie wymaga wielu modernizacji, co powoduje konieczność równie wielu zmian jak w przypadku demokracji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** autorytarny developmentalizm, demokracja, świat 2050

### **Introduction**

In 2050 the world will be different. Changes will probably affect all aspects of life, including social relations and systems of government. While it is not certain, it seems that transformations will occur in an evolutionary rather than revolutionary way. This assumption is a significant simplification because growing social tensions and inequalities may cause the appearance of barriers to development. The occurrence of black swans in the form of a world war (even to a limited scale), although possible, seems little probable due to the fact that it is difficult to imagine any potential winners of such conflict. Therefore, further in this article, we assume that within the perspective of half of the century there will be no world war, which does not mean the lack of wars in generals. Just as today, there will probably be many regional and local conflicts whose impact on the world's problems will be similar to the one made by the current ones. Therefore and as a result of conflicting national interests (or interests of groups of nations), we can assume that the state will still be the basic entity of international politics. Its position may not be as strong as it was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, because the role of groups of interests in the form of different types of international organizations and transnational corporations will keep growing. We may, however, be positive that the establishment of the world government centre with executive power, performing the role of a global government, is too improbable to be taken into account in this analysis.

Moreover, this article excludes the phenomena of very high impact but negligible probability of occurrence, such as the eruption of a super volcano or the Earth's collision with a large space object. The impact of such phenomena would be so great that it would endanger the existence of humanity. Their occurrence, however, is not to be predicted.

The article also does not take into account problems related to geopolitics, i.e. the determination of a real power of influence of particular countries, super-states in particular. Such problems are deliberately left out, because our approach is that regardless of the dominance of particular powers, changes will come from below, stemming from social relations rather than international politics.

## **Democracy**

Democracy is regarded as the best system of government. Taking into account the voice of the people in decision-making processes (through referenda and elections) lets the government better serve the needs of the society. Nevertheless, more and more often we hear voices criticizing the system. In a recent research by the Lowy Institute, less than half of Australians considered democracy as the best solution for their country (Oliver, 2013). In Western Europe the sentiments are similar (Diamond, 2010; Runciman, 2013). To some extent, this may be the result of the process of bureaucratization of democracy, i.e. the prevailing presence of procedures and officials in the social and political life.

Other reasons for the decrease in the interest in democracy include:

- a short-term horizon of action, limited mostly by the cycles of elections,
- a longer time of reaction to changes,
- the need to achieve the majority support for an idea, which makes making unpopular decisions extremely difficult or even impossible.

Another important factor causing the decrease in the efficiency of the democratic system is the increase of social control due to technological changes (monitoring, the internet, etc.). This results in a situation when the representatives of authorities are constantly criticized for various kinds of faults. These are all kinds of problems, from reckless statements of the church hierarchs during press conferences, through dazzling with luxury goods or recording of inappropriate conduct. This leads to a decreased legitimization of power. In this way, every new decision-maker is afraid to make necessary, radical and at the same time unpopular decisions for fear of criticism from voters (Bremmer, 2013). Authorities try to defend themselves by implementing solutions aimed at controlling the flow of information in the internet, which only results in more reluctance in the society (AFP, 2013). Sometimes, all this leads to a short-term enhancement of the democratization processes, but often it appears that, on the long run, it only results in radicalized approaches, tiredness of democracy and further malaise.

The problems related to the decrease in the trust in democracy are noticeable not only on the national level but also on the level of international organizations, including the Council of Europe, which for many years has conducted research in this field. The conclusions of the recent conference, i.e. the Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy (23-29 November 2013) are similar to previous findings, i.e. there is a serious risk of degradation of democratic ideas and a need to reform systems and the assumptions of the whole idea. One of the elements of changes are challenges related to the digital information revolution, i.e. the transfer of the public debate to the internet and the use of new tools of communication. This process involves both opportunities and threats.

Statistics (see table 1) show that the process of the democratisation of the world has come to a halt. Since the transition in Portugal in 1974, when only 25% of countries had democratic systems of government, to the middle of the nineties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the process of democratisation was dynamic and at present as many as 60% of all countries of the world are democracies. Since that time, statistically, little has changed. Nevertheless, more detailed analyses show that dynamic alterations are still taking place. Every year, several countries abandon electoral systems and turns towards authoritarian forms of government. They, on the other hand, are replaced by a similar number of new democracies. In total, the process involves about 1/5 of all democratic countries. It is worrying that countries which abandon democracy are entities which have started the process of democratization quite recently, usually after 1990 (Puddington, 2013). This means that democracy is not an attractive solution for them. Moreover, it is worth emphasizing that the listing presented in table 1 includes also countries not associated with democracy, but having a democratic electoral system, such as Belarus or Russia. This may be another reason for the high rotation in this listing.

**Table 1. Electoral democracies in 1989-2012**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of countries</b>	<b>Number of democracies</b>	<b>Share of democracies<sup>a)</sup></b>
2013	195	117	60
2012	195	117	60
2011	194	115	59
2010	194	116	60
2009	193	119	62
2008	193	121	63
2007	193	123	64
2006	192	123	64
2005	192	119	62
2004	192	117	61
2003	192	121	63
2001-2002	192	121	63
2000-2001	192	120	63
1999-2000	192	120	63
1998-1999	191	117	61
1997-1998	191	117	61
1996-1997	191	118	62
1995-1996	191	115	60
1994-1995	191	113	59
1993-1994	190	108	57
1992-1993	186	99	53

Year	Number of countries	Number of democracies	Share of democracies <sup>a)</sup>
1991-1992	183	89	49
1990-1991	165	76	46
1989-1990	167	69	41

a) Rounding to whole numbers

Source: Puddington A., (2013), *Freedom in The World 2013: Democratic Breakthroughs in The Balance*, Freedom House, Washington, New York p. 29.

When analysing systems of governance we should also pay attention to the fact that in spite of many thousands of years of the history of democracy, the system was fully implemented only in a few countries. Many more only implemented a defective version of it; these are the so-called flawed democracies (see table 2). It is, however, worth emphasizing that the number of countries using undemocratic systems (hybrid and authoritarian regimes) is higher (EIU, 2013).

**Table 2. Participation in various systems of government in 2012**

Specification	Number of countries using a given system	Share in the general number of countries (%)	Share in the general number of people (%)
Full democracies	25	15,0	11,3
Flawed democracies	54	32,3	37,2
Hybrid regimes	37	22,2	14,4
Authoritarian governments	51	30,5	37,1

Source: EIU (2013), *Democracy Index 2012. Democracy at a standstill*, The Economist Intelligence Unit, p. 2.

Recent years brought the apparent renaissance of democracy in the form of the Arab Spring. Nevertheless, more and more often it is pointed out that the Arab Spring was just a short spurt and many of the countries – having conducted elections – entered the path of fundamentalism and limited democracy. In practice, the only Arab country about which it can be said that it entered the path of democracy for good is Iraq (Diamond, 2008), but it paid for it with blood and it is still unclear if the price will not appear even higher. Such sentiments are promoted by the information coming from the Far East, where authoritarian states achieve economic successes and cope with modern challenges significantly better than the rest of the world.

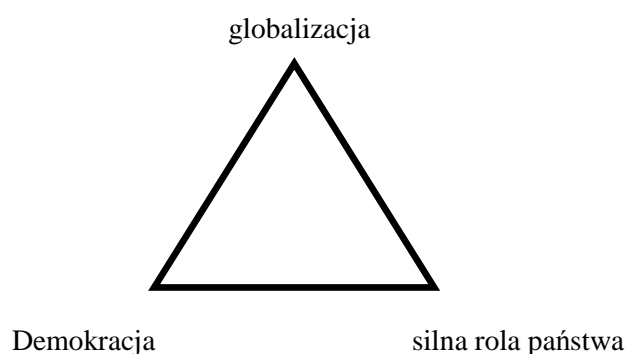
At the same time, it must be emphasized that democracy has many advantages. The economic growth in the system may be smaller<sup>1</sup> and the system is not able to react quickly in the international arena, but all this does not mean the system is inefficient. Its advantage is that it can better suit the initiatives it takes to the needs of the society.

This may be evidenced, among other things, by the comparison showing that democratic countries cope better with the effects of natural disasters. In the opinion of the authors of the comparison the number of victims of natural disasters in democracies is much lower than in authoritarian countries of a similar level of wealth and if the scale of the disaster is comparable (Smith & Flores, 2010). It is worth emphasizing that this advantage stems only from the difference in priorities. The example of Cuba shows that even an authoritarian country is able to conduct a large scale emergency action. In this country, if there is a threat of a hurricane, the authorities decide to evacuate all the people living in an endangered area. The fact that the evacuations are compulsory minimizes the number of victims. The use of such measures as compulsory evacuation in a democracy seems little possible. Hence, it is all about the choice of priorities.

In my opinion the decrease in the interest in democracy can be explained mostly through current economic changes. Most people assess their satisfaction through the level of their wealth. In the era of globalization, when strong international links make it necessary for countries to react to the changing situation as quickly as possible, democracy turns into a boat anchor, because decision-makers analyse the potential impact of every decision they make on their popularity at the time of elections. Thus, any unpopular, though necessary, decisions are postponed as much as possible (Bremmer, 2013). Moreover, democracy always involves the risk of breaking the continuance of one economic policy if – after elections – the power is given to new politicians. Therefore, any strategies are short-term or medium-term, which hinders new economic sectors from developing and makes it difficult to implement capital-intensive investments. Moreover, there is a possibility that it is the next government which will take all the blame for the costs or all the credit for the benefits of policies implemented by the previous team. In this way, the efforts of one party may bring success to the other one and the other way round. In theory, the relations between democracy and globalization have been presented by D. Rodrik (2007) in his theory of a political trilemma of the world economy (see Fig. 1.), which is the evolution of the trilemma of the impossible related to the international economy.

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<sup>1</sup> This cannot be explicitly stated but many studies do not confirm it. (see Rock, 2009).

**Figure 1. Political trilemma of the world economy**

Opis rysunku (od góry): globalisation, strong position of the state, democracy.  
Source: (Rodrik, 2007)

The author of this figure points out that it is impossible to achieve all of the three goals at the same time, i.e. globalization, democracy and the strong position of the state (Rodrik, 2007). This means that authorities may achieve only a maximum of two of the three goals. In developing countries, where the need to satisfy material needs is very strong, the issue of democracy is often shifted aside, giving way to the two other goals. This is the result of simple estimations. Rejecting globalization and achieving a high level of welfare in the contemporary economy is impossible, because even countries which have at their disposal significant resources and many potential consumers are not able to function independently. The choice is then limited to the one between democracy and the strong role of the state. The experience of the last thirty years shows that countries having a precise development policy achieved bigger successes than those which chose neoliberalism. This is why so many countries give up the benefits of democracy.

### **What alternatives for democracy are there?**

Assuming that democracy is not a fully efficient system, it is worth considering other possible solutions, which could be more adequate in the current situation of constant insecurity. Such systems would have to be characterised by better solutions enabling them to deal with modern challenges quicker and in a more efficient way. Enumerating those challenges does not seem necessary, but it is worth emphasizing that they are characterised by high volatility and rapidity, and they spread quickly all over the world. It is assumed that in the future these features will become even more intensive due to further dissemination of information and communication technologies (ICT).

As a result, the new social and political system should be resistant to constant changes in the environment and able to react to them quickly and adequately. The analysis of the contemporary world economy shows that only East Asian and Scandinavian countries have the desired characteristics. Nevertheless, the scale of impact and the pace of changes resulted in a situation in which the real global leader seems to be the system prevailing in Asia (see Prandecki, Nawrot, & Wawrzyński, 2013). This thesis is supported by the characteristics of the system which may be found in relevant literature; researchers focus especially on such features as the GDP growth rate, the import and export rates (of both goods and services), the wealth of the society and changes in the field of the number of registered patents and inventions (Prandecki, 2013). Thanks to its demographic potential, the position of the leader is being taken over by the People's Republic of China, which already is regarded the greatest world economy after the United States.

Economic forecast suggests that if the conditions mentioned above persist, by the mid-century the countries of East Asia will become the leading economies of the world, as it is already the case with Japan, South Korea and Singapore. However, the power of impact of such states as China and Indonesia will be much greater due to their demographic potential (IMF, 2013; O'Neill, 2012; OECD, 2012; Prandecki et al., 2013; PwC, 2013). It is worth remembering that these East Asian economies were very much destroyed in the Second World War, which means that their current position in the world economy is the result of the reforms these countries introduced within the last sixty years.

The success of the leading East Asian countries is due to the following:

- a quick GDP growth,
- a demographic advantage,
- better resistance to crises,
- long-term planning,
- openness to international economy,
- an emphasis on education, research and development,
- cultural factors.

All this was achieved thanks to the implementation of a specific mercantilist long-term economic policy, characterized by a strong share of investments in the state's budget. This caused an increase in production, mostly of exported goods. The resulting surpluses were also earmarked for investments, which made the long-term economic growth possible. As the society is becoming wealthier, domestic consumption is also beginning to show. Such has been the development of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore and now China, Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines. It is worth emphasizing that the aforementioned countries entered this path at different times, which means they are currently at different stages of development. Generally, it should be noted that it



is very probable that this region of the world will become a new global economic centre. This process has already started.

In the light of the above it must be assumed that systems of government used in the countries of East Asia are better suited to the contemporary world than the systems used in developed countries, which lose their competitive edge to other parts of the world, which are just catching up with them. Therefore, they deserve more attention. At the first glance, it seems that the solutions used in different countries of the region have little in common. Some of the countries are democracies (e.g. South Korea, Japan, Singapore), other countries (like China or Vietnam) have strongly authoritarian or even totalitarian systems (North Korea). In the case of the latter, however, it would be difficult to speak of any development. Similarly, in the case of Myanmar, where the totalitarian military rule has only recently started to reform the country and it is still too soon to evaluate the results.

A more profound, historical analysis of the systems of government applied in the countries of East Asia leads to a conclusion that in almost all of them there were periods of authoritarianism, which often overlap with the times when new impulses for development appeared. This is presented in detail in table 3.

**Table 3. Elements of authoritarianism in East Asian countries**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Description</b>
Japan	1955-2009, a break in 1993-1996	Formally, the country is a democracy, but the ruling party is the Liberal-Democratic Party.
South Korea	Until 1987	A military rule.
People's Republic of China	The whole period of its existence, since 1949.	Socialist system based on a single party rule.
Vietnam	Since 1976	A socialist republic.
Malaysia	1957-2013	Formally, the country is a democracy but de facto it is a single-party state. In 2013 the party lost the elections but is still part of the ruling coalition.
Indonesia	Until 1998	A particularly authoritarian rule was that of Suharto. After 1998 the country turned into a democracy but it is still a single party state (the same party in power).
Singapore	Since 1968	A single party state (the Peo-

Country	Period	Description
		ple's Action Party).
Taiwan	At least until 1987	A typical authoritarian rule, after 1987 – a democracy.
Thailand	1955-1973	Authoritarianism.
Myanmar	Since 1948	A totalitarian rule.
The Philippines	Until 1988	A dictatorship, currently a democracy.

Source: Own work.

The comparison of the periods mentioned in table 3 with the times when the economic growth accelerated indicates the existence of a correlation. One significant exception is the Philippines. This country has been developing much faster since democratization than before it. It is important because many analysts regard the country as one having the greatest growth potential for the next decades (Ward, 2012). These estimates have been significantly limited due to the fact that the country was devastated by a hurricane in November 2013. Nevertheless, it is still worth our attention because it shows that developmentalism is not inevitably related to authoritarianism.

Recapitulating, so far our analysis has led us to the conclusion that the system which may compete with democracy is authoritarian developmentalism. Therefore, it is worth further analysis.

#### **Authoritarian developmentalism – the characteristic of the phenomenon**

A notion most often used to describe common features characterizing the reasons for the dynamic development of East Asian countries is authoritarian developmentalism. It is difficult to find its precise definition in relevant literature. The word “authoritarian” is clear – it means basing the rule on the authority of a charismatic leader (who can be an individual or a group). In practice, it means that different forms of repression are used against those who attempt to challenge this leadership. Nevertheless, as opposed to totalitarianism, in authoritarianism, control and terror are not applied to a large extent. Authoritarian rules are often equipped with many token attributes of democracy, i.e. elections. However, the participation of any opponents of the authoritarian rule in those attributes is limited.

Developmentalism is significantly more difficult to define. Before, it was believed that the development of civilizations is a linear process, which means that countries being in the preindustrial era should be seen as underdeveloped in comparison with highly-developed countries. Therefore, it was believed that these countries should focus on development and catching up with developed

states. Nowadays, however, the assumptions of the linear development are not that widely accepted; also, the instruments of developmental policies have changed (e.g. more emphasis is now placed on levelling income discrepancies). Nevertheless, still the notion of developmentalism refers to taking measures aimed at reaching the level of wealth (calculated per capita) comparable to the level of wealth of highly-developed countries.

The most important literature concerning the role of the state in the economic development comes mostly from the eighties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A book considered fundamental with this respect is the work by Ch. Johnson (1982), in which he described the role of the state in reforming Japan. Japan is the country which, also today, is used as one of the most important examples of applying authoritarian developmentalism. It must be mentioned that the country is usually seen as democracy, but in practice, since war until today (with one exception), the country has been ruled by just one party. In a more general approach, it can be assumed that authoritarian developmentalism is a system operating in strong state regimes engaged in facilitating a quick capitalist growth.

Such system is based on the extraordinary authority of the leader. How the leader gains his power is of secondary importance. It can be through a coup d'états or a democratic election (like in the case of German Nazis). Factors which prompt societies to enter this path are: an external threat, domestic ethnic or social instability and a willingness to change an incompetent or corrupted leader.

Usually, an impulse which initiates such choice is crisis, which can be rapid, e.g. caused by changes in the environment, but can also be a result of long years of civilisational delays. In the contemporary world, in the era of internet and mass media, international comparisons may lead to social frustration and desire for changes. These factors create favourable conditions for the choice of a new leader, who would be willing to take on the responsibility for changes. This, of course, does not mean that every authoritarian rule will be efficient. Practise shows that only a small number of leaders are capable of implementing reforms, and it is worth emphasizing that a leader is the crucial factor responsible for changes, because it is him who initiates the actions of others.

It is important that such leader must be surrounded by an appropriate environment, interested in introducing changes. The people who create such environment are often referred to as technocrats, but in practice they are experts in different fields who support the leader in making decisions. Their role is as crucial as the role of the leader, although they usually remain in his shadow.

Only the cooperation of both of these powers (the leader and the support group) aimed at economic development leads to success. This was emphasized by Ch. Johnson (1982), who claimed that achieving a quick pace of growth is possible thanks to political stability and long-term predictability of the system. This means that it is this feature – and not authoritarianism itself – which is the real development fuelling factor. It becomes clear when we compare authoritari-

an regimes. Only a stable (i.e. lasting decades) and consistent application of the ideology of developmentalism leads to significant changes with respect to wealth and social structure.

Success, especially in the early stages of development, is determined by:

- stopping consumption and effective mobilization of forces for industrialisation;
- technocratic rationality;
- immunity to social and political pressure;
- focus on development (List-Jensen, 2008).

The aforementioned factors make it possible to generate the critical mass giving a chance for overcoming barriers and making a civilization leap. Usually, the basic condition is to gather enough financial resources. The experiences of East Asia lead to a conclusion that high spending on investments must last for many years, even decades, depending on the level of the country's underdevelopment.

Maintaining such situation in a democracy is much more difficult and possible only if the elected authorities are very much respected in the society. If there are many groups of stakeholders, choosing one path of development must be difficult, as it requires taking into account the interests of many different environments and working out a compromise. This is not only time-consuming but also makes the final result much weaker than in was in the original plans. Moreover, often, if there is a difficult issue which may require from certain groups that they resign from their privileges, the negotiations are broken off by one of the parties. This may cause the failure of the whole process. Taking the above into account, it must be stated that authoritarian power has a significant advantage over democracy with respect to inducing a growth stimulus.

In political science there is a notion of democratic developmentalism. This notion is used to describe countries where there are many political parties and an electoral system, which are development-oriented and for this reason consistently implement a long-term economic policy. Nevertheless, just like in the case of authoritarian systems, also in this case the continuation of a single economic policy is based on the authority of the ruling. Hence, the division into authoritarian and democratic developmentalism seems unproductive, as in reality both these categories are characterized with the same features, the only difference being the existence of an electoral system. Taking into account the fact that countries implementing a long-term, well-thought policy achieve better results than those in which the only policy is responding to changes as they happen, the above statements lead us to the conclusion that the actual government system (democracy or authoritarianism) is not that important – the key factor is domestic stability.

In general terms, we can assume that both of these systems are characterized by:

- a strong position of the executive (even in the case of countries which are perceived as democracies),
- the creation and consistent implementation of long-term development strategies,
- a significant share of investment expenditures in the state's finances,
- an unbalanced state support for selected sectors of business or single enterprises which facilitate the achievement of particular economic goals,
- the acceptance of the market system,
- a focus on education,
- a pro-export policy of the state.

The foundation ensuring the durability of this system is the state's guarantee of stable effects of the growth, i.e. jobs, increasing income, access to education and health care (Nawrot, 2011). With time, this causes changes in the social structure of the country. As a result, in underdeveloped countries of typically agricultural structure a middle class appears; this middle class starts to demand that its needs are taken into account in the state's policy. In this way, slowly, along with the increase in wealth, the influence of the authoritarian system diminishes. This leads us to a conclusion that authoritarianism in highly developed countries can only be a transition state, because wealthier societies will always demand greater democratic rights. This tendency was very visible in South Korea in the eighties and nineties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a result of the demands of the middle class, the authoritarian regime turned into democracy (in 1987) and democratic standards were gradually introduced into the public life. At a certain stage of development, authoritarianism becomes an obstacle to further development. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that there is a number of barriers due to which no authoritarian power is willing to resign from its privileges. One of these barriers is the personality of a wilful leader, who – even in the face of the evidence that the situation in his country cannot be further improved by old means – does not want to resign from his position. There can be numerous reasons for such behaviours – from self-esteem to fear of being held responsible for unpopular, often illegal, decisions. There is also another force interested in maintaining the status quo – the bureaucracy, which – in the process of transition – can lose its privileges. There can be more of such interest groups; among them the representatives of business, who – thanks to commissions from the regime – could take advantage of the lack of competition and generate extra high profits.

Taking the above into account, it must be stated that departing from authoritarian developmentalism can be as difficult as implementing it. This is why the process is not totally obvious, which can be best seen on the example of Singapore. This country is regarded as one of the most developed entities in the world. It is formally a democracy of quite liberal economic system but it is ruled

always by the same party, centred around a charismatic leader. This and the long-term economic policy give the country its still authoritarian character.

### **The future of authoritarian developmentalism**

In Western Culture it is instinctively assumed that democracy is the best of the existing forms of government, which makes it the centre of any discussion about government options. The weaknesses of democracy are left aside, as the possibilities of its further development are analysed; it is suggested that the collapse of regimes in Iran and Venezuela will bring the renaissance of democratic ideas (Diamond, 2008). However, after the Arab Spring, it seems unlikely that the collapse of these two regimes could be of such great importance. More and more often voices are heard that democracy should be reformed so that it can better face the challenges of globalization.

Discussions on the development of authoritarian regimes are rare in comparison to those concerning democracy. As it has already been mentioned, the most probable situation is the collapse of the authoritarian developmentalism at a certain stage of economic development. Hence, the system is apparently not permanent. Nevertheless, the analysis of East Asian countries leads us to a conclusion that it is a process which can last decades. In the face of the above, countries which are now entering the path of developmentalism will still be on that path in the middle of the century. It is a challenge to foresee what will happen with the entities which have already achieved a certain level of development and with those which can still enter this path.

The future is not clearly foreseeable, it is difficult to accurately predict what will happen to particular countries. But some trends can be identified. The future of China is definitely most worth speculating about. Within the next few years, this country should make strategic decisions concerning the directions of its future social and economic development. B. Góralczyk (2013) claims that there are three basic groups promoting different scenarios for this development. The first group consists of dreamers; they would like China to become the world leader. The second group is made of traditionalists, less visible but as influential as the dreamers; their goal is to return to the roots, i.e. find the foundations for the development of the country within its tradition and national heritage. Realists form the third basic group in this country. They base their policy on existing conditions, which is why they do not picture beautiful visions of the future of China but rather focus on solving existing problems such as: the degradation of the natural environment, depleting resources (access to water in particular), social and territorial stratification. It is difficult to foresee which of these options will win and what impact will it have on the political and economic system of the country. However, it must be emphasized that each of the aforementioned

groups offers concrete solutions aimed at further modernization of the country towards increased innovativeness of its economy. This means that the growth rates may remain high and therefore, for some more time, the society may remain uninterested in departing from authoritarianism. Some hopes were associated with the third plenum of the CCP (held in November 2013). Its results, however, must be called disappointing, as none of the voted decisions could be seen as groundbreaking (see Dews, 2013). Moreover, they concerned the choice of one of the paths of development presented above only in an indirect way. China is a role model for other countries in the region which follow the path of developmentalism (Indonesia, Vietnam)/ This means that whatever the country does will be carefully analysed not only from the perspective of international politics but also from the perspective of possible adjustments to be introduced into the policies of other countries.

A tendency to loosen authoritarianism appears along with the increase of wealth. This happened in Japan and South Korea, which have virtually turned into democracies. The same trend can be seen in other countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. In the light of the development of the Chinese middle class we should also expect that more groups of stakeholders will be included in the system of government. This can be evidenced by the decision of the Chinese government to gradually close down labour camps (Delury, 2013). This, however, does not determine the direction of further changes. The process of democratisation of this country will remain slow. It is highly probable that within decades it will lead to democracy but it is not certain, due to the cultural specificity of this country. The situation is similar in the whole East Asia; with its attachment to and trust in the authority, full democracy is by no means an obvious choice in this region. Moreover, as it was pointed out before, democracy does not rule out the possibility of holding authoritarian power. This is why the probability that authoritarian developmentalism will persist in East Asia is as big as the democratization of the region. One crucial condition for a transition would be maintaining the high pace of economic development, which would make it possible to satisfy material needs of the society.

On the other hand, the vulnerability of the system may be seen in the incidents of the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when we could observe a financial crisis in East Asia. International organizations, such as the World Bank, and the representatives of the civilisation of the west saw authoritarianism as the major culprit in this crisis, as it contributes to the lack of standards and corruption, which – they claimed – were the sources of the crisis. It was widely professed that the application of *good governance* standards would have prevented the crisis in East Asia. In the situation of the lack of the perspectives to grow these statements caused massive protests in many countries, including Indonesia and Malaysia (Thompson, 2004). On the other hand, it is indicated that democracies, e.g. Taiwan, South Ko-

rea, the Philippines and Thailand suffered more in the crisis, because they were less stable and the societies expressed less trust in their governments.

A separate issue is the question of the application of authoritarian developmentalism in other developing countries. It seems that in South and Middle America, exhausted by the 20<sup>th</sup> century extremisms, it would be little possible. But recent reports from Honduras concerning an attempt to create a dedicated extraterritorial city similar to Hong Kong, can be associated with the creation of special economic zones in China, for example in Shanghai (Watts, 2012). Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that entities such as Brazil, Mexico or Chile should show strong tendencies towards authoritarianism. Similarly, in countries identified with the western civilisation, in spite of a growing criticism of democracy, we also should not expect authoritarianism to gain in popularity.

For this reason, it seems more justified to look for such trends in Central Asia and Africa. In Central Asia the democratization processes which started after the collapse of the USSR proved unstable, which brought the popularity of authoritarian forms of government. One exception may be Kazakhstan, whose government is the most democratic, though far from European standards. Nevertheless, authoritarian governments in this region have so far seemed uninterested in the application of the idea of developmentalism. Only recently we could observe some increase in the interest in Chinese solutions but they are treated with extreme caution. The proximity of such large country as China – which in the past used to be an enemy – is treated as a kind of threat. Therefore, many common initiatives, e.g. the idea of a new silk route, are faced with opposition. Consequently, the countries of Central Asia are more willing to cooperate with India, which they perceive as a natural counterbalance for the Peoples' Republic of China. It is difficult to decide to what extent the mixture of authoritarian style of government and Indian economic solutions works. Nevertheless, it definitely will not be a classical path of economic development.

The situation in Africa is totally different. There, the number of democracies and autocracies is more or less equal. Over the last decade we could observe China's growing involvement in economic relations with Africa, first of all in the form of economic investments in interested countries in return for access to natural resources, including land (Cardenal & Araujo, 2012). Additionally, China has become an important supplier of humanitarian aid for the continent, earmarking for this purpose about 75 billion USD in 2000-2011, little less than the USA, which gave 90 billion USD (Strange et al., 2013). The specificity of the Chinese presence in Africa resulted in a critical attitude to the involvement of the superpower in many countries and societies, but many of them still started to introduce the ideas of developmentalism drawing on Asian solutions. The first effects can already be seen, e.g. in 2007-2012 the growth in the GDP in Ethiopia amounted to 9.25% and was the greatest in Africa (UNDP, 2013). Other African



countries of high level of growth in this period include Angola and Nigeria. The latter is described as one of the economic superpowers of the continent, called “the African Lions” (Buiter & Rahbar, 2011). The above examples show that Africa may become a continent where authoritarian developmentalism has a chance to develop. This, however, does not mean that it will become a prevailing form of government within the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Analysing the possibilities of the development of authoritarian developmentalism we should not forget about one scenario, i.e. the popularity of this system due to the activity of third parties, i.e. mostly transnational corporations. Such entities, with the use of their own financial resources, may efficiently influence more than one country. Common interests, e.g. when the government enables the access to natural resources, may lead to a kind of pact, in which corporations will try to create an appropriate media policy aimed at preserving or even strengthening a given government.

### **Conclusions**

In the future, we should not expect a massive change in the systems of government by means of coup d'états, as it is currently taking place in the Ukraine. Much more probable is the evolution of the system under the influence of particular social groups. This evolution will take place within the electoral system. Will it lead to a departure from democracy in favour of authoritarian government? Globally, we should expect a distribution of powers more or less similar to the one we observe now. Democracy is a system typical for European cultural area (Shah, 2012). In some regions of the world, e.g. in South America, we can expect democracy to develop. Also, we should not expect the departure from democracy in India. In other regions of the world, however, e.g. Central Asia and Africa, it is very probable that authoritarian forms of government will prevail.

Another factor influencing the increase in the popularity of authoritarian developmentalism will be the development of the situation in China. The “economic miracle” which has been taking place in this country over the last forty years encourages other nations to choose a similar path of development, but it is worth remembering that the element which attracts other countries is not the authoritarian system itself but the economic success. China, as it was already mentioned, must make a decision concerning their further development, including the evolution of its political system. This could lead to either tightening of the authoritarian rule or to a slow democratization of the country. The choice of a path and further economic successes will have an impact on other countries, which are currently trying to follow the Chinese path. The direction of Chinese reforms is then important not only for the country itself and for its economic partners, but also for political and economic shape of the world.

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