In the Arab world the phenomenon of dissent is complicated by the prominence of antiregime dissidents who are also Islamic fundamentalists, such as Rachid Ghanouchi of al-Nahda (the Renaissance Movement) in Tunisia. Authentic democratic dissidents in this region, who oppose both authoritarian rule and fundamentalist extremism, are frequently writers, such as Egyptian Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz; Kanan Makiya of Iraq, who initiated Charter 91, a human rights manifesto inspired by Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia; Moroccan sociologist Fatima Mernissi, the author of *Islam and Democracy* (1992); Ali Akbar Saidi Sirjani, the Iranian historian who died in prison in November 1994; and the exiled Sudanese Islamist Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim, the author of *Toward an Islamic Reformation* (1990) and a disciple of Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, a democratic Islamist who was executed in Sudan in 1985 because of his heretical views. They also include such human rights advocates as Bahey Eddin Hassan, the secretary general of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, which has criticized abuses by the government as well as by its fundamentalist opponents.

A Continuing Struggle

The global democratic revolution of the 1980s transformed dissidents into heroic figures who could apparently bring down authoritarian governments through the sheer force of their moral courage. In many cases the transformations were not as profound as they at first appeared (witness the backsliding in Russia and the return to power through elections of former communists in five East European countries by mid-1995), nor are the dissidents as influential. As the democratic wave receded and many Western countries became increasingly focused on domestic affairs at the expense of international commitments, the dissidents appeared once again to be isolated figures carrying on a lonely struggle for freedom. Whether they or their successors will be able to recapture the imagination of the world at some more auspicious moment remains to be seen. In the meantime, their struggle continues as an expression of the yearning for freedom that exists in countries throughout the world.

See also *Aung San Suu Kyi; Biko, Bantu Stephen; Freedom of speech; Havel, Václav; Koirala, Bishweshar Prasad; Mandela, Nelson; Poland; Sakharov, Andrei Dmitrievich; Solidarity; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*. In Documents section, see *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).

Carl Gershman

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Districting

The allocation of voters into constituencies. The term *apportionment* refers to the allocation of seats to existing units (for example, political subdivisions such as states), while *districting* refers to the ways in which district boundaries are drawn. In practice, the two terms are often used synonymously. In modern democracies, virtually all decisions are made by elected representatives rather than by the citizens voting directly, although elements of direct democracy such as initiatives, referendums, and town meetings persist.

Almost all democratic elections today involve geographically defined constituencies. Historically, however, a number of countries provided supplemental representation that was based, at least in part, on various forms of group identity or membership. For example, at one time Great Britain gave some university graduates an extra vote; in the Soviet Union members of certain interest groups elected a handful of representatives to the (mostly ceremonial) Soviet parliament.

In the early twentieth century a few scholars argued in

favor of representation based on occupation rather than geography—a position sometimes labeled *corporatist.* Even today, some countries have special voting rolls defined on the basis of race or religion to select a limited number of representatives. Still, most contemporary students of representation take a geographical basis of representation more or less for granted. The principal area of controversy is voting rule—especially majority or plurality versus proportional representation.

Whether elections take place under a list form of proportional representation, under the single transferable vote, under semiproportional representation schemes such as the cumulative vote or limited voting, or under plurality or majority runoff rules, unless the voting unit is the entire polity, it is necessary to draw district lines. Moreover, the decision to use geographical districting leaves open many important questions about the bases of representation and about the choice of voting rule. How many districts will there be, and how large? Will the allocation of seats to a district be based almost entirely on the size of the district's population or pool of eligible voters, or will there be other criteria that will govern the way lines are drawn? For example, will seats be allocated to whole political units such as provinces or towns, or will district lines be permitted to cut across existing subunit boundaries?

Even within geographically defined districts, issues of group representation are not avoided. In the United States, for example, much of the debate about districting criteria has focused on the extent to which districts should seek to place members of historically disadvantaged groups such as African Americans into districts where they make up the majority of the population—even if doing so means drawing districts that are irregular in appearance or cut across municipal and other political unit boundaries.

Voting Rule and District Magnitude

List forms of proportional representation are the most common of systems of representation for modern democracies. They require multimember districts, as do elections under the single transferable vote and semiproportional methods. Plurality elections can take place within either single-member or multimember districts. Most forms of proportional representation reduce to plurality when applied within a single-member district; the exception is the single transferable vote, which becomes the alternative vote. The use of plurality methods within multimember

districts is known as *bloc voting.* Elections using plurality methods in a constituency-wide multimember district are known as *at-large elections.*

District magnitude is the technical term commonly used to refer to the number of representatives elected from a given district. A special term is helpful because district size is usually thought of in terms of the number of inhabitants in a district and might also be used to refer to a district's land area.

Great Britain and various former British colonies, including Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, and the United States, now make exclusive use of single-member districts for national elections to the lower chamber of their legislature. Before 1993 New Zealand also used single-member district plurality elections. Indeed, rather remarkably, a substantial number of countries that use proportional representation have at least some single-member districts. Multimember districts and some form of proportional representation are the norm, however. Most of the newly independent countries formerly associated with the Soviet Union have opted for multimember districts.

The German mixed system (also adopted in New Zealand in 1993), which incorporates both single-member districts and a national constituency, has the greatest range of district magnitudes. But in most democracies there is a considerable range of district magnitude, with the notable exception of the two countries that have a single national list constituency for the lower chamber of their national parliament—the Netherlands (150 seats) and Israel (100 seats)—and one country, Malta, in which all the single transferable vote–based districts have five members. For example, in Austria in the early 1980s district magnitude ranged from 6 to 39; in Belgium in the same period districts ranged from 2 members to 33 members; in Norway, from 4 to 15; in Luxembourg, from 7 to 25; in Switzerland, from 1 to 35; and in Sweden, from 1 to 39.

The decision about election type is, in principle, independent of decisions about district magnitude. At the national level, however, the choice of plurality has become synonymous with the choice of single-member districts, although that was not always the case. The link between plurality and single-member districts is much weaker at the local level than at the national level.

In particular, in the United States, although virtually all elections are conducted by using plurality or majority runoffs, most local elections are at large and thus the relevant district is multimember. Many states use a mix of

single-member and multimember districts for state legislative elections in one or both chambers. The proportion of states that use multimember districts in at least one chamber has been declining, however, largely as a result of voting rights challenges in the courts. In plurality systems, although not in proportional systems, multimember districts are generally less proportional in their representation of parties (and groups) than are single-member districts. Research on plurality-based elections in the United States has found, after controlling for the percentage of minority members in the population, considerable differences between single-member district elections and at-large or multimember district elections. Single-member districts in which there is a significant percentage of minorities in the population are much more likely to have minority representation. The same cannot be said for the representation of political parties: at-large or multimember districts are no more likely to obtain representation in line with the groups' percentages in the population. For women, multimember districts actually favor increased gender representation.

In the United States over the past two decades, minority racial and linguistic groups (especially African Americans and Hispanics) have frequently sought to replace elections using at-large or multimember districts with plans that make exclusive (or almost exclusive) use of single-member districts. Such challenges are most commonly brought under the statutory rubric of section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (as amended in 1982). In general, pursuant to a Supreme Court decision in 1986, *Thornburg v. Gingles*, successful plaintiffs in voting rights challenges to at-large elections in the United States must demonstrate that three conditions hold. First, they must show that voting is polarized along racial lines. Second, they must prove that minority candidates of choice lose as a consequence of (non-Hispanic) whites voting preponderantly for non-minority candidates. And, third, they must demonstrate that the minority population is sufficiently concentrated that it is possible to draw at least one single-member district in which the minority group constitutes a majority (or at least has a realistic chance to elect candidates of its choice).

From a comparative perspective, two important generalizations about districting can be made. First, all things being equal, districting choices will have a greater impact on outcomes in plurality elections when there are more than two political parties competing. Second, districting has fewer consequences for elections under proportional or semiproportional methods than for elections under plurality. However, the way in which a group's voting strength is distributed across districts can affect its overall electoral success even under proportional representation, and expected outcomes can still be manipulated by districting choices, especially choices as to district magnitude.

Districting Criteria

Many criteria have been proposed as relevant to the process by which district lines are drawn. They can be classified in terms of their legal status. Some criteria are best thought of as primary, others as secondary or tertiary. In the United States, equalizing population across districts and avoiding the dilution of a race's votes are criteria rooted in the federal Constitution and in federal statutes, and thus are primary districting criteria. Secondary criteria are those instantiated in state laws on redistricting (for example, contiguity, or respect for city or county boundaries). Tertiary criteria are those rooted in general notions of fair and effective representation that do not have legal sanctions to compel their application in some particular jurisdiction (for example, not fragmenting communities of interest such as farming areas or coastal areas).

U.S. case law has evolved since federal courts entered the districting thicket in the Supreme Court case *Baker v. Carr* in 1962. "One person, one vote," by which is meant the drawing of districts in which the population per representative is roughly the same in all districts, has become the single most important criterion, although it is not totally overriding. One measure of population discrepancy is average deviation, a measure that compares actual district size with ideal district size. Another important measure is total deviation, which compares the deviation for the largest and smallest districts.

For state legislative and local redistricting plans, where the standard of one person, one vote is derived primarily from the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Supreme Court cases in the United States have established a 10 percent total deviation as prima facie evidence of constitutionality. However, for congressional districting, where standards are based directly on the interpretation of Article I of the Constitution, the Supreme Court has held that districts must be as equal as is practicable. One case heard before the Supreme Court in the 1980s, *Karcher v. Daggett*, invalidated a congressional plan with a total deviation of only 0.698 percent.

In contrast, in other countries, especially those using

plurality elections, no such strict population requirements exist. At best, countries may require (or even just suggest) that differences should be no greater than plus or minus 25 percent or plus or minus 50 percent of ideal. On the face of it, therefore, the United States has the world's strictest standards of population equality in districting. The extent of population inequality in U.S. districting at the federal level often goes unappreciated, however. Representation in the U.S. Senate is not related to population. In the House—the repository of the "popular" principle—although there is very little variation in the size of House districts within any state, there is nonetheless considerable variation in district sizes across states.

The largest House district in the 1990s apportionment is 1.7 times the size of the smallest House district, and the 1992 House had a total deviation of 61 percent: Montana's single district had 231,289 people more, and Wyoming's had 118,465 fewer, than the ideal 572,465. The discrepancies were even greater in earlier apportionments.

Such differences in population across districts result from two requirements of apportionment. First, each state must have at least one member in the House regardless of state population. Second, under the rules of congressional apportionment each state must be allocated a whole number of seats; so the number of seats per state is rounded to the nearest whole number. Discrepancies, however, cannot be attributed to choice of a particular method of apportionment, since a variety of such methods have been used for the U.S. Congress.

To satisfy the requirements of the Constitution, congressional district equality in the United States is judged on the basis of persons, not voters. But the case law about the permissible bases of equalization at the state level is much less clear. Although legislative (or congressional) districts within a given state may be very nearly equal in population, in most states voting turnout on election day varies widely across districts. Differences in turnout arise from socioeconomic factors within districts that affect political participation (proportion of citizens, age of the population, and so on). In most other countries, in contrast, attention is paid to equality of numbers of voters or potential voters within a district rather than to equality measured in terms of a district's total population.

Responsibility for Districting

In most countries, especially those with plurality systems, nonpartisan commissions are responsible for drawing district lines. In the United States, in contrast, most legislative bodies are responsible for their own redistricting, and each state legislature draws congressional district lines for its state. Furthermore, in most U.S. legislatures, no plan can be passed without gubernatorial agreement. Moreover, U.S. courts play an important role as arbiter. In the redistricting of the 1980s all but a handful of states saw their legislative or congressional plans challenged in court, and courts had to draw a number of plans. The 1990s witnessed the same pattern. When the legislature and governor are of different parties (and in some other circumstances), states cannot always reach agreement on plans, and the decision is thrown into the courts.

In the United States the Justice Department plays a major role in redistricting, especially in the South and Southwest. In the sixteen states covered (as of 1991) in whole or in part by section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (including all the states of the Deep South), the Department of Justice must approve ("preclear") all redistricting plans (as well as any other changes in electoral law) at all levels of government. The department evaluates any changes with regard to their effect on the votes of protected groups; changes must not be purposefully discriminatory and must not affect the ability of protected groups to participate equally in the political process and to elect candidates of their choice.

Preclearance denials can be appealed to federal court in the District of Columbia, but the department is almost never overruled. Consequently, most jurisdictions do not bother to appeal; instead, they redraw plans to comply with the objections of the Justice Department. In anticipation of preclearance denials, and in light of the threat of lawsuits under the language of section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, as amended in 1982, states have dramatically increased the number of legislative and congressional districts drawn with African American or Hispanic majorities. These districts have a very high probability of electing minority representatives.
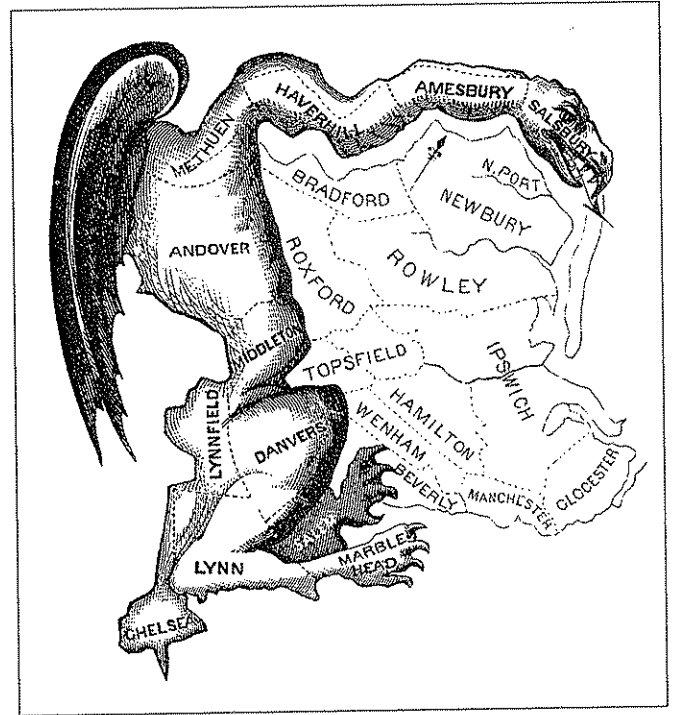
Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering is the drawing of district lines for political advantage or disadvantage. The term comes from wordplay on the last name of Elbridge Gerry, an early governor of the state of Massachusetts. In 1812 Gerry signed into law a districting plan for the Massachusetts Senate. The plan allegedly was designed to maximize the electoral successes of Democratic-Republican Party candidates and to minimize those of Federalist Party candidates. One of the districts was said to look like a salamander. The dis-

trict was shown as a salamander, complete with tongue and teeth, in a map in the *Boston Gazette* of March 26, 1812. The 1812 Senate plan did achieve partisan advantage for the Democratic-Republicans; in the next election they won twenty-nine of the forty Senate seats, even though they received less than half of the total vote. (As a matter of historical interest we might note that Gerry pronounced his name with a hard *g*, although today's most common pronunciation of *gerrymandering* uses a soft *g.)*

Gerrymanders have been classified as partisan, bipartisan (or incumbent), racial, and personal, depending on who can be expected to be harmed or helped. Two basic techniques are used in racial and partisan gerrymandering. The first is to "pack" members of the group that is to be disfavored into districts that are won by very large majorities, thus "wasting" many of that group's votes. The second is to "crack" the voting strength of members of the disfavored group by dispersing the group's population across a number of districts so that the group's preferred candidates will command a majority of the votes in as few districts as possible. In addition, a group's voting strength may be submerged in multimember districts that use bloc voting—a technique sometimes called *stacking.*

The terms *affirmative action gerrymander* and *benign gerrymander* have been used to denote districting intended to advantage members of a historically disadvantaged group. It is important to distinguish among plans, however. Some are drawn to create a level playing field by avoiding unnecessary fragmenting of minority population concentrations, but otherwise they generally take into account the usual districting criteria (such as respect for natural geographical boundaries and historical communities of interest). Others seek to grant special privilege to particular groups by disregarding all features other than race in drawing lines.

Race-conscious districting is permitted—indeed, it is frequently required to comply with the Voting Rights Act. But in a confusingly written 1993 Supreme Court opinion in *Shaw v. Reno,* Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, speaking for a five-member majority, asserted that districts drawn solely to segregate the races are constitutionally impermissible. Some writers have attacked single-member districts that have been drawn in large part for the purpose of racial representation and are contorted in shape. In response, scholars of voting rights such as Lani Guinier, a law professor at the University of Pennsylvania, have argued for multimember proportional or semiproportional districting schemes that would allow voters to support

Gerrymandering is the practice of shaping voting districts to benefit a particular party, politician, or group. It takes its name from a salamander-shaped district created by the Massachusetts legislature under Gov. Elbridge Gerry in 1812.

and elect candidates of a particular racial group if they organized to do so, but that would not require that districts be drawn in a race-conscious manner.

U.S. courts have applied somewhat different standards for partisan as opposed to racial gerrymandering. In a 1986 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Bandemer v. Davis,* the majority of the Court held that the political effects of a districting plan had to be intended before it could be ruled an unconstitutional partisan gerrymander. The decision in that case also suggested that before partisan gerrymandering could rise to the level of a constitutional violation, a plan's effects would have to be shown to be egregious and (most likely) long lasting as well as intentional.

Differences Between Countries

There are dramatic differences in districting practices between the United States and most of the rest of the world. The United States is uncommon in its almost exclusive reliance on plurality methods of selecting winners. The United States shares this choice of electoral rule with only a few other countries, primarily other former British colonies. It is also unusual, at least among nations that use

plurality methods, in generally permitting legislatures to redistrict themselves rather than assigning some neutral administrative or judicial body the line-drawing task. Furthermore, the complex legal review process in the United States can tie up legislative plans in the courts for years and, in many cases, requires the approval of plans by multiple levels of government.

Although U.S. districts are geographically based, recent U.S. court decisions and congressional statutes have made the racial and ethnic consequences of districting plans of far greater legal significance in the United States than in almost any other nation. In most countries, such considerations are largely or entirely irrelevant legally, even if they are of practical concern. Indeed, in the 1990s, except for the need for strict population equality within a state's congressional districts, consequences for racial representation were the most important legal factor in many U.S. states' redistrictings, especially in the South.

One comparison that is often made can be misleading. Many observers have noted that the principle of population equality between districts is extreme in the United States. But in fact, the population of Senate and House districts throughout the country varies far more than might be expected. Senate districts are not included in most international comparisons, yet as statewide districts the largest (California) is about sixty times the size of the smallest (Wyoming). House districts that are equal in population need not be equal in terms of (eligible) voters. And U.S. congressional districts vary significantly in population between states, although not within them.

See also *Affirmative action; Duverger, Maurice; Electoral systems; Proportional representation.*

<div align="right">Bernard Grofman</div>

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Districts, Types of

See *Proportional representation*

Djibouti

See *Africa, Horn of*

Dominant party democracies in Asia

Dominant party democracies in Asia have been a standard arrangement in which an entrenched, elite party asserts tutelary responsibility for guiding the country to economic and political development. Democratic development in Asia, with few exceptions, has taken a form in which a single, dominant party governs the country and is opposed by weak parties that only gradually come to have any hope of ruling. In one manner or another, the dominant party claims to have the dual mission of leading the country to rapid economic development and of teaching the people how their nation can become a modern democracy.

In performing its tutelary tasks, the dominant party's leadership usually claims that authoritarian practices are necessary and legitimate. The dominant parties have differed in the sincerity of their tutelary pledges and also in the length of time they have held on to their authoritarian advantages. Their tutelary pretensions or practices have set apart the Asian one-party-dominant systems from the ordinary autocratic one-party dictatorships found elsewhere.