

wendolen M. Carter and John H. Herz

**GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

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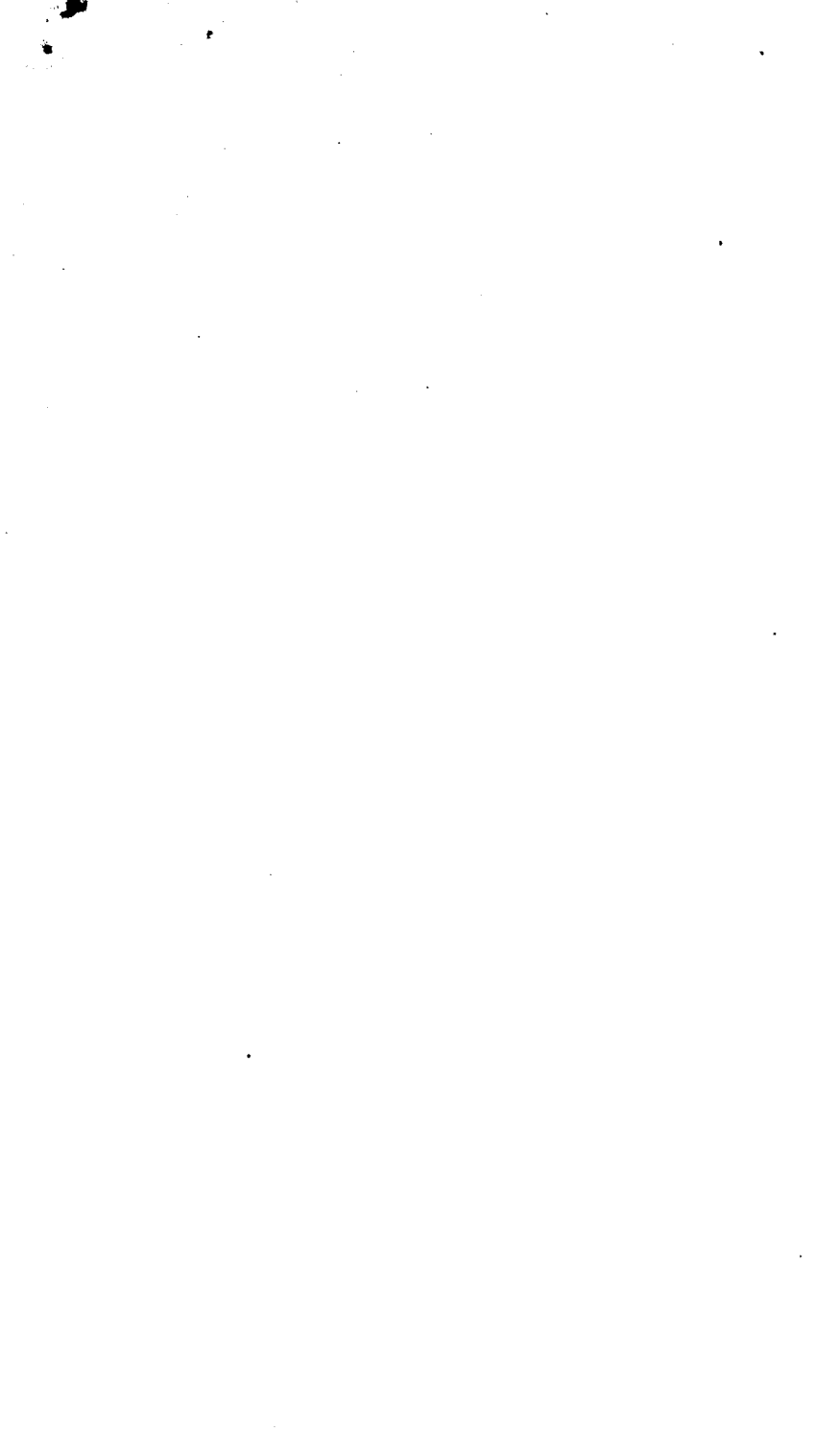
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and Politics
in the
Twentieth
Century

REVISED EDITION

By Gwendolen M. Carter
and John H. Herz



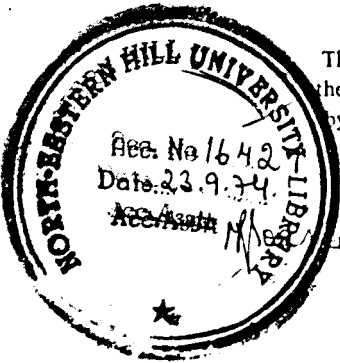
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PREFACE

The systematic study of comparative government and politics has commonly been concerned only with the institutions and activities of European countries and the United States. Moreover, in the still relatively rare works in which the institutions of the newer countries have been examined analytically, the consideration has nearly always been either of a particular state or of several of these states compared with each other. This book seeks to broaden the focus of comparative analysis by dealing with both developed and developing countries and by testing generalizations obtained from the study of mature states in the light of the experience of the newer states of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Accepting the dichotomy of democracy and totalitarianism, we recognize that even highly developed states do not conform exactly to the characteristic features of either system. Particularly among the newer states there are political systems which lie between democracy and totalitarianism, not only partaking of the characteristics of both, but also adding something distinctive of their own.

This book makes no pretense at finality. Rather, we have sought to stimulate further investigation into a field which becomes increasingly suggestive as its focus is widened. We have therefore deliberately sought great breadth of scope. We have been concerned with the operation and results in different settings of what may seem to be similar institutions, with those forces which make for uniformity and those which make for diversity, with the interaction of traditional and revolutionary

forces, and with reactions to the strains of ideological conflict and cold war. While putting into sharp focus the divergencies of governmental and political systems in the twentieth-century world, and while not playing down the conflict situations which such divergency is bound to create, we hope also to have made clear the merit which can exist in systems that differ from Western democracy. It is in accordance with the democratic approach, whose validity we affirm, to grant others their right to find their own institutional answers to their particular problems. Only thus can this "one world" become a world of neighbors.

GWENDOLEN M. CARTER
JOHN H. HERZ

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

When this small volume was first published four years ago, it evoked a degree of interest both in this country and abroad (evidenced by its translation into seven foreign languages) which was as exhilarating as it was unexpected. In bringing out this new edition we wish to express our appreciation above all to those of our critics who have taken us to task for occasional lack of clarity and precision of definition. We have tried to cope with these shortcomings by placing systems and institutions into what we believe to be a clearer and more adequate conceptual framework. We hope that these remedies, plus the numerous and at times comprehensive changes in detail which, in a book like this, are necessitated by new developments and emphases, will render this volume a more useful one.

GWENDOLEN M. CARTER

JOHN H. HERZ

July, 1965





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Government
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III

THREE SIGNIFICANT PATTERNS OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY GOVERNMENT

Within the dichotomy of democracy and totalitarianism there are, as we have seen, all kinds of subtypes, gradations, and transitions which render the spectrum of political regimes extremely varied and colorful. To deal meaningfully with them, it is necessary to select a few patterns of twentieth-century government that appear especially significant, partly because they are characteristic of the political and governmental structures that prevail in major powers, such as the Soviet Union and China, on the one hand, and the United States and Great Britain, on the other, but partly also because they now constitute the standard forms, as it were, likely to be imitated by new countries as well as by older ones when in the process of changing their institutions. These patterns have emerged partly out of history, partly out of force, and partly out of example.

We concentrate on three of these patterns: one of these characterizes totalitarianism wherever it has arisen in the twentieth century; and two markedly different structures are found among liberal democratic systems. The first is *dictatorship* based on *one-party* rule—with the official or “state” party in turn representing the “movement” and its basic philosophy. This form has been the predominant feature of Communist as well as fascist totalitarianism. Democracy, on the other hand, though exhibiting greater variety, has traditionally operated through either of two distinctive patterns, which have been

IV

THE FRAMEWORK OF LIMITED GOVERNMENT

ORIGINS AND FUNCTIONS OF CONSTITUTIONS

Constitutions define, and thereby limit, public power. The distinctive characteristics of a totalitarian dictatorship, as we have indicated above, are the facts that the power exercised by its governing group is unlimited and unrestrained, and that in principle the authority of the regime extends into every aspect of the life of the individual—religious, cultural, economic, and social. In contrast, the exercise of political power in a liberal democracy is limited by a constitutional framework which protects certain areas of personal and group life from governmental interference and provides that governmental powers shall be exercised in accordance with known procedures. The distinction between the two forms of government is basically, therefore, that between limited and unlimited government.

Genuine constitutions determining these limitations can exist therefore only in nontotalitarian countries. Formal appearances notwithstanding, totalitarian regimes do not have them. At best, such regimes may enjoy merely a self-limitation on the part of the ruling group. And in any case, whatever rules exist are forever provisional, changeable, revocable; they do not have the nature of generality, reliability, and thus calculability which the rules of law elsewhere possess. Genuine constitutionalism is likewise absent when constitutions are forever made and remade, changed and abolished, so as to fit the political

V

CHANNELS OF POLITICAL ACTION: ELECTIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES, AND LEGISLATURES

Although constitutions form the framework within which governments should operate, they cannot of themselves answer the most vital question for a democratic state: How is government to be kept responsive to the popular will? It is still possible in a New England town meeting to bring together the citizens to make their own decisions on policy, as Athenians used to do in classical times. But national populations are far too large and too dispersed in modern times for such direct action (even though the device of a national plebiscite is occasionally used, as in Switzerland in both the legislative process and that of constitutional amendment, or as in Australia in the latter). Modern government thus is representative government. But this very fact raises a vast number of other questions: How are representatives to be chosen so that they will be responsible to their constituents? How can they make their influence effective on the executive? In other words, how can the vast variety of often opposing groups in a modern community be linked effectively with the process of government in such a way that policy-making can be carried on speedily and decisively, and yet with due regard to the consent of the governed?

THE PROCESS AND PURPOSE OF ELECTIONS

The most obvious point at which citizens directly influence the conduct of government is at the moment of elections; the

VI

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

Throughout our discussions of how to keep government responsible, we have referred to the importance of political leadership. With the spectacular growth in the functions of government which has taken place in every advanced country, the power of the executive has grown proportionately. Since, as we have seen, the legislature is not well fitted to perform the tasks of framing and initiating, as distinct from discussing and passing, legislation, or to engage in comprehensive planning, these tasks inevitably fall to the relatively small group of political leaders and top-ranking administrators. Moreover, the leadership function presents in an acute form a basic problem of modern government: how to integrate the numerous and often dissenting groups and interests in our pluralistic societies and at the same time to check overly integrated or concentrated power. Liberal democracy can all too easily develop toward the anarchy of diverse and uncooperating groups, while undemocratic systems tend to develop into authoritarianism and even, ultimately, dictatorship. In both situations, the balance wheel is responsible leadership. Thus, the effort to develop and maintain responsible leadership is the most crucial one for the future of the modern democratic state with its mass electorate and vast multiplicity of tasks.

THE HEADSHIP OF THE STATE: THE LEADER "REIGNS"

Integration through leadership has a twofold aspect: symbolism and actual authority. Psychologists and sociologists may

VII

BELIEF SYSTEMS AND POLITICS

THE ROLE OF IDEOLOGY

At the beginning of this book, we pointed out that the deepest challenge of totalitarianism lies in its claim that it alone can fill the spiritual void left by the decline of established religion in the modern age. Beyond their material wants, men need a belief in the meaningfulness of their lives, a faith in some higher cause to which they as individuals as well as the groups to which they belong can be devoted. Many believe that in this period of change and crisis, liberal democracy is failing to answer this need.

Behind these issues lies another problem. It can be summed up in these questions: What ties political communities together? What is it that forms those feelings and attitudes of attachment to the group, that minimum of allegiance without which a political community can neither be established nor endure? In this era of numerous and strongly divisive views, interests, and even centers of allegiance, what gives cohesion to a political community?

We in the West have long ignored this problem, largely because we have been under the influence of individualism, that mainstream of modern social and political thought. Whether it bases itself upon the concept of an original social or political contract or upon the concept of utility, individualism has assumed that political units, like nation-states, are founded upon, or could and should be founded upon, the free and voluntary association of self-determining, rational, enlightened human beings.

VIII

THE INTERRELATIONS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

No less intimately interrelated than belief systems and politics are national and international affairs. A major trend of recent times has been the growing interdependence and integration of nations in an international system where many of them become ever less independent of foreign influence and none can escape the impact of growing world integration. Although the number of formally and legally "independent" states has increased rapidly over the last two decades, they and all others tend to be grouped into a relatively few large blocs. And while technologically, economically, and otherwise all are coming closer to each other on a shrinking globe, at the same time, and paradoxically, they are ever more deeply divided into politically, ideologically, and oftentimes emotionally antagonistic groupings.

The impact of this dual development is reflected not only in the foreign, but increasingly also in the domestic affairs of even the largest and most powerful nations; it must be analyzed with care if the study of government is to be both perceptive and genuinely comparative.

FROM SELF-SUFFICIENCY TO INTERDEPENDENCE

It is not without reason that students of comparative government have long ignored, or paid scant attention to, the impact

IX

DEMOCRACY IN THE MODERN WORLD

Now that we have concluded this survey of some of the forces and problems which confront governments today, we are ready to return to two basic questions of central interest in this book: What is the essential nature of democracy and of totalitarianism? And how valid are the charges against democracy which were raised in the beginning of this book? In reaching our final conclusions on these matters, we must keep in mind that there are many states with a greater or lesser leaning toward democracy which are neither completely democratic nor totalitarian; that even liberal democracies are subject to strains of emotion, fear, and self-interest which sometimes lead them to adopt techniques or, temporarily, even objectives more characteristic of totalitarian dictatorships than they like to realize; and that in the world of today both the tasks and the organization of government are at all times complex, highly demanding, and absolutely vital to the future of any "modern" society.

THE TWO PATTERNS OF DEMOCRACY AND TOTALITARIANISM

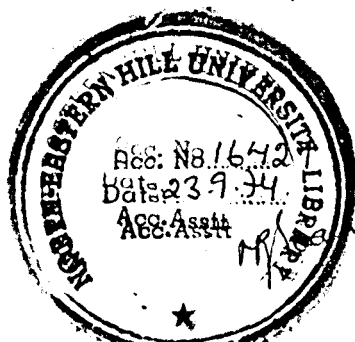
Despite the strains and tensions to which democracies are subject, there remain certain clear differentiations between liberal democracy and totalitarian dictatorship or totalitarian oligarchy (in the sense of the terms as we have defined them in the beginning of this book) which are worth reiterating. As we have seen, in a totalitarian dictatorship the power exercised by its governing group is unlimited and unrestrained, and the au-

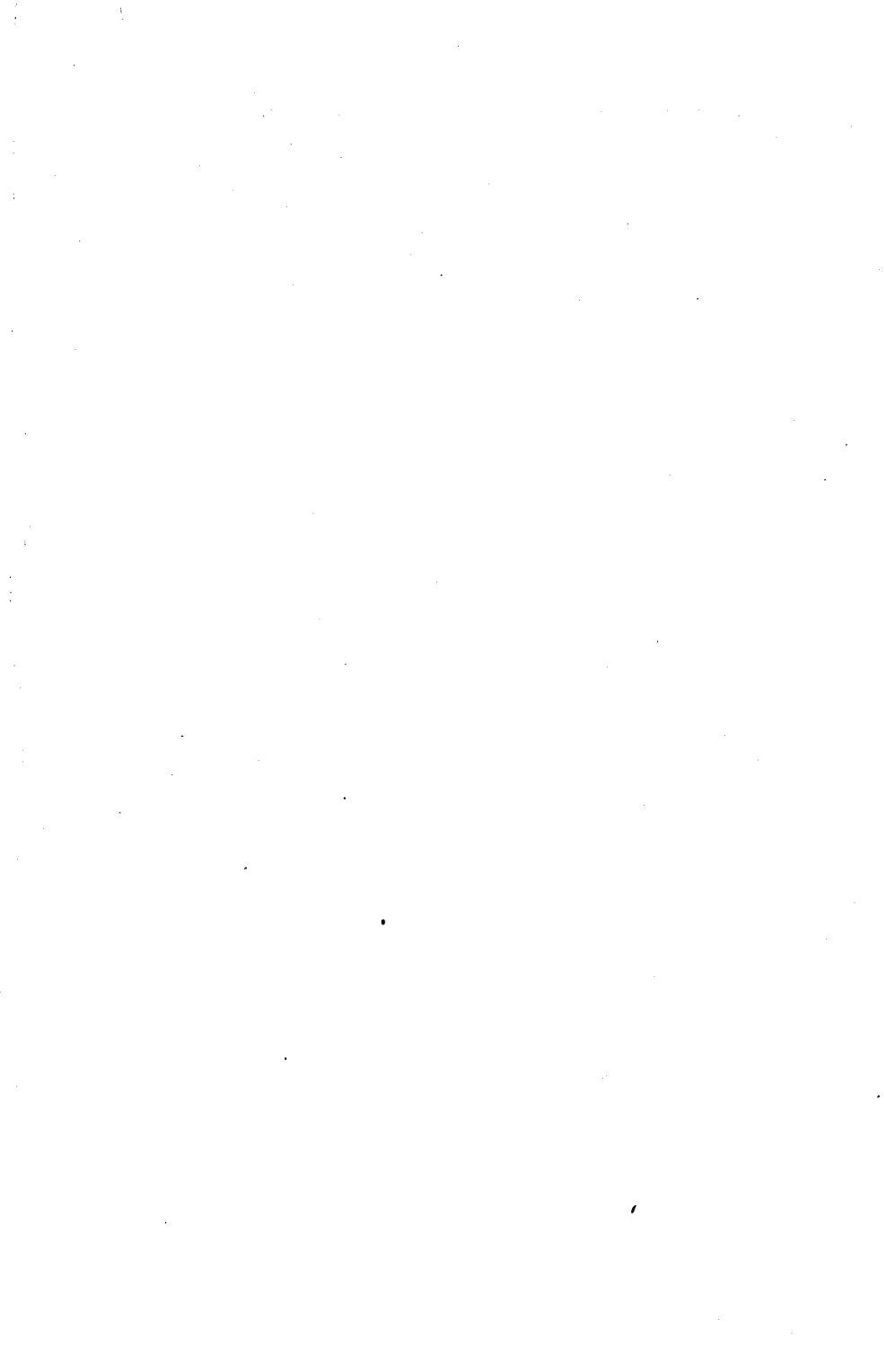
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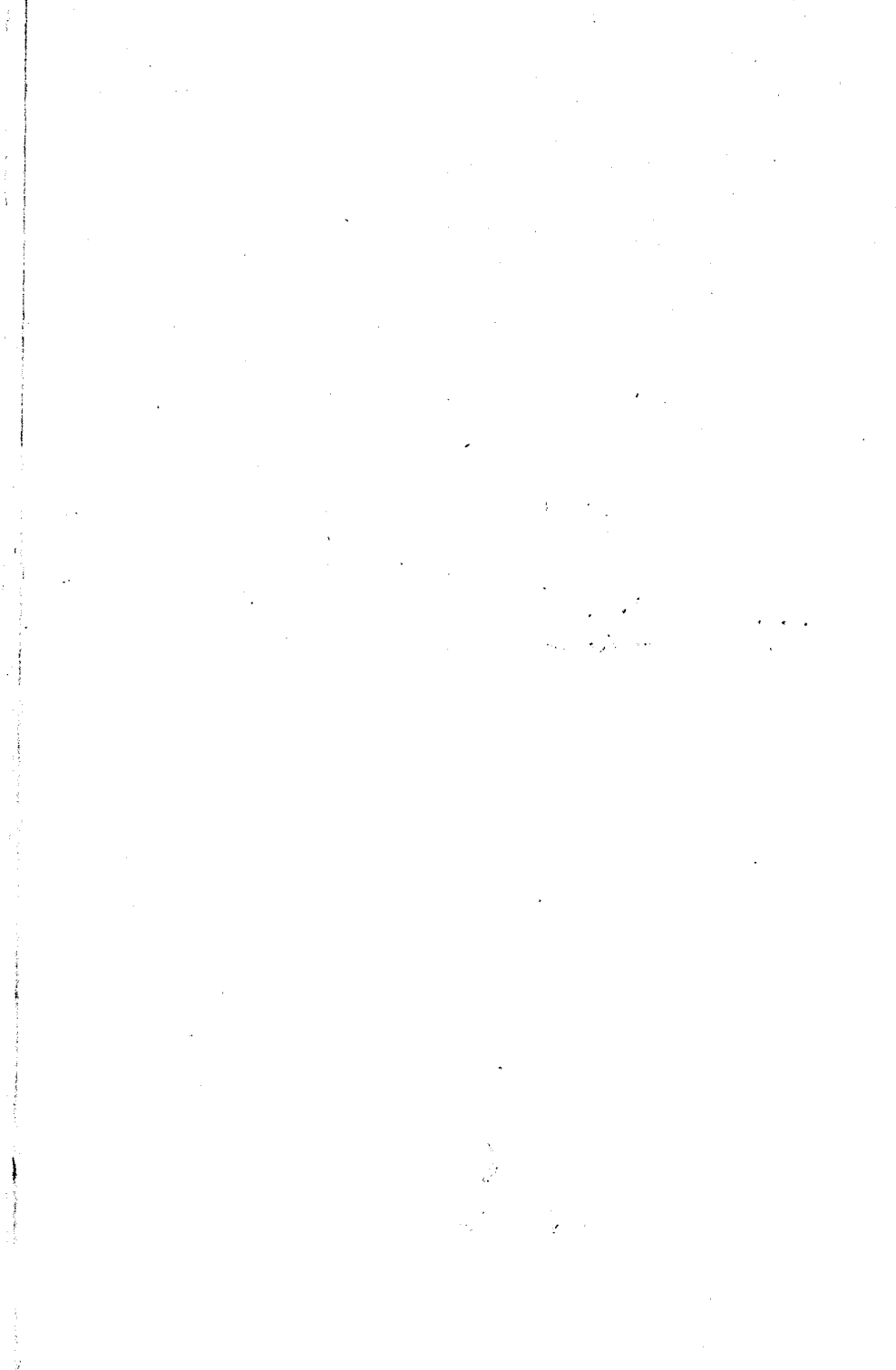
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