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Puritanism and Political Authoritarianism: Authoritarian Mastery of Politics

Puritan Political Authoritarianism: General Considerations

Puritanism essentially constitutes or engenders a theological–religious and institutional–social system of political authoritarianism. Its political authoritarianism is primarily manifested and founded in its specific attempt at the mastery of the world of politics. Puritanism attempted or realized total mastery of politics seeks to turn Puritans into potential or real totalitarian "masters of the world" a la Cromwell cum the "Lord Protector of the Realm" following the Puritan Revolution in England, both of the domestic and global political system, and all others their servants, subjects, or instruments. Puritanism considers politics, just as nature, economy, and civil society, part of this world and thus amenable to, as Tocqueville implies, its sectarian mastery or religiously factional, in Madison's meaning,[1] domination.

In consequence, Puritanism tends to transform polity into an authoritarian political system, including religiously based totalitarian dictatorship typically in the form of theocracy as a substitute or proxy for master–slave relations. Political and other authoritarianism or totalitarianism is the intrinsic constituent or the ultimate outcome, realization, or intensification of the Puritan quest for total, absolute, perfect or "pure" mastery, domination, control, coercion, or restraint of polity and all society. Owing to and through this quest for coercive total political and social mastery, Puritanism is intrinsically authoritarian or totalitarian, notably theocratic. For instance, in early America, especially New England, Puritanism was reportedly the "most totalitarian form of Calvinism" (Stivers 1994:18–23). Also, subsequent developments in Puritanism like contemporary evangelist Protestant churches in the US South, notably dominant Southern Baptism, are observed to belong, alongside their Islamic counterparts, to a "wider family of totalitarian solutions offered

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[1] As known, Madison warned against "mischievous" factions, including those religiously based, and so sectarian political rule. Thus, he says "who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other Religions, may establish with the same ease any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all the other sects."