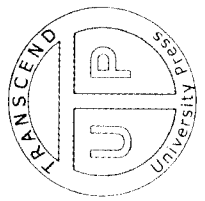


Johan V. Galtung and Paul D. Scott

Democracy •
Peace •
Development



Dedication

The book is dedicated to the People, struggling to be empowered for lives in dignity. Societies have elites with more and people with less power. The road ahead for the people passes through empowerment. Another word is democracy; *demos* comprising both the peoples and the elites. The goal is some kind of resonance, consonance, parity.

Some wilderness is charted, trails are cleared, sometimes overgrown by new wilderness. But the words used, struggle, empowerment, dignity, parity, are indicative of the trails to be cleared, the roads to be built. As Lu Xun says: "Hope cannot be said to exist, nor can it be said not to exist. It is just like roads across the earth. For actually the earth had no roads to begin with, but when many men pass one way a road is made."

In no way should the struggle for democracy be reduced to arithmetic electionism, and in no way should one scoff at elections, free and fair. But, consider this. From 1990 to 2004, 400 million Chinese were taken out of a poverty bordering on misery – not that dignity can be reduced to the bourgeois way of (middle class) life, but it compares very favorably with misery. The Chinese people wanted this to happen, and worked and struggled, like in the numerous town and village enterprises. They got and get what they aspired to without elections. In that period Colombia had such elections, but 60% remain in misery. Obviously the relation is not a simple one. Nor is it obvious that when electionism often carries in its wake corruption and violence only the people, not electionism, is to be blamed.

Western style democracy is very verbal, and there was a famous saying during the Cold War. "In the East, so many are listening that nobody dares to speak; in the West so many are speaking that nobody cares to listen." Maybe there can be an overload of words? And, maybe, in China, a word deficit? People differ.

Maybe. But people tend to blaze, not only chart, trails, with or without the consent of the elites. We are two centuries away from

a major event in not only Spanish but world history. The 2nd of May 1808 Spaniards invented a new form of warfare, the small war, the *guerrilla*, and aimed it at Napoleon's invasion and occupation. They democratized warfare, blazing a trail today travelled by Iraqis and Afghans. Napoleon, the perennial loser, was driven out in 1814, and the Spaniards were then betrayed by a despot King of their own (Fernando VII). Maybe indicating that the violent trail is inferior to what they did after the death of Franco: fair and free elections? Maybe.

Democracy is complicated, also because people are complex, driven by their basic needs, by their deep cultures and deep structures. Equally complicated are peace and development. But let us stand by the dedication: the whole purpose of those three much used and much abused ideas is to serve people, us, wherever and whenever we are. Whom else? Also Nature? Yes – only we don't know how to do that.

So keep the concept of democracy open. No book on democracy is ever final, nor is the library on democracy closed. There will be new trails in that mainly uncharted territory. And the People will do most of the job, not some authors.

This book is also dedicated to some particular people, like Dr Soon Juan Chee and Ms Siok Chin of Singapore, now in jail after a show trial, their courageous lawyers, and thousands like them.

And to our very supportive spouses, Fumiko and Sachiko, both Japanese, dedicated to a deeper and broader democracy in that country.

Kyoto spring 2008:

Johan V. Galtung

Paul D. Scott

1 | The Theory of Democracy

1.1 Essence of Democracy I:

Rule by the Consent of the Ruled

This book links democracy, peace and development, and that begs the first question: What is the essence of these three ideas? What is that without which those precious concepts do not apply, loaded as they are with hopes of a life in dignity for all?

One essential aspect of democracy is obviously rule by rules *making rulers accountable to the consent of the ruled*.

The “ruled” would be the *demos*, the whole people in the political sense of citizens of a state; possibly different from the *ethnos*, people in the national sense of carriers of national culture. The level of legitimacy of the rule depends on the level of consent.¹ In a democracy the ruled bestow legitimacy on the rulers in return for accountability.

A direct way to express consent is for the ruled to do so in a *plebiscite*. An indirect way is for representatives in an assembly to do so in a *vote*. And a very indirect way is to open a window every four years, for 8–12 hours, for people to choose representatives to that assembly in an *election*, free and fair, FAFE, leaving the decision-making between elections to them. All three make rulers arithmetically accountable to the ruled.

Rulers without the *consent* of the ruled are no longer legitimate rulers and should be replaced by new rulers for a new cycle of accountability. A genius social invention, that one.

Democracy is a feedback loop between rulers and ruled, with signals of consent or dissent, meaning acceptance or rejection. A democracy is as good as its feedback loops. Hence, there are degrees, levels, of democracy. *Autocracy* is only one way, with no loop, no built-in feedback, from the ruled to the rulers.

As mentioned, legitimacy is exchanged for accountability. Legitimacy is based on moral consent of the ruled, not fear of the force of the stick, or dependency on the lure of the carrot.

But the essence of democracy transcends signals of consent in feedback loops. The genius stroke was to extend this general point

about consent and legitimacy downwards. Of course systems function better if people want to do what they have to do², but that easily translates into a reality where rulers do what they want to do and the ruled what they have to do. Democracy stands for the revolutionary idea that what the ruled want sets limits to what the rulers do, not the other way round – in principle.

In other words, accountability is not only upwards, the citizens being accountable to the guardians of law and order, or sideways, with people establishing networks of all kinds based on mutual rights and obligations where they basically do what they want to do.³ The point about democracy is to add accountability downwards, with the rulers accountable to the ruled; even if only one day in four years. A meager diet, but better than no accountability at all: also known as autocracy.

A dramatic implication of democracy is that all the ruled affected by the rulers’ decisions are in principle entitled to participate, directly or indirectly, in decision-making. In a globalizing world decisions increasingly affect people in other countries. They should be included in the feedback loops. But the global system of human beings is no democracy. A decision to invade and occupy abroad may be democratic within, and at the same time maxi-autocratic without, with no feedback loops that include the victims. The same may apply to economic decisions, for instance by speculators, affecting millions. Not viable.

Of course, there may be feedbacks from other states in the state-system. But with veto power – and votes being advisory, not compelling – that system is generally not democratic either.

Democratic deficits are found not only at the supra-state, but also at the sub-state levels. But democracy is advancing, also into the basic systems known as family, school and work in complex processes that are quite recent and quite revolutionary.

Take an abusive family, with the husband-father a *pater familias*, with physical force beating wife and children, with bargains with the wife (sex for care) and between the husband’s and wife’s families (dowry against security). The wife may also beat downwards, so may the elder siblings. To introduce husband and parental rule by consent, with husbands and parents being accountable downwards, to wife and children, is as revolutionary as at the general

social level. The idea of romantic love, in principle a relation of reciprocity, may have paved the way, like the idea of children as lovable (pettable?).

Take a school, or a university, with administration-teachers-professors-students. The administration gets compliance from the teachers by paying them, and the teachers until recently got compliance from the pupils by beating them. Accountability was upwards: pupils worked for grading, and teachers reported grades to the administration.

However, increasingly the professors are made accountable to the students, and the level of consent is expressed through the (sometimes publicly available) instrument of evaluation. But administrations, like feudal lords, resist accountability to professors and students. The accountability cycle is blocked.⁴ Not viable in the longer run. Democracy knows no holy cows.

A classical company also has a three tier structure, board-management-workers. Accountability is upwards only: workers to the management, management to the board. Democratization would add consent by management, and by workers, expressed through evaluation of the board by the management and of the management and the board, by the workers. Voting might be an instrument.

And customers would be given more of a say than with money only, through buying or not, and some idea boxes in some shops. Customers might actually have ideas. They might even suggest new products, not only wait for whatever the management proposes and the board is willing to accept if the returns are both high and quick enough for "risk capital".

The best might actually be a meeting of all four, board, management, workers and customers, maybe also with suppliers, the community and spokes-persons for environmental concerns; for a multilateral dialogue after bilateral explorations. The same applies to families and schools. There is actually a loophole in democratic theory and practice: excessive bilateralism.

Take the standard democratic state with the executive (government) accountable to the legislature (parliament), and the legislature accountable to the people. They meet bilaterally, ministers

with representatives in the national assembly, representatives with voters in the campaign. But never the three shall meet, bringing up issues in triads that may lead to new insights and solutions.

As also in the micro-space of families, in schools with at least parents, teachers and administration meeting (PTA), and at work places that bring together workers, managers and the CEO. The break-through to multilateralism will be a major step forward.

1.2 Essence of Democracy II: Nonviolent Conflict Resolution

This angle-perspective-discourse zooms in on another essence. But does not one essence have to be more essential than any other essence, being the essence of the essences so to speak? Maybe, maybe not. Let us explore.

This time the point of departure is not rule, but conflict, meaning incompatible goals (not to be confused with violence). And the point of arrival is conflict resolution, meaning a state of affairs acceptable to – enjoying the consent of – all parties, and sustainable for at least some meaningful time period.

One paradigm for conflict transformation between two parties, A and B, opens for five possible outcomes:⁵

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| [1] Either-or | Domination: The winner A takes all | Fighting |
| [2] Either-or | Domination: The winner B takes all | Fighting |
| [3] Neither-nor | Transcendence, negative | Dialogue |
| [4] Half-half | Compromise | Negotiation |
| [5] Both-and | Transcendence, positive | Dialogue |

[3]-[4]-[5] are all nonviolent. Dialogue is brainstorming.

Thus, in the border conflict Ecuador-Peru 1941-98 over a 500 km² zone in the Andes *fighting* might eventually lead to victory for one of them, and "the winner takes all": domination.

But there could also be a compromise called a "border", like a ceasefire line after *fighting* or, after *negotiation*, using features like watersheds, river-beds, mountain ranges.

And then there are the two transcendencies, going beyond, into new social realities. The parties might through *dialogue* come

to the neither-nor conclusion of withdrawal, giving the territory to the UN, OAS, the indigenous. Or to the both-and conclusion of a binational zone; possibly with a natural park or an economic zone for free binational trade, even production. And that became the nonviolent conflict resolution in 1998.⁶

War as a decision mechanism in a conflict leads to [1] or [2], ties are infrequent. How about the decision mechanism of voting, among citizens or representatives? Very similar to fighting, counting live heads rather than dead bodies. Conviction expressed in a vote replaces prowess expressed in a shot. Mind replaces body, brain for brawn, not underestimating the brain-intensive aspect of an armed campaign, nor the body-intensive stamina in an election or nomination campaign. Words, in campaigns, fighting and victory, are common to both. And both have showing-off foreplay, displaying weapons in maneuvers, and displaying war-chests (campaign funds) and positions in debates. The strength of weapons, chests or positions, may even substitute as decision mechanisms for war or voting. Sun Tzu rather than Clausewitz: no blood, but psychological warfare.

Both being forms of fighting with "winning not being everything, but the only thing", we would expect similarities between war and voting. Sports competitions and legal processes are steered by the same logic.⁷ A and B above can be political parties, the voters are the people. FPTP, First-Past-the-Post, election systems give all to the winner in the constituencies. In Proportional Representative Government, PRG, the majority takes all only in the parliament, not in the constituencies.

As Gandhi said, this opens for the dictatorship of 51 %. And for warlike tactics, like exploiting Other's weaknesses rather than own strengths – the negativism of many election campaigns. And tactics like outflanking and attacking from behind, picking up Other's positions the way Clinton-Blair picked up Republican-Tory positions. Or canceling choice with a Grand Coalition, giving the voters single party autocracy.

So much for the *Debate-Voting Democracy*, based on conflict outcomes [1] and [2] above. Democratic voting is used to conquer a position from which autocracy may be exercised, with the justly celebrated possibility that the next election may turn the tables

around. Electoral democracy may become a pendulum oscillating between two autocracies, with enough time in power to cancel what the other party did. And with the clear and present danger that one of them tries to eternalize⁸ itself by canceling the voting. Negativism and position-stealing would be used, and more so the more "goodies" come with a victory, with power implying perk and privilege, including corruption by selling public contracts in return for private money.

The war metaphor has a two-party system democracy as its logical consequence; wars between more than two parties – except as alliances – being less likely. But two parties tend to be come similar, leading to a de facto Grand Coalition, a two party dictatorship blocking the access of new parties to the election battlefield. Rather than opening for new ideas, this kind of perverted democracy may also serve to block new ideas. Two party conservatism, FPTP and belligerence go together.⁹

How about a *Negotiation-Compromise Democracy* based on [4] in the typology of conflict approaches? This means "ruling" as "ruling together with", which means ending the time-limited autocracy within democracy. No party has monopoly on 'fruth. There is some validity to all, so let us bargain and compromise. There are shadowy aspects, like a Grand Coalition for a Grand Political Class, sharing the spoils of power and privilege. But the basic, bottom line is to take seriously the positions of Other, giving them all their due, as is often done in a crisis.

Finally, the *Dialogue-Consensus Democracy*, based on [3] and [5] in the typology: the transcendencies. The parties meet in a mutual brainstorming where all positions are born equal and have the same right to joint processing to higher levels. Each party contributes its legitimate goals for joint processing toward a creative, constructive consensus. The positions held by the parties are only raw material, not ironclad fortifications to conquer electoral territory as a source of power to rule alone.

We have used the term "conflict resolution" to arrive at these three democracies, and now turn to the term "nonviolent". How nonviolent are the processes of voting (democratese for fighting), *negotiation* and *dialogue*? Disregarding perversions like killing to eliminate voters for other parties, and rigging?

Debate-Voting Democracy may use the “mandate from the people” as cultural violence to legitimize far from nonviolent direct and structural violence. Certain demographics may block democracy if minorities are afraid of losing power and privilege. If the same group always loses, it may also lose interest in the whole process, particularly if the majority imposes its will, and benefits from “the winner takes all” election systems like FPTP.

Negotiation-Compromise Democracy will soften this as all are in it, like the Swiss coalition government “magic” formula with all language groups (German-French-Italian-Retoromanian) and all political positions (left-center-right), accountable directly to the people in referenda rather than to the national assembly in votes of confidence.

Dialogue-Consensus Democracy goes further, using dialogue for mutual learning in a search for new positions, beyond the parties. This will be explored in some detail in 1.5 below.

All three democracies are “by and large nonviolent”, with the danger of the structural violence of exclusion of minorities by majorities, and of people by the political class. And of the danger of direct violence when headcount turns into bodycount. There is, after all, much at stake if the winner takes all.

But “nonviolence” has very positive interpretations beyond no violence. Gandhi was also the end of colonialism, Martin Luther King Jr and Nelson Mandela the end of enforced segregation and apartheid, the peace and dissident movements the end of the Cold War, etc; rather major steps forward.

As mentioned, the consent in a democracy is inner, moral; not by stick or carrot, force or bribery. That is democracy in the name only, sometimes under the guise of FAFE. This is one reason why capitalism meets with more compliance than socialism: the fruits have a sweet taste to those who can afford them, believers or not, whereas the constraints of socialism had a bitter taste, even to the true believers. Capitalism uses bribery, socialism uses force. True democracy is moral.

If compliance is obtained by stick and not by consent, including the stick wielded by a 51% majority, then Gandhi’s, like Thoreau’s, answer was civil disobedience. “Civil” means non-

violent, “disobedience” means non-cooperation with autocratic rules and rulers, not refusal to dialogue with them as humans. Fearlessness as immunity against stick power, and economic self-reliance against carrot power were added to the moral commitment to true democracy. Their willingness to sacrifice without retaliation will, through compromise and consensus processes, ultimately lead to and restore democracy. Nonviolence as *ultima ratio populi* is an indispensable part of democracy.

1.3 Essence of Democracy III:

Basic Human Needs, Basic Human Rights

A third angle-perspective-discourse would zoom in on a third essence: democracy as the political formation that has as ultimate goal to satisfy the basic human needs for all, particularly for the most needy; protected by basic human rights for all, particularly for the most vulnerable and powerless.

This perspective launches democracy as a social formation to blunt class formations. Class means unequal distribution of the political power of decision-making, economic carrot-power, military stick-power and cultural, moral, persuasion-power. The powerless are low on all four. Democracy empowers the powerless by giving them a share in decision-making. The assumption would be that people know best themselves what their needs are, and can best use their share in decision-making to satisfy those needs.

At the end of that process is not a classless society, nor an egalitarian society, but a society with the bottom level of basic need satisfaction high enough for people to live lives in dignity.

Maybe in principle. But not in practice, and actually not in theory either. For the sake of the argument let us disregard manipulation by economic power buying votes for some party, or the threats by military power enforcing non-votes for some party. Let us assume that only interests and inner convictions count. Then, by Gandhi’s principle, if 51% live in misery and vote for its abolition, they may impose a dictatorship of the poor and direct the social surplus to their own need-satisfaction. But in so doing they may, even quickly, undermine their own power and the pendulum might swing to a dictatorship of a well-to-do 51%,

redirecting the social surplus, in turn undermining their power position.

And that is where basic human rights enter.

Human rights – an indispensable part of democracy – are as much a corrective to dictatorship by 51 % in a democracy as to autocratic dictatorship. There are decisions majorities cannot make, like capital punishment. Gandhi was killed on 30 January 1948 before the Universal Declaration (UD) 10 December took some of the brunt off his important 51% observation. UD paved the way for the Third Estate, the bourgeoisie, covering mainly the civil-political rights, repeated and deepened in one of the two covenants of 16 December 1966. The Second covenant, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified by the overwhelming majority of states, has yet to be ratified by what still seems to be the final arbiter of the state-system, the USA. To some this makes those rights “unrealistic”, meaning unacceptable to Big Powers (a very unrealistic definition of “unrealistic”¹⁰).

Electoral democracy rewards and punishes rulers more than the state-system for meeting or breaking the International Bill of Human Rights. That may be changing, but “robust” sanctions have so far only been imposed by the UN Security Council, and by definition only in matters of security, opening for force. A UN Economic and Social Council empowered to do the same, adding rewards for exemplary compliance, could change that.

Today a government can leave poor citizens in misery with impunity by halving the welfare budget if the poor do not use their numerical power. They would not do that to security by halving the police force because the well-to-do are the least secure, having more to lose. Welfare enjoys less consensus, and welfare policy less consent, than security. A government cannot decrease its concern over decrease due to murder with impunity; but can do so for decrease due to disease out of misery. So far.

1.4 The Three Essences Combined: Peace and Development

These three perspectives on democracy do not exclude each other, but could be combined, for instance as follows:

A *democracy* is a system steered by human rights that uses voting, negotiation and dialogue for the nonviolent and creative resolution of conflicts over distribution of the social surplus.

This includes the meta-conflict over the choice of rulers to decide over that distribution, and the succession conflict when the mandate of a ruler has to be renewed or rejected. Murder of rulers happens in democracies, but rarely.

The definition incorporates reasonable definitions of peace and development.

Peace is incorporated through a focus on nonviolence in the sense of no violence in the political process; and in the sense of coming to grips with the roots of violence in unresolved, untransformed conflict through the three nonviolent approaches: fighting by voting only, negotiation, and dialogue. And there is a focus on equality in the focus on human rights, meaning all human rights, indivisible and universal, are for *everyone*.

Development is incorporated in the focus on human rights as institutionalized protection of basic human needs as a base to build on, raising humans to ever higher levels, with creativity.

The three concepts are like three facets of the same prism.

But that synergy is lost if we simplify and trivialize to:

democracy = free and secret ballot for government (electionism).

peace = absence of direct violence (ceasefireism), and

development = catching up with developed countries (deficitism).

They have the advantage of being obtainable quickly and the disadvantage of the bars being too low for humankind to advance. They are too modest. Better set higher goals and no bars at all.

1.5 Dialogue-Consensus vs Debate-Voting: A False Dichotomy

Above, in 1.1, we started with a definition of democracy based on such words as rule, rulers, ruled and rules. Based on that reasoning a slightly modified formulation would be

Democracy is rule with the consent of the ruled according to rules that make the rulers accountable to the ruled.

Let us now explore further two of the ways of obtaining consent developed in I.2, Dialogue-Consensus Democracy and Debate-Voting Democracy. Let us simply call them Democracy A and Democracy B, using these definitions:

In Democracy A decisions are based on consensus, after a dialogue, with everybody, rulers and ruled, participating.

In Democracy B decisions are based on majority rule after voting, with everybody, rulers and ruled, participating.

Democracy A is through the word, Democracy B through the vote.

Democracy A is what we associate with traditional African meetings, the *baraza*, with Japanese decision-making, with low groups at all times and high level political bodies all over the world "talking it through" till consensus is reached. Age old.

Democracy B is what we associate with Athenian, Icelandic, Westminster, generally Western democracy; only 2,500 years old.

Here are some arguments for and against these two types, written up as a dialogue between two spokespersons, A and B:

A: Democracy by consensus has not only the great advantage that there is no winning majority and losing minority, which may lead to a serious split if the same people always lose. The means of achieving consensus, the dialogue, permits a thorough search for the common ground. In addition, no dictatorship by 51% will be possible; Gandhi's major point about democracy.

A vote plays up to Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism, "the greatest good for the greatest number", meaning that a society where 51% are well off and 49% are steeped in misery, is compatible with democracy.¹¹ And a dialogue plays up to John Ruskin's "Unto this Last", giving him-her a chance, reducing structural violence. Any body of thought defending 51%/49% splits is itself cultural violence.

B: But we may not have sufficient time available for that endless search for consensus!

Moreover, the magnitude of that task may force people to give up even before trying. And some, however benign, Quaker type, chairperson ultimately saying "I feel the sense of the meeting is - -" actually exercises autocracy badly disguised. Then I prefer dictatorship by the majority, which can be challenged afterwards by reopening the issue, and softened by reliance on human rights as a corrective. There is no guarantee that "this last" person will prevail more in a dialogue than in a vote. S-he may be out-talked, not only out-voted. There are plenty of glib talkers at the top of any society. Your approach presupposes a solidarity and compassion that may not be there.

A: But you not only kill the **corpus mysticum** of the political body by your insistence on decision-making by voting. You also kill the verbal exchange, the spiritual process of developing something together by calling for a vote which may be premature, under the pretext of time pressure. I agree that the dialogue presupposes an underlayer of compassion. But the question is, what fosters that compassion, to keep people apart in a voting booth, or to keep them together in a dialogue?

B: Nobody has said that democracy is only voting. Of course there are exchanges of words, spoken and printed before that solemn act in the booth where the only Sovereign there is, the People, expresses its will.

A: But that exchange of words is superficial because it only caters to already existing ideas in a potential majority. The dialogue, **dialogos**, through the word, aims higher, at a mutual brainstorming whereby new ideas can emerge, capable of transcending old controversies, bringing people together behind those new visions instead of splitting them, and mainly along old lines. The People is the Sovereign, there we agree, but whereas you see the People essentially as a set of individuals fixed in their collective and individual views, I see the People as always interacting, dynamic, together in the search for something new. And what makes you think that the majority will really respect the human rights of the outvoted minority?

B: That is because we assume the individual to be the holder of a world view, and the social dialectic to be between sets of people holding different ideas about how to organize a society. Hence, what matters is to get these groups organized, under democracy B rules. That is why we have political parties.

A: And we assume no opinion to be fixed forever, but always to be surrounded by doubts. The dialogue permits a dialectic inside, not only among participants where the debate freezes the opinion. What matters is depth, each person enriching the other in a dialogue. In your debate the majority wins. In our dialogue everybody wins through a deeper, common understanding.

B: I can see that working in small groups with much time, not in big societies under the time pressure of today's world.

Let us cut off A and B at that point. How do we decide which democracy is better, Democracy A or Democracy B?

That question – conceiving of a problem as a dichotomy – is already biased in its Western-ness. Buddhist tetralemma logic would make us look, immediately, for the neither-nor and the both-and possibilities. We might conclude that all arguments forwarded by A and B are compelling, that there are very good arguments on both sides, and decide in favor of a both-and. A and B are simply two different approaches to the same problem. Democracy B may work better in big, heterogeneous societies with little **corpus mysticum**, and within an individualistic I-culture. Democracy A may work better in smaller societies, within a more collectivist we-culture. Democracy must be culture-sensitive.

In multi-tiered societies Democracy A and Democracy B could be used at different levels, even at every second level. There could be a village-bloc dialogue for consensus before a national election, with the bloc, literally speaking, voting *en bloc*.

Then comes the head-counting election of representatives.

And then those representatives may work according to a dialogue-consensus model, for instance on foreign policy.

And they may send representatives to a UN General Assembly based on one country-one vote voting, after a debate.

It often happens in such A-B debates that both parties, justifying their own positions, refer to the other party as undemocratic. The A argument would be that the people are left out, that decisions are left to representatives who do not even report back to become accountable. And the B argument would be that all dialogue groups are dominated by glib dialogue masters.

Neither by A nor by B alone is the answer to the question of how to ensure rule by consent. The good arguments pro and contra A and B should make us favor both.

A more democratic culture could eliminate the deficits. The problem is that we do not do that. The dominant position of the West is used to impose Western Democracy B as the only form of democracy on the rest of the world, and talk about democracy through dialogue and consensus adds up to exactly that: talk.

The secret ballot, more or less freely arrived at, and reliably counted with international monitors, is the panacea. That panacea is also delivered as bilateral and multilateral (UN, OSCE, EU) development assistance in accordance with the development-as-elimination-of-deficits (what the MDCs have and the LDCs miss) model. However, to impose one form of democracy on societies that rather should be encouraged to develop some mix is structural and cultural violence at the same time.

People around the world are not consulted about what they understand by democracy, or whether they really believe in what they understand. They get the Western interpretation grafted onto their structure and culture, onto their body and spirit so to speak, with a highly non-democratic lack of alternatives and debate. Of course, imposing Democracy A on other countries, against their structure and culture, would not have been better; but that is not what is happening in the world.

Cambodia is an example.¹² A Hinayana Buddhist culture with the *anattha* – no-soul – doctrine of growth through immersion in the collective, universal Self of all Humans, present, past and future, of all sentient Life. Dialogue for consensus makes sense in this framework, debate for majority not.

But that was imposed upon them by UN action. The result will be a caricature, a mockery of democracy, a “democracy” – in Japanese *demokurashii*, *kurashi* dark – destroying the culture.

Democracy and Buddhism will lose; criminality, corruption and violence will gain, in a country already devastated by the double genocide of US bombing and the Khmer Rouge horror.

Nations will be divided to the point of mafia style gangs, buying and even eliminating voters (*la violencia*, Colombia¹³). Families will be divided politically by gender and generation. *Democracy by consensus* will be marginalized to older generation and the women, *democracy by majority* will probably be used by younger men as their power instrument, with force and bribes.

A counter-argument to this type of critique would be that sooner or later they will all get used to democracy by majority, and be able to handle cleavages without violence and corruption. But if that happens their culture has already been invaded and changed, and so has their political structure; toward political individualism, away from dialogue, however distorted by power and privilege dialogues may be.

Any change from collective to individual ethical budget cultures is dramatic. Given Western records of war and peacelessness, is the West really so sure of the infallibility of their democracy concept? Or is this only a new form of structural and cultural violence, in addition to the old, tested forms of colonialism, imperialism and economism?¹⁴

Of course, nothing said above is in any way an argument against democracy as rule with the consent of the ruled. The argument is over how to do it, only A, only B or a combination. There is no argument for autocracy: neither A, nor B, above.

And there is an argument for something A and B have, or ought to have, in common: *deliberative democracy*. Deliberation is neither debate nor dialogue.

It means to present (debate) or to arrive at (dialogue) not only a statement about how reality is or ought to be, but why. Deliberation is theory, argumentation, justification. And like science it should be public. "By what theory?" is always a good question when somebody delivers a conclusion but does not share the deliberation, if any.

In the classic *Why Deliberative Democracy?*¹⁵, Amy Gutman and Dennis Thompson present their deliberations on deliberation:

"Combining these four characteristics, we can define deliberative democracy as a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representatives), justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, with the aim of reaching conclusions that are binding in the present on all citizens but open to challenge in the future".

About this there can be many deliberations. Deliberation calls for some kind of deduction (reasoning, justification), and a person in a debating mode may demand this in order to attack Other's position, both head and tail. Both the legal and the theological professions are deliberative, and a person in a dialogical mode may fear that mutually acceptable and accessible reasons will give the past a too heavy vote, and close for the new realities emerging from dialogues. Facts are indispensable, so is deductive reasoning. And so is genuine creativity.

But conclusions derived from a dialogue should also be justified by reasons and not be self-referential as if «this came out of a dialogue» guarantees absolute truth. Dialogue is a heuristic, like a debate. To assign Truth to the winner of a debate is a verbal form of might is right, dear to lawyers and theologians. In a dialogue there is no such thing.

The basic point remains: democracy is based on statements and their relations, as explanations and/or justifications.¹⁶

1.6 Democracy vs Autocracy: Another False Dichotomy

With the more idealistic definition of democracy in 1.4 as a background let us have a fresh look at the conventional, sharp, merciless dichotomy *democracy vs autocracy*, "rule by the people" vs "rule by one person". Two types only.

Let us call him (usually a he) *No. 1*. And let us then expose this dichotomy straitjacket – keeping the moral challenge of *rule with the consent of the ruled* – to some useful questions:

- how about neither-nor; is there something else under the sun?
- how about both-and: could there be a combinations of the two?
- how about levels: could there be degrees of demo /autocracy?

Doing so we expand from two to five, even to nine types:

A typology of political systems

Autocracy: No. 1 alone	AUTOCRACY	"manifestations, please!"	INCARNACY
The political class-elites	OLIGARCHY	Parliamentocracy Indirect Democracy	"The will of the masses" Democracy, direct
No power to elites NO. 1	ANARCHY	Local Democracy? Issue Democracy?	
	No power to the people	Some power to the people	Alle power to the people

On the "X-axis" for democracy is no, some, or all power to the people; on the "Y-axis" three possibilities for autocracy.

Well-known systems are found along the *bi-diagonal*: all power to *No. 1* in *autocracy*; power shared between people and a political class in indirect, electoral democracy, *parliamentocracy*; all power to the people (direct, plebiscitarian *democracy* with Switzerland as an approximation). On this diagonal the total amount of power over the people is about constant, only distributed in three very different ways. Like three models for wealth distribution: in the hands of *No. 1* only, unequally, and equally.¹⁷

Then there is the *main diagonal* of the table. Down to the left is no power at all, neither for the people, nor for *No. 1*. Everybody is out for him-herself, not bothering to influence anybody else, but very concerned with their own, ego-centric, cost-benefit balance.

Anarchy is one term often used, another may be *postmodernity*. Of course there is frozen power built into the structure as structural power. But here the focus is on power exercised openly in public space, by actors over other actors.¹⁸

In the middle the public power is shared between the people – in free, secret and rare elections – and a political class. This system, *parliamentocracy*, easily degenerates into electionism.¹⁹

In the top right hand corner is another category that, like anarchy, does not fit the democracy/autocracy dichotomy at all.

No. 1 has absolute power *and* absolute consent, maybe as an *incarnation* of the popular will, hence *incarnacy*. The author had the occasion June 1962 to meet a powerful case: Kwame Nkrumah, the *osagyefoh* (savior) was his title, bestowed on him by the

people. Churchill may have had a similar status during the Second World War, and Mandela in the struggle against apartheid. The problem is not that sovereignty, coming from the people, for some period rests with *No. 1*, but whether, and how, it comes back. Churchill lost elections in 1945, Nkrumah was ousted in 1966 and died in 1972. Mandela stepped back. Power returned to the people. And in Bhutan democracy even had to be forced on the people.²¹

Autocracy and democracy are the pure, extremist forms of this table. Anarchy is neither-nor. Incarnacy is both-and. What we have, parliamentocracy, is an in-between compromise. There is much talk about democracy, but we have only electionism as legitimation of parliamentocracy – with Switzerland as the only real democracy.

Of the remaining four in the table the oligarchy rule of the few is a classic softening of autocracy, like local, or issue, democracy softens democracy. But the sum of local democracies is as far from state democracy as the sum of state democracies is from world democracy. And *No. 1* might like manifestations to confirm his power, just as oligarchic parties might try to pose as the will of the masses. All four are legitimation exercises for autocrats, or for political classes, the political elites, like parliamentarians.

The nine types do not exclude each other. A famous combination is autocracy with oligarchy – the party dictatorship – with shifting balances between *No. 1* and the elites. Another is the combination of parliamentocracy with occasional referenda.

There is more autocracy in the world than democracy. Families (and schools) are usually run like autocracies raising future autocrats. The children ultimately walk out on their parents; they defect in their puberty revolutions. The parents are ultimately carried out, feet first. But their children often see to it that home autocracy is reproduced when their time comes. Pupils-students may hate the autocracy imposed upon them by teachers-professors, like workers hate the autocracy in most companies. But unless they undergo a consciousness change these formulas will be reproduced.

Of course the book focus is on autocracy in a country, and in the world, on territorially defined political entities. But family, school and the work-place are important because that is how we

learn autocracy as the form justified by the guiding light of No. 1; as the form where some are the guides for others in need of guidance. *Educare* is the Italian word, like in *duce*, not a compliment to schools. And when No. 1 is adored as the “father of the country”, “father” is not necessarily a compliment to the family system.

Under *aristocracy* one class had the task of guiding the rest of society, not being accountable to the people but for the people.²² Conservatism is based on the idea that people of high class by birth-education can better exercise that function. Colonialism was legitimized as some countries raising others to adulthood, or rightly kept them infantile. Development assistance is based on the idea that the MDCs have the task of developing the LDCs by supplying what is missing. Democracy assistance is done the same autocratic way. Human rights are enforced by breaking them, through NATO decision-making, and wars. All half-baked, badly thought through, and doomed to fail because wrong means will overshadow right ends.

There is an element of socio-cultural cloning: the autocrat or the autocrat class (OECD for development assistance, NATO for “security assistance”) are convinced that they have a blueprint that should be imprinted on those lower down, and on future generations.

We have tried to tap into the democracy-autocracy dialectic. There is the *yin* of the people not only having their own say, but being consulted in search of the basic consent of the ruled. There is also the *yin* of people enacting their own game, empowered to raise themselves, to teach themselves, develop themselves, creating their own democracy. But then there is the *yang* of some thinking they are ahead, born into a leadership not freely given to them.

The question is whether they are willing and able to share, to raise and praise others, to step back when time has come and they are tired and retired. Parliamentocracy or indirect democracy is an effort to use this dialectic: people have “a say” in choosing their leaders, and the leaders have “an act”, a limited time-lease to lit the light for all. A rather ingenious formula, but also one that easily can go wrong if the political class amasses oligarchic power.

2 | The Reality of Democracy

So much for the theory of democracy. Let us turn to reality.

It should be taken for granted that any book about democracy consists mainly of blank pages, that we have only seen the early beginning of the life-cycle of that phenomenon, that much of its charm is in the process, in not being finished, and that democracy dies the moment we assume that perfection has been attained.²³

It should also be taken for granted that democracy is in a crisis, which is not necessarily bad. Thus, asking people who won the US elections November 1996 the answer was “Clinton, of course.” People failed to understand that the non-voters were in majority, 51%. By the logic of democracy, “one person, one vote” we get “one non-vote, one non-person”. The majority seemed to prefer being non-persons to keeping democracy alive through their participation.

When 95% did not participate in Haiti, to US spokesmen this was nothing to worry about. Democracy was firmly launched. But the Haitians had another explanation: the candidates were the old suspects, dressed up in party garbs to satisfy the norm of having at least two parties. An invitation to democracy at election time, then the observers pack up, and autocracy between elections can be resumed till another old suspect takes over. Their choice, Aristide, had been ousted - by the United States.²⁴

Low election participation, in US presidential elections or in EU parliamentary elections, whether the reason given is “why vote when the two parties are so similar” or “why vote when Parliament has so little power” is only one of the reality problems.²⁵ Below five other, and considerably more important, problems will be explored. The sustainability of an institution depends on its self-repair capacity. Ignoring the problems is death by suicide.