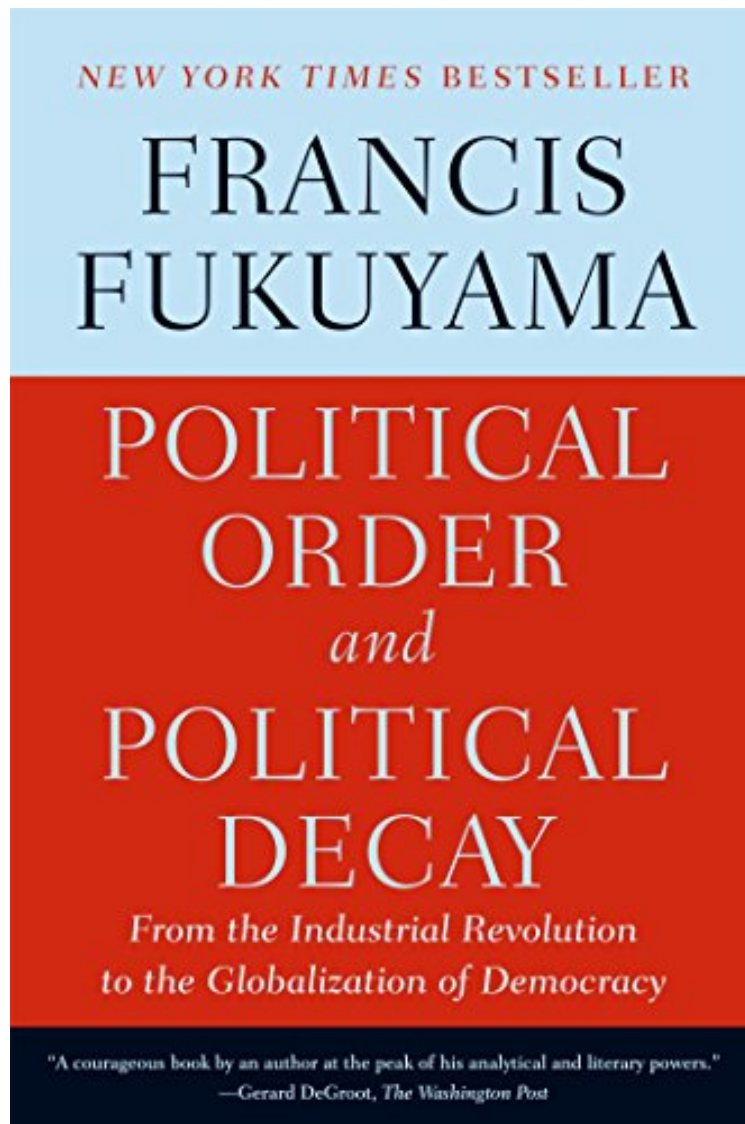


[Mobile book] Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy

Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy

Francis Fukuyama

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Francis Fukuyama : Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy:

169 of 173 people found the following review helpful. Engrossing and Frustrating Excellence By Roger J Jones
A mess - the world, not the book which is excellent. In *The End of History and the Last Man* Dr. Fukuyama asked the question "is there a direction to political evolution?" In *Trust: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order* he explored the impact of high trust vs low trust societies on the evolution and nature of political governance. In his tour de force *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution* we were given an in depth history of political development across many nations and regions. In it Dr. Fukuyama postulates that effective governance requires three sets of political institutions in some kind of balance: the state, the rule of law, and political accountability. In *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy* he left me with the feeling that such an outcome (sustained effective governance) was "to dream the impossible dream." Parts I and II discuss the "State" and "Foreign Influence." In an excellent historical overview he demonstrates that what would appear to be similar circumstances lead to disparate outcomes. Much less than in previous works Dr. Fukuyama treats us to current unanswered questions; how none of the current theoretical constructs adequately explain what has transpired and as such can not give clear guidance on how to proceed. "The State made War and War made the State." In Part III the discussion turns to Democracy. Although revered on an intellectual basis we find that historically democracy is not the panacea one hopes. Periods of semi-benevolent autocracy have many times been fundamental to the development of the modern state. The extension of suffrage has in many cases resulted in clientism - the political elites purchasing votes from the newly empowered reinforcing rather than reducing the elites' political control. In Part IV we get to political decay. Fundamental to human nature is the acquisition of power and the desire once obtained to hold on to it. In a constantly changing world this usually leads to a disparity between the needs and desires of the "in group" and the needs and desires of the "out groups." As the balance between state, law, and accountability becomes more and more out of sync and the "out groups" gain power political upheaval, frequently in the form of armed conflict, is the result. But in Part IV we are once again reminded that there are many paths to and outcomes from political upheaval. I found this book to be both enlightening and frustrating. As an American who in Dr. Fukuyama's words "has a reverence to the Declaration of Independence and the U. S. Constitution" his thoughtful analysis of how our political system has contributed to the current state of American governance: political scandal, incompetent bureaucracy, overt and inappropriate power by special interest groups, approval of Congress in the single digits, was hard to accept - but accept it I did. Frustrating is that there does not appear to be a clear path to resolution. As the book gets closer to modern times I am reminded of Dr. Fukuyama's question in "The End of History." He said (I paraphrase) are we evolving over time to a better form of political governance? Inherent in evolution are two facts: it takes a long time and many evolutionary paths result in dead ends. This suggests that the "mess" the world is in today may be a perturbation in the long term trend of political evolution. On a personal note I found this a enjoyable book. As can be inferred from the time between its publication and my review I spent a couple of long nights engrossed in reading rather than sleeping. The book is more descriptive than prescriptive. If you are looking to justify your political outlook you will not find it here. Likewise if you are looking for the elegant solution to the world's problems it is not here either. But if you want to be educated into just how complex an undertaking of providing a balance between state, law and accountability this is your book.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very good for those interested in the political development of functioning states
By Yoda
This book was inspired by Samuel Huntingtons classic *Political Order and Changing Societies*. This was first published in 1968 and is still being used in universities today. In his book, however, Dr. Fukuyama expands on Dr. Huntingtons thesis on many regards. For example, he examines the important role played in competition by states, particularly in Europe, in the development of the modern functioning state. This is something Dr. Huntington does not. Dr. Fukuyama discusses a plethora of factors behind the development of the modern state and also provides a very large number of interesting observations. For example, the role of land concentration in Argentina played a very important role in the creation and perpetuation of political oligarchy. Another example is the fact that parliamentary democracy has not, historically, lead to functioning states but instead has been the result of states founded and operated by non-democratic means. Dr. Fukuyama, like Dr. Huntington, points out the fact that non parliamentary means of governance (ie, authoritarianism of one form or another) have usually been the means of creating functioning states. Nations starting with weak and/or parliamentary forms of democracy (i.e., many ex-colonial nations after winning their independence) have usually not been able to create functioning modern states. Despite the interesting views and insights, there are still many problems with the book. For example, as just stated above, Dr. Fukuyama points out that authoritarian regimes have usually been needed to form modern states. However, there have been many authoritarian nations that have not been able to create functioning modern states. Examples of these include the modern Russia along with many of the nations that arose from the ex-Soviet Union in Central Asia. Most of Latin America too has had a long history of authoritarianism. Yet few, if any, nations with modern functioning states have arisen there either. The same applies, albeit to a less limited extent, in say China and Vietnam. Despite these weaknesses, this book should be of intense interest for any student of political (and economic) development or for those with a serious interest in how the modern state has come about. It should be noted though that this book is not written for the novice. It is written for those with a comprehensive knowledge of world history.

0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. Great overview of political development and decayBy David S. This is a great overview of political development and decay. I appreciate it's rather balanced view. Fukuyama clearly does not support, and for good reason, systems and ideologies that go to the extremes of too much or too little government. He eschews such ideological devotion to either extreme and does so with examples. Being able to focus on broader aspects of good governance he is able to move on to the important topic of what good governance looks like, how we have gotten there and how we have gotten there differently. He notes what needs to be done through his many examples without too many policy recommendations (very few) of what to do. I think this is a great strength. It reflects his desire and tendency to avoid over-moralizing what people should do and leaves it up to populations to tweak their system, looking to principles. It also keeps him on more solid historical footing rather than more speculative future policy. As a student of history myself, I like the global and historical breadth and depth between volumes 1 and 2. Too few people have done much research into comparative political histories to truly examine how and why political order develops. It would behoove us to do so and we have ever more great resources like these volumes on political order.

The second volume of the bestselling landmark work on the history of the modern stateWriting in The Wall Street Journal, David Gress called Francis Fukuyama's *Origins of Political Order* "magisterial in its learning and admirably immodest in its ambition." In The New York Times Book Review, Michael Lind described the book as "a major achievement by one of the leading public intellectuals of our time." And in The Washington Post, Gerard DeGroot exclaimed "this is a book that will be remembered. Bring on volume two." Volume two is finally here, completing the most important work of political thought in at least a generation. Taking up the essential question of how societies develop strong, impersonal, and accountable political institutions, Fukuyama follows the story from the French Revolution to the so-called Arab Spring and the deep dysfunctions of contemporary American politics. He examines the effects of corruption on governance, and why some societies have been successful at rooting it out. He explores the different legacies of colonialism in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, and offers a clear-eyed account of why some regions have thrived and developed more quickly than others. And he boldly reckons with the future of democracy in the face of a rising global middle class and entrenched political paralysis in the West. A sweeping, masterful account of the struggle to create a well-functioning modern state, *Political Order and Political Decay* is destined to be a classic.

Straightforward and sensible . . . Fukuyama is nothing if not ambitious. Sheri Berman, The New York Times Book It is not often that a 600-page work of political science ends with a cliffhanger. But the first volume of Francis Fukuyama's epic two-part account of what makes political societies work, published three years ago, left the big question unanswered . . . *Political Order and Political Decay* is his answer . . . Fukuyama's wealth of insights [are] worthy of the greatest writers about democracy. David Runciman, Financial Times *Political Order and Political Decay* is a courageous book by an author at the peak of his analytical and literary powers. This project started as an attempt to rewrite and update Samuel Huntington's classic *Political Order in Changing Societies*, published in 1968. Yet Fukuyama has what Huntington sorely lacked, namely the ability to communicate complex ideas through engaging prose. He's both a perceptive political analyst and a wonderful storyteller. Clearly, something has indeed gone haywire in our world: Serious political science is not supposed to be so enjoyable. Gerard de Groot, The Washington Post[A] monumental study [that] rest[s] on an astonishing body of learning. The Economist Fukuyama has been both a policy maker and adviser . . . His latest opus [seeks] to clarify the fundamental problems of political order. David Polansky, Wall Street Journal Fukuyama's brilliant work on political orders [is] cogent, clear, and often intellectually thrilling account of the development of the state . . . There is simply no way to do full justice in a review. Zach Dorfman, The Los Angeles of Books This and the earlier volume, viewed as a single work, will remain vital contributions to the literature on democracy and government for some time to come. Earl Pike, Plain Dealer Fukuyama has succeeded in proving, with a formidable display of erudition, that anyone who wants to reform American democracy had better start by reading his latest book. Michael Ignatieff, The Atlantic Learned and lucid, *Political Order and Political Decay* is jam-packed with insights about political development. Glenn C. Altschuler, San Francisco Chronicle This bold political scientist limns the transformation of societies politically galvanized by eighteenth-century revolutions and financially enriched by nineteenth-century industry . . . Strikingly ambitious and provocative. Booklist (starred review) [Fukuyama's] superb synthesis of political science and history will be useful to experts as well as students and laypeople. Publishers Weekly (starred review) Th[is] deeply engaged political scientist offers a compelling historical overview . . . Systematic, thorough and even hopeful fodder for reform-minded political observers. Kirkus s (starred review) About the Author Francis Fukuyama is the Olivier Nomellini Senior Fellow at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. He has previously taught at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University and at the George Mason University School of Public Policy. Fukuyama was a researcher at the RAND Corporation and served on the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. He is the author of *The Origins of Political Order*, *The End of History and the Last Man*, *Trust*, and *America at the Crossroads*, among other books. He lives with his wife in California.