
On Democracy

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CHAPTER 1

Do We Really Need a Guide?

During the last half of the twentieth century the world witnessed an extraordinary and unprecedented political change. All of the main alternatives to democracy either disappeared, turned into eccentric survivals, or retreated from the field to hunker down in their last strongholds. Earlier in the century the premodern enemies of democracy--centralized monarchy, hereditary aristocracy, oligarchy based on narrow and exclusive suffrage--had lost their legitimacy in the eyes of much of humankind. The main antidemocratic regimes of the twentieth century--communist, fascist, Nazi--disappeared in the ruins of calamitous war or, as in the Soviet Union, collapsed from within. Military dictatorships had been pretty thoroughly discredited by their failures, particularly in Latin America; where they managed to survive they often adopted a pseudo-democratic facade.

So had democracy at last won the contest for the support of people throughout the world? Hardly. Antidemocratic beliefs and movements continued, frequently associated with fanatical nationalism or religious fundamentalism. Democratic governments (with varying degrees of "democracy") existed in fewer than half the countries of the world, which contained less than half the world's population. One-fifth of the world's people lived in China, which in its illustrious four thousand years of history had never experienced democratic government. In Russia, which had made the transition to democratic rule only in the last decade of the century, democracy (End of page 1) was fragile and weakly supported. Even in countries where democracy had long been established and seemed secure, some observers held that democracy was in crisis, or at least severely strained by a decline in the confidence of citizens that their elected leaders, the political parties, and government officials could or would cope fairly or successfully with issues like persistent unemployment, poverty, crime, welfare programs, immigration, taxation, and corruption.

Suppose we divide the nearly two hundred countries of the world into those with nondemocratic governments, those with new democratic governments, and those with long and relatively well established democratic governments. Admittedly, each group contains an enormously diverse set of countries. Yet our threefold simplification helps us to see that viewed from a democratic perspective each group faces a different challenge. For the nondemocratic countries, the challenge is whether and how they can make the *transition* to democracy. For the newly democratized countries, the challenge is whether and how the new democratic practices and institutions can be strengthened or, as some political scientists would say, *consolidated,* so that they will withstand the tests of time, political conflict, and crisis. For the older democracies, the challenge is to perfect and *deepen* their democracy.

At this point, however, you might well ask: Just what do we mean by democracy? What distinguishes a democratic government from a nondemocratic government. If a nondemocratic country makes the transition to democracy, what is the transition *to?* When can we tell whether it has made the transition. As to consolidating democracy, what, exactly, is consolidated. And what can it mean to speak of deepening democracy in a democratic country. If a country is already a democracy, how can it become more democratic. And so on.

Democracy has been discussed off .and on for about twenty-five hundred years, enough time to provide a tidy set of Ideas about (End of page 2) democracy on which everyone, or nearly everyone, could agree. For better or worse, that is not the case.

The twenty-five centuries during which democracy has been discussed, debated, supported, attacked, ignored, established, practiced, destroyed, and then sometimes reestablished have not, it seems, produced agreement on some of the most fundamental questions about democracy.

Ironically, the very fact that democracy has such a lengthy history has actually contributed to confusion and disagreement, for "democracy" has meant different things to different people at different times and places. Indeed, during long periods in human history democracy disappeared in practice, remaining barely alive as an idea or a memory among a precious few. Until only two centuries ago--let's say ten generations--history was very short on actual examples of democracies. Democracy was more a subject for philosophers to theorize about than an actual political system for people to adopt and practice. And even in the rare cases where a "democracy" or a "republic' actually existed, most adults were not entitled to participate in political life.

Although in its most general sense democracy is ancient, the form of democracy I shall be mainly discussing in this book is a product of the twentieth century. Today we have come to assume that democracy must guarantee virtually every adult citizen the right to vote. Yet until about four generations ago--around 1918, or the end of the First World War.-in every independent democracy or republic that had ever existed up to then, a good half of all adults had always been excluded from the full rights of citizenship. These were, of course, women.

Here, then, is an arresting thought: if we accept universal adult suffrage as a requirement of democracy, there would be some persons in practically every democratic country who would be older than their democratic system of government. Democracy (End of page 3) in our modern sense may not be exactly youthful, but it is hardly ancient.

You might object at once: Wasn't the United States a democracy from the American Revolution onward--a "democracy in a republic," as Abraham Lincoln called it? Didn't the illustrious French writer Alexis de Tocqueville, after visiting the United States in the l83OS, call his famous work *Democracy in America?* And didn't the Athenians call their system a democracy in the fifth century B.C.E.? What was the Roman republic, if not some kind of democracy? If "democracy" has meant different things at different times, how can we possibly agree on what it means today?

Once started, you might persist: Why is democracy desirable anyway? And just how democratic is "democracy" in countries that we call democracies today: the United States, Britain, France, Norway, Australia, and many others? Further, is it possible to explain why these countries are " democratic' and many others are not? The questions could go on and on.

The answer to the question in the title of this chapter, then, is pretty clear. If you are interested in searching for answers to some of the most basic questions about democracy, a guide can help.

Of course, during this short tour you wont find answers to all the questions you might like to ask. To keep our journey relatively brief and manageable, we shall have to bypass innumerable paths that you might feel should be explored. They probably should be, and I hope that by the' end of our tour you will undertake to explore them on your own. To help you do so, at the end of the book I'll provide a brief list of relevant works for further reading on your part.

Our journey begins at the beginning: the origins of democracy.

CHAPTER 2

Where and How Did Democracy Develop?

A BRIEF HISTORY

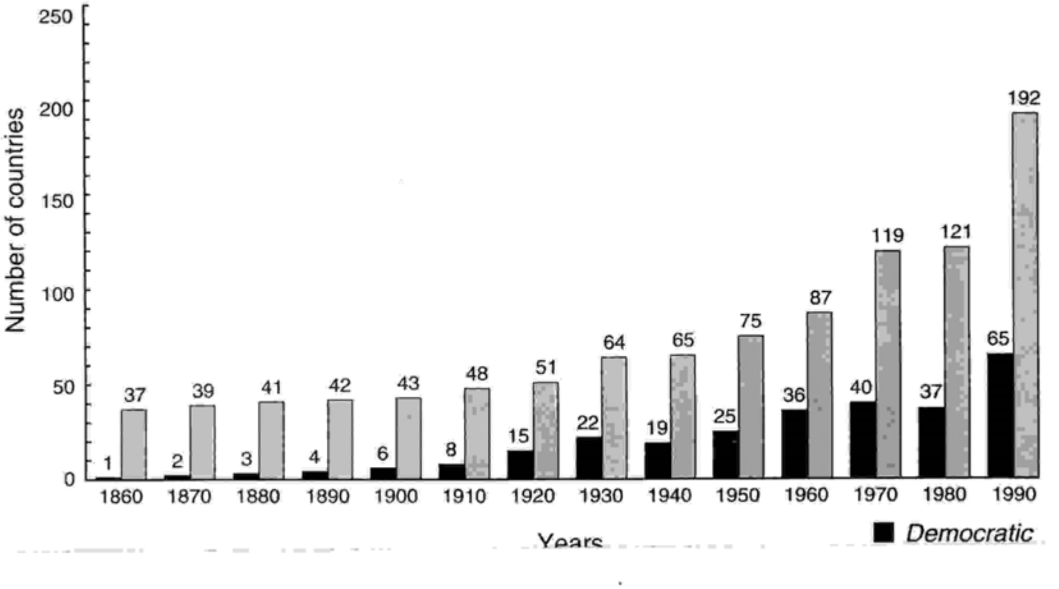
I started, you remember, by saying that democracy has been discussed off and on for twenty-five hundred years. Is democracy really that old, you might wonder? Many Americans, and probably others as well, might believe that democracy began two hundred years ago in the United States. Others, aware of its classical roots, would claim ancient Greece or Rome. Just where did it begin and how did it evolve?

It might please us to see democracy as more or less continuously advancing from its invention, so to speak, in ancient Greece twenty-five hundred years ago and spreading gradually outward from that tiny beginning to the present day, when it has reached every continent and a substantial portion of humanity.

A pretty picture but false for at least two reasons.

First, as everyone acquainted with European history knows, after its early centuries in Greece and Rome the rise of popular government turned into its decline and disappearance. Even if we were to allow ourselves considerable latitude in deciding what governments we would count as "popular;' "democratic;' or "republican;' their rise and decline could not be portrayed as a steady upward climb to the distant summit, punctuated only by brief descents here and there. Instead the course of democratic history would look like the path of a traveler crossing a flat and almost endless desert broken by (End of page 7) only a few hills, until the path finally begins the long climb to its present heights (fig. 1).

FIGURE 1. *Democratic countries (those with male or full suffrage), 1850–1995*



In the second place, it would be a mistake to assume that democracy was just invented once and for all, as, for example, the steam engine was invented. When anthropologists and historians find that similar tools or practices have appeared in different times and places, they generally want to know how these separate appearances came about. Did the tools or practices spread by means of diffusion from its original inventors to the other groups, or instead were they independently invented by different groups? Finding an answer is often difficult, perhaps impossible. So too with the development of democracy in the world. How much of its spread is to be explained simply by its diffusion from its early sources and how much, if any, by its having been independently invented in different times and places?

Although with democracy the answer is surrounded by a good deal of uncertainty, my reading of the historical record is in essence this: some of the expansion of democracy--perhaps a good deal of it --can be accounted for mainly by the diffusion of democratic ideas and practices, but diffusion cannot provide the whole explanation. Like fire, or painting or writing, democracy seems to have been invented more than once, and in more than one place. After all, if the conditions were favorable for the invention of democracy at one time and place (in Athens, say, about 500 B.C.E.), might not similar favorable conditions have existed elsewhere?

I assume that democracy can be independently invented and reinvented whenever the appropriate conditions exist. And the appropriate conditions have existed, I believe, at different times and in different places. Just as a supply of tillable land and adequate rainfall have generally encouraged the development of agriculture, so certain favorable conditions have always supported a tendency toward the development of a democratic government. For example, (End of page 9) because of favorable conditions some form of democracy probably existed for tribal governments long before recorded history. Consider this possibility: Certain people, we'll assume, make up a fairly well-bounded group--"we" and "they," ourselves and others, my people and their people, my tribe and other tribes. In addition, let's assume that the group--the tribe, let's say--is fairly independent of control by outsiders; the members of tribe can, so to speak, more or less run their own show without interference by outsiders. Finally, let's assume that a substantial number of the members of the group, perhaps the tribal elders, see themselves as about equal in being well qualified to have a say in governing the group. In these circumstances, democratic tendencies are, I believe, likely to arise. A push toward democratic participation develops out of what we might call *the logic of equality*.

Over the long period when human beings lived together in small groups and survived by hunting game and collecting roots, fruits, berries, and other offerings of nature, they would no doubt have sometimes, perhaps usually, developed a system in which a good many of the members animated by the logic of equality--the older or more experienced ones, anyway--participated in whatever decisions they needed to make as a group. That such was indeed the case is strongly suggested by studies of nonliterate tribal societies. For many thousands of years, then, some form of primitive democracy may well have been the most "natural' political system.

We know, however, that this lengthy period came to an end. When human beings began to settle down for long stretches of time in fixed communities, primarily for agriculture and trade, the kinds of circumstances favorable to popular participation in government that I just mentioned--group identity, little outside interference, an assumption of equality--seem to have become rare. Forms of hierarchy and domination came to be more "natural." As a result, popular governments vanished among settled people for thousands of (End of page 10) years. They were replaced by monarchies, despotisms, aristocracies, or oligarchies, all based on some form of ranking or hierarchy.

Then around 500 B.C.E. in several places favorable conditions seem to have reappeared and a few small groups of people began to develop systems of government that provided fairly extensive opportunities to participate in group decisions. Primitive democracy, one might say, was reinvented in a more advanced form. The most crucial developments occurred in Europe, three along the Mediterranean coast, others in Northern Europe.

THE MEDITERRANEAN

It was in classical Greece and Rome around 500 B**.**C.E. that systems of government providing for popular participation by a substantial number of citizens were first established on foundations so solid that, with occasional changes, they endured for centuries. *Greece*. Classical Greece was not a country in our modern sense, a place in which all Greeks lived within a single state with a single government. Instead, Greece was composed of several hundred independent cities, each with its surrounding countryside. Unlike the United States, France, Japan, and other modern countries, the so called nation-states or national states that have *largely* dominated the modern world, the sovereign states of Greece were city-states. The most famous city-state, in classical times and after, was Athens. In 507 B.C.E. the Athenians adopted a system of popular government that lasted nearly two centuries, until the city was subjugated by its more powerful neighbor to the north, Macedonia. (After 321 B.C.E. the Athenian government limped along under Macedonian control for generations; then the city was subjugated again, this time by the Romans.)

It was the Greeks--probably the Athenians--who coined the term *democracy,* or *demokratia,* from the Greek words *demos,* the people, and *kratos,* to rule. It is interesting, by the way, that while in (End of page 11) Athens the word *demos* usually referred to the entire Athenian people, sometimes it meant only the common people or even just the poor. The word *democracy,* it appears, was sometimes used by its aristocratic critics as a kind of epithet, to show their disdain for the common people who had wrested away the aristocrats' previous control over the government. In any case, *democratia* was applied specifically by Athenians and other Greeks to the government of Athens and of many other cities in Greece as well.1

Among the Greek democracies, that of Athens was far and away the most important, the best known then and today, of incomparable influence on political philosophy, and often held up later as a prime example of citizen participation or, as some would say, participatory democracy.

The government of Athens was complex, too complex to describe adequately here. At its heart and center was an *assembly* in which all citizens were entitled to participate. The assembly elected a few key officials--generals, for example, odd as that may seem to us. But the main method for selecting citizens for the other public duties was by a lottery in which eligible citizens stood an equal chance of being selected. According to some estimates, an ordinary citizen stood a fair chance of being chosen by lot once in his lifetime to serve as the most important presiding officer in the government. Although some Greek cities joined in forming rudimentary representative governments for their alliances, leagues, and confederacies (primarily for common defense), little is known about these representative systems. They left virtually no impress on democratic ideas and practices and none, certainly, on the later form of representative democracy. Nor did the Athenian system of selecting citizens for public duties by lot ever become an acceptable alternative

to elections as a way of choosing representatives.

Thus the *political institutions* of Greek democracy, innovative though 'they had been, in their time, were ignored or even (End of page 12) rejected outright during the development of modern representative democracy.

Rome. About the time that popular government was introduced in Greece, it also made its appearance on the Italian peninsula in the city of Rome. The Romans, however, chose to call their system a republic, from *res,* meaning thing or affair in Latin, and *publicus,* public: loosely rendered, a republic was the thing that belonged to the people. (I'll come back to these two words, democracy and republic.)

The right to participate in governing the Republic was at first restricted to the patricians, or aristocrats. But in a development that we shall encounter again, after much struggle the common people (the *plebs,* or plebeians) also gained entry. As in Athens, the right to participate was restricted to men, just as it was also in all later democracies and republics until the twentieth century.

From its beginnings as a city of quite modest size, the Roman Republic expanded by means of annexation and conquest far beyond the old city's boundaries. As a result, the Republic came to rule over all of Italy and far beyond. What is more, the Republic often conferred Roman citizenship, which was highly valued, on the conquered peoples, who thus became not mere subjects but Roman citizens fully entitled to a citizen's rights and privileges.

Wise and generous as this gift was, if we judge Rome from today's perspective we discover an enormous defect: Rome never adequately adapted its institutions of popular government to the huge increase in the number of its citizens and their great geographical distances from Rome. Oddly, from our present point of view, the assemblies in which Roman citizens were entitled to participate continued meeting, as before, within the city of Rome--in the very Forum that tourists still see today, in ruins. But for most Roman citizens living in the far-flung territory of the Republic, the city was too far away to attend, at least without extraordinary effort and (End of page 13) expense. Consequently, an increasing and ultimately overwhelming number of citizens were, as a practical matter, denied the opportunity to participate in the citizen assemblies at the center of the Roman system of government. It was rather as if American citizenship had been conferred on the people in the various states as the country expanded, even though the people in the new states could only exercise their right to vote in national elections by showing up in Washington, D.C.

A highly creative and practical people in many respects, the Romans never invented or adopted a solution that seems obvious to us today: a workable system of *representative* government based on *democratically elected* representatives.

Before we jump to the conclusion that the Romans were less creative or capable than we are, let us remind ourselves that innovations and inventions to which we have grown accustomed often seem so obvious to us that we wonder why our predecessors did not introduce them earlier. Most of us readily take things for granted that at an earlier time remained to be discovered. So, too, later generations may wonder how *we* could have overlooked certain innovations that they will take for granted. Because of what *we* take for granted might not we, like the Romans, be insufficiently creative in reshaping our political institutions?

Although the Roman Republic endured considerably longer than the Athenian democracy and longer than any modern democracy has yet endured, it was undermined after about 130 B.C.E. by civil unrest, war, militarization, corruption, and a decline in the sturdy civic spirit that had previously existed among its citizens. What little remained of authentic republican practices perished with the dictatorship of Julius Caesar. After his assassination in 44 B.C.E., a republic once governed by its citizens became an empire ruled by its emperors.

With the fall of the Republic, popular rule entirely disappeared in (End of page 14) southern Europe. Except for the political systems of small, scattered tribes it vanished from the face of the earth for nearly a thousand years.

Italy. Like an extinct species reemerging after a massive climatic change, popular rule began to reappear in many of the cities of northern Italy around 1100 C.E. Once again it was in relatively small city-states that popular governments developed, not in large regions or countries. In a pattern familiar in Rome and later repeated during the emergence of modern representative governments, participation in the governing bodies of the city-states was at first restricted to members of upper-class families: nobles, large landowners, and the like. But in time, urban residents who were lower in the socioeconomic scale began to demand the right to participate. Members of what we today would call the middle classes- the newly rich, the smaller merchants and bankers, the skilled craftsmen organized in guilds, the footsoldiers commanded by the knights-were not only more numerous than the dominant upper classes but also capable of organizing themselves. What is more, they could threaten violent uprisings, and if need be carry them out. As a result, in many cities people like these-the *popolo,* as they were sometimes called--gained the right to participate in the government of the city.

For two centuries and more these republics flourished in a number of Italian cities. A good many republics were, like Florence and Venice, centers of extraordinary prosperity, exquisite craftsmanship, superb art and architecture, unexcelled urban design, magnificent poetry and music, and an enthusiastic rediscovery of the ancient world of Greece and Rome. What later generations were to call the Middle Ages came to a close, and that incredible outburst of brilliant creativity, the Renaissance, arrived.

Unhappily for the development of democracy, however, after about the mid -1300s the republican governments of some of the major cities increasingly gave way to the perennial enemies of popular (End of page 15) government: economic decline, corruption, oligarchy, war, conquest, and seizure of power by authoritarian rulers, whether princes, monarchs, or soldiers. Nor was that all. Viewed in the longer sweep of historical trends, the city-state was doomed as a foundation for popular government by the emergence of a rival with overwhelmingly superior forces: the national state or country. Towns and cities were destined to be incorporated into this larger and more powerful entity, thus becoming, at most, subordinate units of government. Glorious as it had been, the city-state was obsolete.

Words About Words

You may have noticed that I have referred to "popular governments" in Greece, Rome, and Italy. To designate their popular governments, the Greeks, as we saw, invented the term *democracy.* The Romans drew on their native Latin and called their government a "republic," and later the Italians gave that name to the popular governments of some of their city-states. You might well wonder whether *democracy and republic* refer to fundamentally different types of constitutional systems. Or instead do the two' words just reflect differences in the languages from which they originally came?

The correct answer was obfuscated by James Madison in 1787 in an influential paper he wrote to win support for the newly proposed American constitution. One of the principal architects of that constitution and a statesman exceptionally well informed in the political science of his time, Madison distinguished between "a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person," and a "republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place." This distinction had no basis in prior history: neither in Rome nor, for example, in Venice was there "a scheme of representation ." (End of page 16) Indeed, the earlier republics all pretty much fit into Madison's definition of a "democracy." What is more, the two terms were used interchangeably in the United States during the eighteenth century. Nor is Madison's distinction found in a work by the well-known French political philosopher Montesquieu, whom Madison greatly admired and frequently praised. Madison himself would have known that his proposed distinction had no firm historical basis, and so we must conclude that he made it to discredit critics who contended that the proposed constitution was not sufficiently "democratic."

However that may be (the matter is unclear), the plain fact is that the words *democracy and republic* did not (despite Madison) designate differences in types of popular government. What they reflected, at the cost of later confusion, was a difference between Greek and Latin, the languages from which they came.

NORTHERN EUROPE

Whether called democracies or republics, the systems of popular government in Greece, Rome, and Italy all lacked several of the crucial characteristics of modern representative government. Classical Greece as well as medieval and Renaissance Italy were composed of popular local governments but lacked an effective national government. Rome had, so to speak, just one local government based on popular participation but no national parliament of elected representatives.

From today's perspective, conspicuously absent from all these systems were at least three basic political institutions: *a national parliament* composed of *elected representatives*, and *popularly chosen local governments* that were ultimately subordinate to the national government. A system combining democracy at local levels with a popularly elected parliament at the top level had yet to be invented (End of page 17) This combination of political institutions originated in Britain, Scandinavia, the Lowlands, Switzerland, and elsewhere north of the Mediterranean.

Although the patterns of political development diverged widely among these regions, a highly simplified version would look something like this. In various localities freemen and nobles would begin to participate directly in local assemblies. To these were added regional and national assemblies consisting of representatives, some or all of whom would come to be *elected*.

Local assemblies. I begin with the Vikings, not only from sentiment, but also because their experience is little known though highly relevant. I have sometimes visited the Norwegian farm about 80 miles northeast of Trondheim from which my paternal grandfather emigrated (and which to my delight is still known as Dahl Vestre, or West Dahl). In the nearby town of Steinkjer you can still see a boat-shaped ring of large stones where Viking freemen regularly met from about 600 C.E. to 1000 C.E. to hold an adjudicative assembly called in Norse a *ring*.

(Incidentally, the English word *thing is* derived from an Old English word meaning both thing and assembly.) Similar places, some even older, can be found elsewhere in the vicinity.

By 900 C.E., assemblies of free Vikings were meeting not just in the Trondheim region but in many other areas of Scandinavia as well. As in Steinkjer the Ting was typically held in an open field marked off by large vertical stones. At the meeting of the Ting the freemen settled disputes; discussed, accepted, and rejected laws; adopted or turned down a proposed change of religion (as they did when they accepted Christianity in place of the old Norse religion); and even elected or gave their approval to a king--who was often required to swear his faithfulness to the laws approved by the Ting**.** The Vikings knew little or nothing, and would have cared less, about the democratic and republican political practices a thousand (End of page 18) years earlier in Greece and Rome. Operating from the logic of equality that they applied to free men, they seem to have created assemblies on their own. That the idea of equality was alive and well among Viking freemen in the tenth century is attested to by the answer given by some Danish Vikings when, while traveling up a river in France, they were asked by a messenger calling out from the riverbank, "What is the name of your master?" "None," they replied, "we are all equals."3

But we must resist the temptation to exaggerate. The equality that Vikings boasted about applied only among free men, and even they varied in wealth and status. Beneath the freemen were the slaves**.** Like the Greeks and Romans, or for that matter Europeans and Americans centuries later, the Vikings possessed slaves: enemies captured in battle, or the hapless victims of raids on neighboring peoples, or simply persons bought in the ancient and ubiquitous commerce in slaves. And unlike the men free by birth, when slaves were freed they remained dependent on their previous owners. If slaves were a caste below the free men, above them was an aristocracy of families with wealth, usually in land, and hereditary status. At the apex stood a king whose power was limited by his election, his obligation to obey the laws, and his need to retain the loyalty of the nobles and the support of the free men.

In spite of these severe limits on equality, the class of free men-free peasants, smallholders, farmers-was large enough to impose a lasting democratic influence on political institutions and traditions.

In several other parts of Europe, local conditions also sometimes favored the emergence of popular participation in government. The high mountain valleys of the Alps, for example, provided a measure of protection and autonomy to free men engaged in pastoral activities. As a modern writer describes Raetia (later the Swiss canton of Graubunden) around 800 C.E.: "Free peasants. . . found (End of page 19) themselves in a uniquely egalitarian situation. Bound together by their common status. . . and by their common rights of usage over [mountain pastures], they developed a sense of equality wholly at odds with the hierarchical, status-conscious thrust of medieval feudalism. This distinctive spirit was to dominate the later emergence of democracy in the Raetian Republic."4

*From assemblies to parliaments***.** When the Vikings ventured westward *to* Iceland, they transplanted their political practices and in several localities re-created a Ting. But they did more: foreshadowing the later appearance of national parliaments elsewhere, in 930 C.E. they created a sort of supra- Ting, the *Althing,* or National Assembly, which remained the source of Icelandic law for three centuries, until the Icelanders were finally subjugated by Norway.5 Meanwhile in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden regional assemblies developed and then, as in Iceland, national assemblies. Although the subsequent growth in the power of the king and the centralized bureaucracies under his control reduced the importance of these national assemblies, they left their mark on later developments.

In Sweden, for example, the tradition of popular participation in the assemblies of the Viking period led in the fifteenth century to a precursor of a modern representative parliament when the king began to summon meetings of representatives from different sectors of Swedish society: nobility, clergy, burghers, and common people. These meetings eventually evolved into the Swedish *riksdag,* or parliament.6

In the radically different environment of the Netherlands and Flanders, the expansion of manufacturing, commerce, and finance helped to create urban middle classes composed of persons who commanded sizable economic resources. Rulers perpetually starved for revenues could neither ignore this rich lode nor tax it without gaining the consent of its owners. To obtain consent, rulers summoned (End of page 20) meetings of representatives drawn from the towns and the most important social classes. Although these assemblies, parliaments, or "estates:' as they were often called, did not evolve directly into the national legislatures of today, they established traditions, practices, and ideas that strongly favored such a development**.** Meanwhile, from obscure beginnings a representative parliament was gradually coming into existence that in the centuries to come would exert far and away the greatest influence on the idea and practice of representative government**.** This was the parliament of medieval England. A product less of intention and design than of blind evolution, Parliament grew out of assemblies summoned sporadically, and under the pressure of need, during the reign of Edward I from 1272 to 1307.

How Parliament evolved from these beginnings is too lengthy and complex a story to be summarized here. By the eighteenth century, however, that evolution had led to a constitutional system in which the king and Parliament were each limited by the authority of the other; within Parliament the power of the hereditary aristocracy in the House of Lords was offset by the power of the people in the House of Commons; and the laws enacted by king and Parliament were interpreted by judges who were mostly, though by no means always, independent of king and Parliament alike.

In the 1700s this seemingly marvelous system of checks and balances among the country's major social forces and the separation of the powers within the government was widely admired in Europe**.** It was lauded by the famous French political philosopher Montesquieu, among others, and admired in America by the Framers of the Constitution, many of whom hoped to create in America a republic that would retain the virtues of the English system without the vices of a monarchy. The republic they helped to form would in due time provide something of a model for many other republics. (End of page 21)

DEMOCRATIZATION:
ON THE WAY, BUT ONLY ON THE WAY

Looking back with all the advantages of hindsight, we can easily see that by the early eighteenth century political ideas and practices had appeared in Europe that were to become important elements in later democratic beliefs and institutions. Using language that is more modern and abstract than people of the time would have employed, let me summarize what these elements were.

Favored by local conditions and opportunities in several areas of Europe--notably Scandinavia, Flanders, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Britain-the logic of equality stimulated the creation of *local assemblies* in which free men could participate in governing, at least to an extent. The idea that governments needed the *consent of the governed*, initially a claim primarily about raising taxes, was gradually growing into a claim about laws in general. Over an area too large for primary assemblies of free men, as in a large town, city, region, or country, consent required *representation* in the body that raised taxes and made laws. In sharp contrast to Athenian practice, representation was to be secured not by lot or random selection but by *election*. To secure the consent of free citizens in a country, nation, or nation-state would require elected representative legislatures, or parliaments, at several levels: local, national, and perhaps provincial, regional, or other intermediate levels as well.

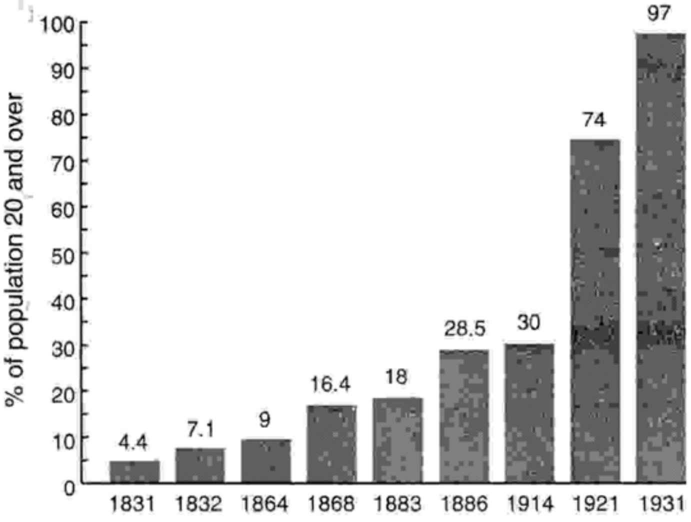
These European political ideas and practices provided a base from which democratization could proceed. Among proponents of further democratization, accounts of popular governments in classical Greece, Rome, and the Italian cities sometimes lent greater plausibility to their advocacy. Those historical experiences had demonstrated that governments subject to the will of the people *were* more than illusory hopes. Once upon a time they had actually existed, and had lasted for centuries to boot. (End of page 22)

What hadn't been achieved. If the ideas, traditions, history, and practices just described held a promise of democratization, it was, at best, only a promise. Crucial pieces were still missing.

First, even in countries with the most auspicious beginnings, gross inequalities posed enormous obstacles to democracy: differences between the rights, duties, influence, and power of slaves and free men, rich and poor, landed and landless, master and servant, men and women, day laborers and apprentices, skilled craftworkers and owners, burghers and bankers, feudal lords and tenants, nobles and commoners, monarchs and their subjects, the king's officials and those they ordered about. Even free men were highly unequal in status, wealth, work, obligations, knowledge, freedom, influence, and power. And in many places the wife of a free man was regarded by law, custom, and practice as his property. Then as always and everywhere the logic of equality ran head-on into the brute facts of inequality.

Second, even where assemblies and parliaments existed they were a long way from meeting minimal democratic standards. Parliaments were often no match for a monarch; it would be centuries before control over the king's ministers would shift from monarch to parliament or a president would take the place of a king. Parliaments themselves were bastions of privilege, particularly in chambers reserved for the aristocracy and higher clergy. Representatives elected by "the people" had at best only a partial say in lawmaking. Third, the representatives of '(the people" did not really represent the whole people. For one thing, free men were, after all, men. Except for the occasional female monarch, half the adult population was excluded from political life. But so were many adult males-most adult males, in fact. As late as 1832 in Great Britain the right to vote extended to only 5 percent of the population over age twenty. In that year it took a tempestuous struggle to expand the suffrage to slightly more than 7 percent (fig. 2)! In Norway, despite (End of page 23) the promising appearance of popular participation in the Tings of Viking times, the percentage was little better.7

FIGURE 2. *Great Britain's electorate, 1831–1931 (data from* Encyclopedia Britannica *[1970], s.v. "Parliament")*



Fourth, until the eighteenth century and later, democratic ideas and beliefs were not widely shared or even well understood. In all countries the logic of equality was effective only among a few and a rather privileged few at that. Even an understanding of what a democratic republic would require in the way of political institutions was all but nonexistent. In speech and press freedom of expression was seriously restricted, particularly if it was exercised to criticize the king. Political opposition lacked legitimacy and legality. "His Majesty's Loyal Opposition" was an idea whose time had not yet come. Political parties were widely condemned as dangerous and undesirable. Elections were notoriously corrupted by agents of the Crown. (End of page 24)

The advance of democratic ideas and practices depended on the existence of certain favorable conditions that did not yet exist. As long as only a few people believed in democracy and were prepared to fight for it, existing privilege would maintain itself with the aid of undemocratic governments. Even if many more people came to believe in democratic ideas and goals, other conditions would still be required if further democratization were to be achieved. Later on, in Part IV, I'll describe some of most important of these conditions. Meanwhile, we need to recall that after the promising beginnings sketched out in this chapter, democratization did not proceed on an ascending path to the present. There were ups and downs, resistance movements, rebellions, civil wars, revolutions. For several centuries the rise of centralized monarchies reversed some of the earlier advances--even though, ironically, these very monarchies may have helped to create some conditions that were favorable to democratization in the longer run.

Looking back on the rise and decline of democracy, it is clear that we cannot count on historical forces to insure that democracy will always advance-or even survive, as the long intervals in which popular governments vanished from the earth remind us. Democracy, it appears, is a bit chancy. But its chances also depend on what we do ourselves. Even if we cannot count on benign historical forces to favor democracy, we are not mere victims of blind forces over which we have no control. With adequate understanding of what democracy requires and the will to meet its requirements, we can act to preserve and, what is more, to advance democratic ideas **and** practices. (End of page 25)

CHAPTER 3

'What Lies Ahead?

When we discuss democracy perhaps nothing gives rise to more confusion than the simple fact that "democracy" refers to both an ideal and an actuality. We often fail to make the distinction clear. For example:

Alan says, "I think democracy is the best possible form of "government.

Beth replies, "You must be crazy to believe that the so-called democratic government in this country is the best we can have! Why, I don't even think it's much of a democracy:'

Alan is of course speaking of democracy as an ideal, whereas Beth is referring to an actual government usually called a democracy. Until Alan and Beth make clear which meaning each has in mind, they may flounder about, talking right past each other. From extensive experience I know how easily this can happen--even, I regret to add, among scholars who are deeply knowledgeable about democratic ideas and practices.

We an usually avoid this kind of confusion just by making clear which meaning we intend:

Alan continues, "Oh, I didn't mean our actual government. As to that, I'd be inclined to agree with you."

Beth replies, "Well, if you're talking about ideal governments, then I think you're dead right. I do believe that as an ideal, democracy is the best form of government. That's why I'd like our own government to be a lot more democratic than it really is." Philosophers have engaged in endless debates about the differences between our judgments about goals, ends, values, and so on and our judgments about reality, actuality, and so on. We make judgments of the first kind in response to questions like "What *ought* I to do? What is the right thing for me to do?" We make judgments of the second kind in response to such questions as "What *can* I do? What options are open to me? What are the likely consequences of my choosing to do X rather than

Y?" A convenient label for the first is value judgments (or moral judgments), for the second, empirical judgments.

Words About Words

Although philosophers have engaged in endless debates about the nature of value judgments and empirical judgments and differences between one kind of judgment and the other, we need not concern ourselves here with these philosophical issues, for in everyday life we are fairly accustomed to distinguishing between real things and ideal things. However, we need to bear in mind that the distinction between value judgments and empirical judgments is useful, provided that we do not push it too far. If we assert, "A government ought to give equal consideration to the good and interests of every person bound by its decisions;' or "Happiness is the highest good;' we are as close to making "pure" value judgments as we can get. An example at the opposite extreme, a strictly empirical proposition, is Newton's famous law of universal gravitation, asserting that the force between any two bodies is directly proportional to the product of their masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between them. In practice, many assertions contain or imply elements of (End of page 27) both kinds of judgments. This is nearly always the case with judgments about public policy. For example, someone who says, "The government should establish a program of universal health insurance" is asserting in effect that (1) health is a good end, (2) the government should strive to achieve that end, and (3) universal health insurance is the best means of attaining that end. Moreover, we make an enormous number of empirical judgments like (3) that represent the best judgment we can make in the face of great uncertainties. These are not "scientific" conclusions in a strict sense. They are often based on a mixture of hard evidence, soft evidence, no evidence, and uncertainty. Judgments like these are sometimes called "practical" or "prudential." Finally, one important kind of practical judgment is to balance gains to one value, person, or group against costs to another value, person, or group. To describe situations of this kind I'll sometimes borrow an expression often used by economists and say that we have to choose among various possible "trade-offs" among our ends. As we move along we'll encounter all these variants of value judgments and empirical judgments.

DEMOCRATIC GOALS AND ACTUALITIES

Although it is helpful to distinguish between ideals and actualities, we also need to understand how democratic ideals or goals and democratic actualities are connected. I am going to spell out these connections more fully in later chapters. Meanwhile, let me use the chart as a rough guide to what lies ahead.

Each of the four items under Ideal and Actual is a fundamental question:

What is democracy? What does democracy mean? Put another way, what standards should we use to determine whether, and to what extent, a government is democratic? (End of page 28) I believe that such a system would have to meet five criteria and that a system meeting these criteria would be fully democratic. In Chapter 4, I describe four of these criteria, and in Chapters 6 and 7, I show why we need a fifth. Remember, however, that the criteria describe an ideal or perfect democratic system. None of us, I imagine, believes that we could actually attain a perfectly democratic system, given the many limits imposed on us in the real world. The criteria do provide us, though, with standards against which we can compare the achievements and the remaining imperfections of actual political systems and their institutions, and they can guide us toward solutions that would bring us closer to the ideal.

FIGURE 3.

IDEAL		ACTUAL	
Goals and Ideals		Actual Democratic Governments	
What is democracy?	Why democracy?	What political institutions does democracy require?	What conditions favor democracy?
Chapter 4	Chapters 5-7	Part III	Part IV

Why democracy? What reasons can we give for believing that democracy is the best political system? What values are best served by democracy?

In answering these questions it is essential to keep in mind that we are *not* just asking why people now support democracy, or why they have supported it in the past, or how democratic systems have come about. People may favor democracy for many reasons. Some, for example, may favor democracy without thinking much about why they do; in their time and place, giving lip service to democracy may just be the conventional or traditional thing to do. Some might endorse democracy because they believe that with a democratic (End of page 29)government they will stand a better chance of getting rich, or because they think democratic politics would open up a promising political career for them, or because someone they admire tells them to, and so on.

Are there reasons for supporting democracy of more general and perhaps even universal relevance? I believe there are. These will be discussed in Chapters 5 through 7.

In order to meet the ideal standards as best we can, given the limits and possibilities in the real world, what political institutions are necessary?

As we shall see in the next chapter, in varying times and places political systems with significantly different political institutions have been called democracies or republics. In the last chapter we encountered one reason why democratic institutions differ: they have been adapted to huge differences in the size or scale of political units-in population, territory, or both. Some political units, such as an English village, are tiny in area and population; others, like China, Brazil, or the United States, are gigantic in both. A small city or town might meet democratic criteria reasonably well without some of the institutions that would be required in, say, a large country.

Since the eighteenth century, however, the idea of democracy has been applied to entire countries: the United States, France, Great Britain, Norway, Japan, India. . . . Political institutions that seemed necessary or desirable for democracy on the small scale of a town or city proved to be wholly inadequate on the far larger scale of a modern country. The political institutions suitable for a town would be wholly inadequate even for countries that would be small on a global scale, such as Denmark or the Netherlands. As a result, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a new set of institutions developed that in part resemble political institutions in earlier democracies and republics but, viewed in their entirety, constitute a wholly new political system. (End of page 30)

Chapter 2 provided a brief sketch of this historical development. In Part III, I describe more fully the political institutions of actual democracies and how they vary in important ways.

A word of caution: to say that certain institutions are necessary is not to say that they are enough to achieve perfect democracy. In every democratic country a substantial gap exists between actual and ideal democracy. That gap offers us a challenge: can we find ways to make "democratic" countries more democratic?

If even "democratic" countries are not fully democratic, what can we say about countries that lack some or all of the major political institutions of modern democracy-the nondemocratic countries? How if at all can they be made more democratic? Indeed, just why is it that some countries have become relatively more democratic than others? These questions lead us to still others. What conditions in a country (or any other political unit) favor the development and stability of democratic institutions? And, conversely, what conditions are likely to prevent or impede their development and stability?

In today's world these questions are of extraordinary importance. Fortunately, at the end of the twentieth century we have much better answers than could be obtained only a few generations ago and far better answers than at any earlier time in recorded history. In Part IV, I indicate what we know about answers to these crucial question as the twentieth century draws to a close.

To be sure, the answers we have are by no means free from uncertainty. Yet they do provide a firmer starting point for seeking solutions than we have ever had before.

FROM VALUE JUDGMENTS TO EMPIRICAL JUDGMENTS

Before leaving the chart I want to call attention to an important shift as we move from left to right. In answering "What is (End of page 31) democracy?" we make judgments that depend almost exclusively on our values, or what we believe is good, right, or a desirable goal. When we move on to the question "Why democracy?" our judgments still strongly depend on ideal values, but they also depend on our beliefs about causal connections, limits, and possibilities in the actual world around us--that is, on empirical judgments. Here we begin to rely more heavily on interpretations of evidence, facts, and purported facts. When we try to decide what political institutions democracy actually requires, we rely even more on evidence and empirical judgments. Yet here, too, what matters to us depends in part on our previous judgments about the meaning and value of democracy. Indeed, the reason we may be concerned with the shape of political institutions in the actual world is that the values of democracy and its criteria are important to us.

When we reach the right side of the chart and undertake to determine what conditions favor the development and stability of democratic institutions, our judgments are straightforwardly empirical; they depend entirely on how we interpret the evidence available to us. For example, do or do not democratic beliefs contribute significantly to the survival of democratic political institutions? Yet here again the reason these empirical judgments are important and relevant to us is that we care about democracy and its values.

Our path, then, will take us from the exploration of ideals, goals, and values in Part II to the much more empirical descriptions of democratic political institutions in Part III. We'll then be in a position to move on in Part IV to a description of the conditions that are favorable or unfavorable for democratic political institutions, where our judgments will be almost exclusively empirical in nature. Finally, in the last chapter I'll describe some of the challenges that democracies face in the years ahead. (End of page 32)

CHAPTER 4

What Is Democracy?

All of us have goals that we cannot attain by ourselves. Yet we might attain some of these by cooperating with others who share similar aims.

Let us suppose, then, that in order to achieve certain common ends, you and several hundred other persons agree to form an association. What the specific goals of the association are, we can put aside so as to focus strictly on the question that forms the title of this chapter: What is democracy?

At the first meeting, let **us** further assume, several members suggest that your association will need a constitution. Their view is favorably received. Because you are thought to possess some skills on matters like these, a member proposes that you be invited **to** draft a constitution, which you would then bring to a later meeting for consideration by the members. This proposal is adopted by acclamation. In accepting this task you say something like the following:

"I believe I understand the goals we share, but I'm not sure how we should go about making our decisions. For example, do we want a constitution that entrusts to several of the ablest and best informed among us the authority to make all our important decisions? That arrangement might not only insure wiser decisions but spare the rest of us a lot of time and effort."

The members overwhelmingly reject a solution along these lines**.** One member, whom I am going to call the Main Speaker, argues: (End of page 35)

"On the most important matters that this association will deal with, no one among us is so much wiser than the rest that his or her views should automatically prevail. Even if some members may know more about an issue at any given moment, we're all capable of learning what we need to know. Of course, we'll need to discuss matters and deliberate among ourselves before reaching our decisions. To deliberate and discuss and then decide on policies is one reason why we're forming this association. But we're all equally qualified to participate in discussing the issues and then deciding on the policies our association should follow. Consequently, our constitution should be based on that assumption. It should guarantee all of us the right to participate in the decisions of the association. To put it plainly, because we are all equally qualified we should govern ourselves democratically."

Further discussion reveals that the views set forth by the Main Speaker accord with the prevailing view. You then agree to draft a constitution in conformity with these assumptions.

As you begin your task you quickly discover, however, that various associations and organization calling themselves "democratic" have adopted many different constitutions. Even among "democratic" countries, you find, constitutions differ in important ways. As one example, the Constitution of the United States provides for a powerful chief executive in the presidency and at the same time for a powerful legislature in the Congress; and each of these is rather independent of the other. By contrast, most European countries have preferred a parliamentary system in which the chief executive, a prime minister, is chosen by the parliament. One could easily point to many other important differences. There is, it appears, no single "democratic" constitution (a matter I shall return to in Chapter 10).

You now begin to wonder whether these different constitutions have something in common that justifies their claim to being "democratic." (End of page 36) And are some perhaps *more* "democratic" than others? What does *democracy* mean? Alas, you soon learn that the term is used in a staggering number of ways. Wisely, you decide to ignore this hopeless variety of definitions, for your task is more specific: to design a set of rules and principles, a constitution, that will determine how the association's decisions are to be made. And your constitution must be in conformity with one elementary principle: that all the members are to be treated (under the constitution) as if they were equally qualified to participate in the process of making decisions about the policies the association will pursue. Whatever may be the case on other matters, then, in governing this association all members are to be considered as *politically equal*.

CRITERIA FOR A DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Within the enormous and often impenetrable thicket of ideas about democracy, is it possible to identify some criteria that a process for governing an association would have to meet in order to satisfy the requirement that all the members are equally entitled to participate in the association's decisions about its policies? There are, I believe, at least five such standards (fig. 4).

Effective participation. Before a policy is adopted by the association, all the members must have equal and effective opportunities for making their views known to the other members as to what the policy should be.

Voting equality. When the moment arrives at which the decision about policy will finally be made, every member must have an equal and effective opportunity to vote, and all votes must be counted as equal.

Enlightened understanding. Within reasonable limits as to time, each member must have equal and effective opportunities for learning about the relevant alternative policies and their likely consequences. (End of page 37)

Control of the agenda. The members must have the exclusive opportunity to decide how and, if they choose, what matters are to be placed on the agenda. Thus the democratic process required by the three preceding criteria is never closed. The policies of the association are always open to change by the members, if they so choose.

Inclusion of adults. All, or at any rate most, adult permanent residents should have the full rights of citizens that are implied by the first four criteria. Before the twentieth century this criterion was unacceptable to most advocates of democracy. To justify it will require us to examine why we should treat others as our political equals. After we've explored that question in Chapters 6 and 7, I'll return to the criterion of inclusion.

FIGURE 4. *What is democracy?*

Democracy provides opportunities for:

1. Effective participation
2. Equality in voting
3. Gaining enlightened understanding
4. Exercising final control over the agenda
5. Inclusion of adults

Meanwhile, you might begin to wonder whether the first four criteria are just rather arbitrary selections from many possibilities. Do we have good reasons for adopting these particular standards for a democratic process?

WHY THESE CRITERIA?

The short answer is simply this: each is necessary if the members (however limited their numbers may be) are to be politically equal in determining the policies of the association. To put it in another way, to the extent that any of the requirements is violated, the members will not be politically equal. (End of page 38) For example, if some members are given greater opportunities than others for expressing their views, their policies are more likely to prevail. In the extreme case, by curtailing opportunities for discussing the proposals on the agenda, a tiny minority of members might, in effect, determine the policies of the association. The criterion of effective participation is meant to insure against this result. Or suppose that the votes of different members are counted unequally. For example, lets assume that votes are assigned a weight in proportion to the amount of property a member owns, and members possess greatly differing amounts of property. If we believe that all the members are equally well qualified to participate in the association's decisions, why should the votes of some be counted for more than the votes of others?

Although the first two criteria seem nearly self-evident, you might question whether the criterion of enlightened understanding is necessary or appropriate. If the members are equally qualified, why is this criterion necessary? And if the members are not equally qualified, then why design a constitution on the assumption that they are?

However, as the Main Speaker said, the principle of political equality assumes that the members are all equally well qualified to participate in decisions *provided* they have adequate opportunities to learn about the matters before the association by inquiry, discussion, and deliberation. The third criterion is meant to insure that these opportunities exist for every member. Its essence was set forth in 431 B.C.E. by the Athenian leader Pericles in a famous oration commemorating the city's war dead. "Our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters; . . . and instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all."l

Taken together the first three criteria might seem sufficient. But (End of page 39) suppose a few members are secretly opposed to the idea that all should be treated as political equals in governing the affairs of the association. The interests of the largest property owners, they say to you, are really more important than the interests of the others. Although it would be best, they contend, if the votes of the largest property owners were given such extra weight that they could always win. this seems to be out of the question. Consequently, what is needed is a provision that would allow them to prevail no matter what a majority of members might adopt in a free and fair vote. Coming up with an ingenious solution, they propose a constitution that would nicely meet the first three criteria and to that extent would appear to be fully democratic. But to nullify those criteria they propose to require that at the general meetings the members can only discuss and vote on matters that have already been placed on the agenda by an executive committee; and membership on the executive committee will be open only to the largest property holders. By controlling the agenda, this tiny cabal can be fairly confident that the association will never act contrary to its interests, because it will never allow any proposal to be brought forward that would do so. On reflection, you reject their proposal because it violates the principle of political equality that you have been charged to uphold. You are led instead to a search for constitutional arrangements that will satisfy the fourth criterion and thus insure that final control rests with the members as a whole.

In order for the members to be political equals in governing the affairs of the association, then, it would have to meet all four criteria. We have, it seems, discovered the criteria that must be met by an association if it is to be governed by a democratic process.

SOME CRUCIAL QUESTIONS

Have we now answered the question "What is democracy?"? Would that the question were so easy to answer! Although the answer (End of page 40) I have just offered is a good place to start, it suggests a good many more questions.

To begin with, even if the criteria might be usefully applied to the government of a very small, voluntary association, are they really applicable to the government of a *state?*

Words About Words

Because the term *state* is often used loosely and ambiguously, let me say briefly what I mean by it. By *state* I mean a very special type of association that is distinguishable by the extent to which it can secure compliance with its rules, among all those over whom it claims jurisdiction, by its superior means of coercion. When people talk about "the government:' ordinarily they mean the government of the state under whose jurisdiction they live. Throughout history, with rare exceptions, states have exercised their jurisdiction over people occupying a certain (or in some cases, uncertain or contested) territory. Thus we can think of a state as a territorial entity. Although in some times and places the territory of a state has been no larger than a city, in recent centuries states have generally claimed jurisdiction over entire countries.

One could find much to quibble with in my brief attempt to convey the meaning of the word *state.* Writings about the state by political and legal philosophers would probably require enough paper to use up a small forest. But what I have said will, I believe, serve our purposes.2

Back, then, to our question. Can we apply the criteria to the government of a state? Of course we can! Indeed, the primary focus of democratic ideas has long been the state. Though other kinds of associations, particularly some religious organizations, played a (End of page 41) part in the later history of democratic ideas and practices, from the beginnings of democracy in ancient Greece and Rome the political institutions we usually think of as characteristic of democracy were developed primarily as means for democratizing the government of states.

Perhaps it bears repeating that as with other associations no state has ever possessed a government that fully measured up to the criteria of a democratic process. None is likely to. Yet as I hope to show, the criteria provide highly serviceable standards for measuring the achievements and possibilities of democratic government.

A second question: Is it realistic to think that an association could ever fully meet these criteria? To put the question in another way, can any actual association ever be fully democratic? In the real world is it likely that every member of an association will truly have equal opportunities to participate, to gain an informed understanding of the issues, and to influence the agenda?

Probably not. But if so, are these criteria useful? Or are they just pie-in-the-sky, utopian hopes for the impossible? The answer, simply stated, is that they are as useful as ideal standards can ever be, and they are more relevant and useful than many. They do provide standards against which to measure the performance of actual associations that claim to be democratic. They can serve as guides for shaping and reshaping concrete arrangements, constitutions, practices, and political institutions. For all those who aspire to democracy, they can also generate relevant questions and help in the search for answers.

Because the proof of the pudding is in the eating, in the remaining chapters I hope to show how the criteria can help guide us toward solutions for some of the central problems of democratic theory and practice.

A third question: Granting that the criteria may serve as useful guides, are they all we would need for designing democratic political (End of page 42) institutions? If, as I imagined above, you were charged with the task of designing a democratic constitution and proposing the actual institutions of a democratic government, could you move straightforwardly from the criteria to the design? Obviously not. An architect armed only with the criteria provided by the client-as to location, size, general style, number and types of rooms, cost, timing, and so on--could then draw up plans only after taking into account a great many specific factors. So, too, with political institutions.

How we may best interpret our democratic standards, apply them to a specific association, and create the political practices and institutions they require is, of course, no simple task. To do so we must plunge headlong into political realities, where our choices will require innumerable theoretical and practical judgments. Among other difficulties, when we try to apply several criteria--in this case at least four--we are likely to discover that they sometimes conflict with one another and we'll have to make judgments about tradeoffs among conflicting values, as we shall discover in our examination of democratic constitutions in Chapter 10.

Finally, an even more fundamental question: the views of the Main Speaker were accepted, it seems, without challenge. But why should they be? Why should we believe that democracy is desirable, particularly in governing an association as important as the state? And the desirability of democracy presupposes the desirability of political equality, why should we believe in something that, on the face of it, looks rather preposterous? Yet if we don't believe in political equality, how can we support democracy? If, however, we do believe in political quality among the citizens of a state, wont that require us to adopt something like the fifth criterion--inclusive citizenship?

To these challenging questions we now turn. (End of page 43)