

# Democracy

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### THE WORD 'DEMOCRACY'

The word 'democracy' comes from the Greek and literally means rule by the people. It is sometimes said that democratic government originated in the city-states of ancient Greece and that democratic ideals have been handed down to us from that time. In truth, however, this is an unhelpful assertion. The Greeks gave us the word, but did not provide us with a model. The assumptions and practices of the Greeks were very different from those of modern democrats. The Greeks had little or no idea of the rights of the individual, an idea that is tied up with the modern concept of democracy. Greek practice granted the right of political participation to only a small minority of the adult inhabitants of the city. When those granted this right were able to take political decisions, they did so by a direct vote on issues, which is very different from the system of representative government that has developed in the west in the past two centuries. 'Modern men', asserts Sartori, 'want another democracy, in the sense that their ideal of democracy is not at all the same as that of the Greeks' (Sartori 1987: 279).

Greek democracy was poorly regarded by all the Greek philosophers and historians whose writings have survived, including Plato, Aristotle and Thucydides. They depicted it as government by the ignorant or government by the poor. It was subsequently held in general disrepute for over two thousand years. During the English civil war of the seventeenth century the Levellers briefly raised the banner of democracy, but they were a small group who had little or no influence on events. The founders of the American constitution shared in the generally poor view of democratic government. In *The Federalist*, James Madison, assuming that democracy involved direct rule by citizens, wrote that 'democracies have ever been found incompatible with personal security, or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths' (Hamilton et al. 1901: 48). The Founding Fathers talked of creating a republic, based on representative institutions, not a democracy; the leaders of the French Revolution talked of a republic also; and in Britain people described their system as one of representative and responsible government.

The term 'democracy', in its modern sense, came into use during the course of the nineteenth century to describe a system of representative government in which the representatives are chosen by free competitive elections and most male citizens are entitled to vote. In the United States this state of affairs was reached in the 1820s and 1830s, as the franchise was extended state by state. In France, there was a sudden leap to adult male suffrage in 1848, but parliamentary government was not established securely until 1871. In Britain, parliamentary government was secure from 1688 onwards, but the franchise was not extended to the majority of male citizens until 1867. Democracy is therefore a fairly new phenomenon in world history, though it is spreading.

Democratic institutions and practices have been firmly established for four decades or more in about 30 of the 192 states that now exist. In addition, there are younger but seemingly secure democratic regimes in Spain, Portugal and South Africa, an uncertain number of regimes that are best described as partially democratic, such as those of Cyprus, Mexico and Malaysia, and a very large number of regimes (mostly in eastern Europe and Latin America) that have freshly claimed the title of democratic since 1990. This last category will be discussed below under the heading of 'Democratization'.

In defining and discussing democracy in the twentieth century, there have been two sources of confusion. One source of confusion is that the term has been used not only to describe a system of government but also to describe other social relationships. Thus, Americans have said that their country not only has a democratic set of political institutions but also has or is a democratic society. Some socialists have advocated industrial democracy. Communists used to describe the Communist Party states of eastern Europe as people's democracies.

However, this kind of confusion does not pose serious problems so long as language is used with some precision. Thus, a democratic society, in the American sense, is one without hereditary class distinctions, in which there is something approaching equality of opportunity for all citizens. The term 'democratic' is used to indicate a degree of social equality, not a form of government. Industrial democracy, a term coined by Sidney and Beatrice Webb in the early years of the twentieth century, means a form of workers' control within industrial plants.

The term 'people's democracies' is an essentially misleading one that was coined in the aftermath of the Second World War. No sensible person has ever been deceived by this into thinking that these Soviet-controlled states were democratically governed in the accepted sense of the term. Clearly the citizens of the states themselves had no such illusion.

It follows that we need not be concerned about these extensions of the term 'democracy', but should focus our attention on the other source of confusion, namely the vagueness of the terms commonly used to define a

democratic political system, the difficulty of clarifying these terms in a value-free way, and the array of partially incompatible justifications for democracy advanced by democratic theorists. It is because of these difficulties that the concept has to be regarded as currently contestable.

## DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY

If we start from the dictionary definition, that democracy means the rule of the people, we immediately run into the problem of how, in practical terms, to define the people and how to define the meaning of rule. Does 'the people' mean the whole adult population, or only those who possess enough property to give them what nineteenth-century politicians called a stake in the country? Does it matter if women are excluded from the franchise, as they were until after the Second World War in several European countries that were universally recognized as democratic, including France and Switzerland? Can one say that a system is partially democratic if the right to participate in politics is confined to one section of the population? The South African regime under apartheid, for example, rested on democratic institutions for its white citizens, but not for the majority of its people, who are black or coloured. Would the answer to this question be different if the great majority of South African citizens were white? In practice, the answers that people give to these questions depend on their political values, so it is impossible to formulate a value-free definition of 'the people'.

This is even clearer in regard to the question of what is meant by 'rule'. If ruling is taken to mean the activity of reaching authoritative decisions that result in laws and regulations binding upon society, then it is obvious that (apart from occasional referendums) only a small minority of individuals can be rulers in modern, populous societies. So for the dictionary definition to be operational, ruling must be taken in the much weaker sense of choosing the rulers and influencing their decisions. But how weak can this sense be and still remain meaningful? Is it essential to a democracy that governmental decisions, though made by only a small minority of politicians, should nevertheless reflect or embody the popular will? If so, how can the popular will be defined and how can it be identified in practice? The answers that people give to these and various similar questions clearly depend on their values and ideals.

It follows that we cannot arrive at an objective and precise definition of democracy simply by elucidating the intrinsic meaning of the term, in so far as it might be said to have an intrinsic meaning. We are therefore left with two alternatives. On the one hand, we can start with the observation of political practice and common usage, which leads to a definition in terms of institutions and processes and leaves the question of justification to a distinguishable (though not entirely separate) intellectual exercise. On the other hand, we can spell out our democratic ideals and consider what the practical

implications of these are. Some theorists of democracy have taken the first approach, which can best be called the empirical approach, while others have taken the second, best called the idealist approach. Others again have tried to blend the two approaches.

In discussing theories of democracy, there is another distinction that is very relevant, namely the distinction between theories about parliamentary democracy and theories about American democracy. Because American political scientists occupy a rather dominant position in the discipline, it is sometimes forgotten that, among democracies, the United States is a unique case. All other securely democratic states have political systems based on the principle that sovereignty inheres in the national parliament or assembly. The controversies about democracy in these countries are essentially controversies about the selection and functions of representatives in this parliament.

The United States, in contrast, has a political system based on the principle that sovereignty inheres in the people. The US constitution begins with the words 'We the People of the United States . . . do ordain and establish this Constitution.' Members of Congress, Senators, the president and the judges are all regarded as deriving their authority from the people. In view of this difference, it will be convenient, in what follows, to deal with theories about American democracy separately from theories about parliamentary democracy.

## AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Simplifying somewhat, it can be said that Americans have defined their democracy in three different ways: a populist way, in terms of the rule of the people; a pluralist way, in terms of competition between sections and pressure groups; and an institutional way, in terms of a set of institutions and processes. All three versions had their origins in the thought and writings of the Founding Fathers of the American republic.

A belief in the principle of popular sovereignty was common to all the Founding Fathers, whether they were relatively conservative or relatively radical. One of the latter, James Wilson of Pennsylvania, declared in 1787 that:

in our governments, the supreme, absolute, and uncontrollable power remains in the people. As our constitutions are superior to our legislatures, so the people are superior to our constitutions . . . In giving a definition of what I meant by a democracy . . . I termed it, that government in which the people retain the supreme power.

(quoted Padover 1963: 19)

Madison and Jefferson, while sceptical of democracy because of its Greek connotation of direct rule, were quite clear that the American republic must

have frequent elections so that the people could keep the politicians in check. They and their colleagues were, indeed, much more sceptical than British and French liberals have been of what could be expected of politicians. Thus, Madison declared that 'it is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust . . . clashing interests. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm' (Hamilton et al. 1901: 47). Jefferson believed that unless politicians and public officials were kept under the direct eye of their constituents, the result would be 'corruption, plunder and waste' (quoted Birch 1975: 227). Alexander Hamilton observed more than once that men love power. Thomas Mason said that 'From the nature of man, we may be sure that those who have power in their hands . . . will always, when they can . . . increase it' (quoted Dahl 1956: 8).

This scepticism about the motives and behaviour of politicians underlies the American belief in frequent elections. Hamilton said it was essential that representatives should 'have an immediate dependence on, and an intimate sympathy with, the people. Frequent elections are unquestionably the only policy by which this dependence and sympathy can be effectually secured' (Hamilton et al. 1901: 290). Jefferson was of the same opinion, declaring that legislators should have to submit themselves 'to approbation or rejection at short intervals' and saying that the executive (by which he meant a state governor or the president) must be 'chosen in the same way . . . by those whose agent he is to be' (quoted Padover 1969: 27). The president, be it noted, was regarded by Jefferson as an agent of the people; a view that has never been taken of a prime minister in a parliamentary system of democracy. In fact, the several state constitutions that existed between 1776 and 1787 all provided for frequent elections of legislators: in Connecticut and Rhode Island elections were held every six months; in South Carolina, every two years; and in the other ten states, every year. The decision to have biennial elections to the US House of Representatives, which is more frequently than in any other national legislative chamber in the world, followed naturally from these assumptions and practices.

This belief in popular sovereignty and frequent elections did not at first lead American theorists and leaders to identify their system of government as democratic. They preferred to call it republican, both because of the eighteenth-century tradition of republicanism among advanced thinkers and because the term was thought more appropriate to the balanced constitution that had been adopted in 1787 than the term democratic, with its connotations of lower-class dominance. (For a discussion of republican rhetoric during the early years of the republic, see Hanson 1985: Chapters 2 and 3.) It was not until the Jacksonian period that the term democratic came into widespread usage, and at first it had partisan connotations.

By the 1860s it had gained general acceptance, however, and the belief in popular sovereignty was reflected in Lincoln's famous definition of democracy as 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'. As

Sartori has pointed out, this phrase defies exact analysis. The three concepts in the phrase can be interpreted in a variety of ways; Stalin could have used it to characterize his regime without doing violence to the wording; and the phrase as a whole has rhetorical value rather than logical meaning (Sartori 1987: 34–5). It has rhetorical value because it reflects a strain in the American political tradition that all Americans can recognize; a strain that has been otherwise identified as faith in the common man. When Woodrow Wilson inspired popular enthusiasm for democracy during the First World War – which he described as a war to make the world safe for democracy – much was said about the twentieth century being the century of the common man. Padover reports that in the six years following the end of Wilson’s presidency in 1921, ‘there were, in the United States, no less than 120 books in print with “democracy” or its derivatives in their titles’ (Padover 1963: 29).

There is another strain in American democratic thought that is also important, namely the pluralist strain. The origins of this, like the origins of the populist strain, can be found in the writings of the Founding Fathers. In *The Federalist* no. 10, Madison argued that the size and diversity of the proposed federation would safeguard the rights of minorities by making it difficult for any coherent majority to be formed.

Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less likely that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other.

(Hamilton et al. 1901: 50)

In *The Federalist* no. 51, Hamilton repeated this argument.

In the federal republic of the United States . . . the society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests, and classes of citizens that the rights of individuals or of the minority will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority.

(Hamilton et al. 1901: 287)

This suspicion of majority rule runs through a great deal of political debate in the United States. It goes along with the attachment to the separation of powers between the legislature and the executive that operates at both federal and state levels of government. It adds up to a preference for weak government that has no clear equivalent in other democratic states. In parliamentary regimes there have been some groups at some periods who have favoured laissez-faire economic policies (as in Britain in the mid-nineteenth century) or have shown suspicion of state power (as in France in

the Third Republic), but the dominant strain in theories of parliamentary democracy has been a preference for government that has the capacity for firm leadership, though being responsible to elected representatives for the way this leadership is exercised.

In the post-war period these early theories about sectional pluralism were given a new emphasis by writers who argued that disciplined national parties were undesirable and probably impossible to achieve in a society as large and heterogeneous as the United States. And, following that, writers like Earl Latham (1952) and David Truman (1951) developed a new form of pluralism which hinged on the activities of organized interest groups rather than on pressures from geographical sections. American government, it was urged, is democratic because policy making is an arena for conflict between organized groups, which represent all relevant interests and ensure that the outcome would be a series of compromises which took these interests into account. All citizens were free to organize and join such groups, and the politicians responsible for reaching decisions would be influenced not only by the activities of existing groups but also by the knowledge that new groups would undoubtedly be formed to defend any interest that was presently unrepresented, if decisions were reached that were harmful to that interest.

This line of argument was in part persuasive, because one of the characteristics that stands out in American politics is the openness of the system to group pressures and the vigour of the conflicts between interest groups. However, the argument was open to the criticism of being complacent in its assumption that all interests are adequately represented, because it is evident that some groups are much more influential than others, while some categories of people, such as the homeless, have no effective group to look after their interests.

In general, it seems clear that scholars of the pluralist school are broadly correct in their insistence that conflict between group pressures is a central characteristic of American politics, but controversial when they equate this with democracy. To populists, it is not good enough to show that power is divided between competing elites and pressure groups, when democracy, properly defined, would be a system in which power belonged to the common people.

Without necessarily accepting the superiority of the populist approach, it must be conceded that there are grounds for doubting the claim that a pluralistic dispersal of political influence in a political unit can be equated with democracy. Imagine an American city divided on ethnic lines, as New York, for example, was during the 1950s. Suppose that in the government of this city representatives of the Irish community tended to have a dominant influence on issues relating to the police and the appointment of magistrates; that representatives of the Jewish community tended to have a dominant influence on policy regarding education and the social services;

and that representatives of the Italian community tended to have a large say in decisions about highways and the award of construction contracts. This would be a pluralistic system, but it would not be a fully democratic system if representatives of the black community lacked influence over any area of policy. Nor would it be fully democratic unless the representatives of the various communities were answerable to the electorate for their actions.

Some writers of the pluralist persuasion are more cautious than others in their claims. It is fair to say, however, that the pluralist view of democracy rests upon the three propositions that the United States is democratic, that the American political system is pluralistic, and that pluralism equals democracy, it being possible to start with any of these propositions and move to the other two, as if moving round a circle. And it is not unreasonable for critics to be sceptical about the third of these propositions, even while accepting the first two. One might well take the view that the American system is both pluralistic and democratic, but that its democratic character depends on more than its pluralistic dimension.

## PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

The debates over the definition of democracy in countries enjoying parliamentary systems have been more limited in scope than the American debates. Very few writers in these countries have adopted populist definitions or pluralist definitions. The great majority have defined democracy in institutional and procedural terms, as parliamentary government with free competitive elections and a wide franchise. However, the normative theories by which they have justified democracy have varied considerably.

In discussing European ideas about democracy it is appropriate to begin with French ideas, because the French have influenced more countries that have remained democratic than the British have done. The British have certainly planted parliamentary institutions in nearly all their former colonies, but it is only in a few cases that these countries have remained democratic for more than a few years after the achievement of self-government. The French, in contrast, have influenced the growth of democratic institutions and practices throughout most of continental Europe.

A discussion of French democratic ideas has to begin with the theories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It is, of course, arguable whether Rousseau should be regarded as a democrat. He did not believe in representative government, because he did not think that people's wills could be represented by others. His ideal revolved around direct self-government in small communities, and even there he did not apparently think it important that all adults, or even a majority of adults, should be entitled to participate in political decisions. He wrote admiringly of the government of Geneva, where he had spent his youth, even though less than 10 per cent of the residents of that city had



the right to participate. He is, nevertheless, important, because he developed a vision of popular self-government that has influenced the ideas of subsequent generations and affected the way they regard politics in large communities where representation is the norm.

One of the main keys to Rousseau's thinking is his commitment to the idea of civic virtue. Whereas most democratic theorists in both the United States and Britain have thought in terms of the protection and promotion of individual interests through political action, Rousseau considered that in an ideal polity individuals should put their personal interests on one side when they participated in politics, and commit themselves instead to the promotion of the communal welfare. He postulated the possibility that citizens could have two levels of consciousness, leading to two types of political will.

On the one hand, they would be conscious of their own individual or group interests, leading to a set of 'particular wills' to promote measures favourable to those interests. On the other hand, they could, in the right conditions, be led to think in terms of the interests of the community as a whole, leading to a 'real will' to promote measures that would protect these shared interests. The particular wills of citizens would be diverse and to some extent mutually incompatible; their real wills, on the other hand, would merge into a consensus that Rousseau called the 'general will'. It followed that if the laws of the state were based on the general will, they would not restrict the liberty (properly defined) of citizens, who would be forced to obey only laws that they had prescribed for themselves. It was in this way, Rousseau declared, that people could resolve the most fundamental problem of politics, that of how to achieve freedom while being bound by the laws of the community.

Rousseau was not naive enough to believe that this ideal state of affairs could easily be achieved. On the contrary, he set out some quite stringent conditions for its achievement. The community must be small enough for its active citizens to meet and cast their votes directly, rather than through representatives. Members of the community must be educated to accept what Rousseau called a civil religion – 'a purely civil profession of faith of which the sovereign should fix the articles, not exactly as religious dogmas, but as social sentiments without which a man cannot be a good citizen' (Rousseau 1913: 121). The laws to be determined by the general will must be general in their scope, not regulations on specific matters which would be bound to divide citizens according to their particular interests. The formulation of the questions to be put to the sovereign body, namely the assembly of citizens, must be left to a statesman described as the legislator.

It is obvious that when Rousseau wrote of the laws he was thinking of a small body of laws on fundamental questions of state, not of a mass of detailed legislation such as regulate the affairs of industrial societies in the twenty-first century. It is also made clear that in his ideal state the day-to-day

business of government would be conducted not by the sovereign assembly, but by a body of public officials answerable to the sovereign assembly (see Rousseau 1913: Book III, Chapters 16–18).

This very brief sketch is intended only to indicate the character of Rousseau's vision of an ideal self-governing community, not to serve as a guide to his rich and rewarding philosophy of politics. Rousseau's ideas have had a profound influence on subsequent thought in many countries, including most notably the philosophies of Kant, Hegel and numerous followers of Hegel in Germany and, much later, the social ideas of the English Idealists. It is Rousseau who was the originator of what is now called the positive concept of liberty, to be discussed in Chapter 10.

Within France, Rousseau has always been a controversial figure, revered by some and reviled by others. What French attitudes to democracy have in common with Rousseau's ideas is the assumption that democracy is to be advocated in collective terms rather than in the individualistic terms common in the United States and Britain. French republicans tended to see the French revolution and the later extensions of the franchise as nation-building activities. Although French revolutionaries talked of the rights of man, they did not share the American belief in popular sovereignty. The doctrine of the revolutionaries was not that the French people were sovereign and that their views were represented in the National Assembly. The doctrine was that the French nation was sovereign and the National Assembly embodied the will of the nation. The 1789 *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* stated that members of the Assembly should not be 'bound by the instructions of their constituents', while the 1791 constitution said clearly that 'the representatives elected in the departments will not be representatives of a particular department but of the whole nation, and they may not be given any mandate'.

This doctrine marked a turning point in continental European ideas about political representation. Before this, the political representative had been viewed on the continent as a delegate, so that there were three parties in the representative process: the principal, the representative, and the authority to whom representations were to be made. According to the new theory promulgated by the French revolutionaries, political representatives were no longer to be thought of as intermediaries of this kind but were to contrive, in their collective capacity, to act as the voice of the nation. This theory clearly differs from both the populist view of democracy and the pluralist view of democracy; it is a European but not an American theory. It views the elected representative as an independent maker of national laws and policies, not as an agent for his constituents or for sectional interests.

This French view has been generally accepted in Europe. The French constitutional provisions that prohibited mandates and instructions were subsequently copied or followed in the constitutions of most of the countries of western Europe, including those of Belgium in 1831, Italy in 1848,

Prussia in 1850, Sweden in 1866, Austria in 1867, Germany in 1871, Switzerland in 1874, the Netherlands in 1887, and Denmark in 1915. Similar provisions are included in the 1948 constitution of Italy and the 1949 Basic Law of the German Federal Republic.

In Britain, which has no written constitution, the same attitude is embodied in the constitutional doctrine that sovereignty belongs to Parliament, there being no mention of the people, and also in the conventions that protect the privileges of Members of Parliament (MPs). In the 1950s, for instance, the Committee of Privileges of the House of Commons found that a serious breach of privilege had been committed by the editor of a national newspaper (with a circulation numbered in millions) who had published the private telephone number of an MP and advised those of his readers who disagreed with the views of the MP to telephone him and say so. The committee insisted that MPs must be free to say what they pleased in the House without the fear that it might lead to their being pestered in this way. The editor had to apologize to the House and could conceivably have been sent to prison for his offence.

It is unnecessary to follow the vicissitudes of French democratic thought since the revolution, but two general points about it should be noted. The first is that the French, unlike the British, have not had protracted arguments about the extent of the franchise. This was based on a property qualification from 1791 to 1848; was then extended to all male citizens; and was extended to women in 1946 as the result of the changed status of women brought about by the Second World War rather than as the consequence of a debate about democracy.

The other point is that French debates have been influenced by the ideological factionalism that was for long a characteristic of political life. In the Third and Fourth Republics the existence of a multi-party system meant that every government was based on a coalition, while the weakness of party discipline increased the frequency with which these coalitions fell apart. In the life of these two regimes, totalling 81 years, France had 118 different governments, with an average duration of only eight months each. Some theorists were quite happy with this situation, feeling that it had the desirable result of keeping the executive in check. Others were critical, feeling that the representatives were spending much of their time on political intrigues and factional disputes rather than advancing the interests of the nation. The Chamber of Deputies in the Fourth Republic was sometimes described as a 'house without windows' for this reason.

The situation changed with the establishment of the Fifth Republic in 1958. De Gaulle was called to power because French governments had been unable to deal effectively with the political crisis and civil war in Algeria. He then adopted the tactic of appealing directly to French electors, over the head of the National Assembly, by holding referendums on critical issues. Two of these dealt with Algeria, the result being that de Gaulle's

favoured policies were endorsed and he claimed that he had a mandate from the nation to grant independence to that territory. He also claimed a popular mandate for a constitutional revision to provide for the direct election of the president, and succeeded in carrying this through, although the use of a referendum in these circumstances was not authorized by the constitution.

The present system of government in France is a hybrid system, not only in the sense that it combines some of the features of normal parliamentary democracy with a strong executive presidency that is not answerable to parliament, but also in the sense that it has broken with the traditional republican doctrine that the National Assembly (and only the National Assembly) embodies the will of the nation. De Gaulle claimed on occasion to speak for the national will himself, while on other occasions he declared that the electorate had done so. He saw himself on these latter occasions in the role of Rousseau's legislator, putting a simple question to the people and eliciting a large majority in favour of a course of action that would probably not have emerged from factional debates in the Assembly. De Gaulle is not normally regarded as a democratic theorist, but the undoubted success of his approach to democratic government has added another strand to the French political tradition.

The history of the development of democratic government in Britain differs from the French case in three significant ways. First, Britain had a liberal culture and a constitution based on the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty for nearly two centuries before the system became democratic. Second, British politicians and theorists engaged in a debate over the extent of the franchise for the greater part of the nineteenth century. Third, British liberal theories were more individualistic in their assumptions than French theories.

From 1688 onwards the British political system was liberal in two senses. First, it was established that ultimate power rested with Parliament rather than with the king. Whereas most European states, including France, were ruled in the eighteenth century by monarchs who claimed absolute powers, the British king depended on Parliament for the passage of laws and for finance. As taxation could not be authorized for more than 12 months, Parliament had to meet at least once a year – a sharp contrast to the position in France before the revolution, when the Estates-General (the three legislative bodies meeting simultaneously) had not been summoned for 175 years.

Second, Britain had a liberal regime from 1688 onwards in the sense that there was substantial freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of political association. Along with these freedoms, British residents had the right to trial by jury and they had a judiciary whose members were appointed for life and were independent of both the legislature and the executive government. In the eighteenth century, Britain had the most liberal regime in the world.

This regime was, however, far from being democratic. Fewer than 5 per cent of adult citizens were entitled to vote, constituencies were wildly unequal in size, the electoral process was highly corrupt, and wealthy land owners controlled almost half the seats in the House of Commons. Various radical reformers objected to this system and argued in favour of franchise reform, on the ground that all citizens should have equal political rights. The French Revolution stimulated demands for reform, particularly among the working classes. Tom Paine's book, *Rights of Man*, published in 1792 and sold about 200,000 copies within 2 years (see Brown 1918: 84). From this period until the major parliamentary Reform Act of 1832, there was constant agitation for radical changes in the electoral system, based on a belief in natural rights and popular sovereignty. (For a fuller outline of these radical movements, see Birch 1964: Chapter 3.)

British legislators were to some extent influenced by these agitations and demonstrations in industrial areas, but were quite unable to accept the validity of demands that invoked the concept of natural rights. They were more willing, however, to accept the proposals for reform put forward by the Utilitarians, based, as those were, on the concept of interests. In the view of Jeremy Bentham and his collaborator, James Mill, the key to good government could be found in two propositions. The first is the principle of 'self-preference', by which it was affirmed that all men, including legislators, know what will promote their own happiness and try to maximize this. The second is the principle of 'utility' by which it was claimed that 'the right and proper end' of government is to promote 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' of citizens (Bentham 1838–43: vol. 9, p. 8).

These propositions, if accepted, established a case for parliamentary reform which was quite independent of cloudy ideas like natural rights. The unreformed Parliament of the early years of the nineteenth century could not be expected to maximize the happiness of the general body of citizens, it was said, for its members were drawn from a very narrow section of society and would reflect the interests of only that section. If Parliament were to promote the general welfare, the franchise must be extended so that elected members were drawn from all sections of society. The logic of the argument pointed to universal suffrage, though Mill, anxious to make his ideas acceptable to a middle-class male audience, declared that it would be enough to give the vote to men over the age of 40.

This theory had philosophical limitations and, as a prescription for action, was not without ambiguities and difficulties. For one thing, it is not easy to see why a process of free election in geographical constituencies should automatically produce a House of Commons that would be a microcosm of the interests of the whole citizen body. Some interests, being those of a minority in each constituency, might never be represented at all. The assumption that women had no interests of their own, not represented by male members of their family, is clearly faulty. Beyond this, there is the

problem presented by the differences in the intensity with which pains and pleasures are felt or anticipated. If such differences were ignored by legislators, as Bentham suggested, the interests of the majority would always be put first, even if the majority were only mildly in favour of a proposed policy or law while the minority felt that it threatened their wellbeing in a quite drastic way.

Despite these shortcomings, the Utilitarian theory acquired a great deal of influence in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century. It did so largely because it met the needs of influential groups. The manufacturers of the northern industrial towns and the traders and craftsmen of London were alike in wanting fairly radical reforms in the system of parliamentary representation. The theories of the Whigs, though somewhat supportive of reform, were too moderate and too aristocratic in tone for them; the views advanced by Tom Paine and his followers were unacceptable because they insisted on the dangerous doctrine of natural rights of man. The Utilitarian theory had the advantage of being radical without seeming revolutionary; it was apparently logical and apparently hard-headed; it was admirably suited to be a vehicle for the claims of the new middle classes.

These middle-class groups were given the vote by the Reform Act of 1832. At about the same time, the principle of ministerial responsibility to Parliament was established, while the procedure by which the Reform Act was passed seemed to establish the dominance of the House of Commons over the House of Lords. The system therefore became more liberal; but was still undemocratic because the property qualification for the franchise excluded the great majority of the population.

The system was democratized in the period 1867–85, when (in two bites) the franchise was extended to include nearly all adult male citizens, the distribution of seats was reformed to provide something much nearer to equality in the size of constituencies, and effective measures were taken to stop electoral corruption. The campaign leading up to these reforms, however, was conducted in the name of liberalism rather than that of democracy. It was marked by caution and by openly expressed doubts about the political reliability of the working classes. There was precious little rhetoric about the intrinsic wisdom of the people, as had long been commonplace on the other side of the Atlantic.

Reformers placed their faith not in this but in the view expressed by John Stuart Mill (son of James Mill) that political reform would lead to the gradual education of the masses; that granting men the right to vote would develop their sense of social responsibility and would stimulate them to understand political problems and prepare themselves to take part in political life. The younger Mill's views therefore stressed the possibility of civic education rather than just the simple representation of interests. In this way he was more of an idealist than his father or Bentham had been. However, he was a rather cautious idealist, recommending that the extension of the

franchise to working-class citizens (provided they paid taxes and could pass a literacy test) should be accompanied by the granting of multiple votes to citizens who had a higher education or were working in skilled or managerial occupations (J. S. Mill 1946: Chapter 8).

In 1865 William Gladstone summarized the cautious liberalism of the period by offering a definition of the attitudes of the two main parties to the franchise question. The Liberal attitude, he said, was ‘trust in the people, only qualified by prudence’, while the Conservative attitude was ‘mistrust in the people, only qualified by fear’ (quoted Bullock and Shock 1956: 143). In the event it was a Conservative government that took the plunge by introducing the Reform Act of 1867.

Universal suffrage was not established until women were granted the vote, which was done in two instalments, in 1918 and 1926. However, it was generally accepted that the reforms of 1867–85 made the British system democratic. Moreover, these reforms, having been supported by both major parties, and not leading to any serious problems, were quickly accepted by all shades of opinion as having been desirable. Lord Bryce, writing in 1920, said: ‘Seventy years ago the word “democracy” awakened dislike and fear. Now it is a word of praise’ (Bryce 1920: vol. 1, p. 4).

Since 1920, with the franchise issue settled, there have been three other developments in British democratic theory that deserve mention. First, the political ideas of the English Idealists influenced the attitude to democracy taken by several theorists in the inter-war period. The Idealist social philosophers, writing in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, introduced some of Rousseau’s notions to British intellectual circles. They advocated what has become known as the positive concept of liberty, and their approach to this topic will be discussed in Chapter 10. They and (more particularly) their followers also developed a less individualistic and more uplifting view of the purpose of representation than had been common in the nineteenth century.

One such theorist was A. D. Lindsay of Oxford. In a book called *The Essentials of Democracy*, published in 1929, he said this:

The purpose of representative government is to maintain and preserve different points of view, in order to make effective discussion possible . . . it is democratic in so far as it is recognized that anyone . . . has something special and distinctive to contribute . . . But this belief that everyone has something to contribute does not mean that what everyone has to say is of equal value. It assumes that if the discussion is good enough the proper value of each contribution will be brought out in the discussion.

(Lindsay 1935: 40–1)

About the same time, Harold Laski wrote in similar terms: ‘The underlying thesis of parliamentary government’, he said, ‘is that discussion forms

the popular mind and that the executive utilizes the legislature to translate into statute the will arrived at by that mind' (Laski 1928: 13). Ernest Barker of Cambridge followed the same trend when he wrote that the real basis of democracy is the 'discussion of competing ideas, leading to a compromise in which all the ideas are reconciled and which can be accepted by all because it bears the imprint of all' (Barker 1942: 41).

Peter Bachrach has suggested that Lindsay and Barker, along with J. S. Mill, should be regarded as the authors of the 'classical theory of democracy' (Bachrach 1969: 4). This is quite implausible, both because there is no classical theory and because Lindsay and Barker were not particularly influential. They are quoted here only because their views indicate the width of the Atlantic Ocean in regard to democratic theory. The predominant tendency in Britain in this field has always been to favour pragmatic Utilitarian views, but those British theorists who did briefly (because their views did not survive the Second World War) develop more idealistic theories produced ideas that were far removed from the idealism of American populists.

A second line of argument in Britain has revolved around the theory of the electoral mandate, developed by Labour Party spokesmen. This theory states that each party has a duty to present the electorate at a general election with a detailed manifesto setting out the policies that the party proposes to follow, and the legislative changes it proposes to introduce, if it wins the election and forms the next government. The incoming government would then be entitled to claim that it had a mandate from the electors to carry out its promises and would therefore be acting democratically in using party discipline to press these policies through Parliament.

To some extent, this theory reflects the traditions and practices of the British trade-union movement, which has always believed that leaders should not only be elected but also be mandated to pursue specific policies endorsed by the rank-and-file members. Beyond this, however, it can be and has been claimed that the theory is the most appropriate one for a country whose politics are dominated by two highly disciplined national parties. It is said that individualistic theories of representative government like those of the Utilitarians are outdated in a situation in which the role of the voters is not to get their individual interests represented but simply to decide which of the two main parties should govern the country for the next four or five years. This may be a restricted choice, but if the parties are democratically organized (as the Labour Party is), so that all who are interested in party policy can play a part in framing it, then the ordinary citizen can have a continuing role in the democratic process and the policy of a party winning a general election can reasonably be regarded as reflecting the will of the majority.

This theory has some plausibility in the context of a parliamentary system dominated by two disciplined parties. It is, however, highly controversial



and much academic opinion is against it. The theory runs contrary to the accepted constitutional doctrine that the government of the country has a responsibility to protect and advance the interests of the whole nation, not just to look after its own political supporters. The theory also seems to be incompatible with the fact that the victorious party at a general election in Britain rarely gets the support of a majority of voters and virtually never gets that of a majority of electors.

In reviewing the theory of the electoral mandate in the early 1960s I reached the conclusion that it had little descriptive validity, citing as evidence the results of sample surveys of public opinion and voting behaviour. These showed that in the 1950s there was a poor match between opinions on policy issues and voting behaviour. In the 1950 general election in a London constituency, 41 per cent of Labour voters agreed with Conservative policy positions, while in the 1955 election in Birmingham 39 per cent of Labour voters had pro-Conservative policy positions as against only 34 per cent who had pro-Labour policy positions (see Birch 1964: 120–1).

It was also shown that most voters decide how to vote on the basis of factors other than their view of the rival election manifestos; the authors of a study of voting in Birmingham in the 1951 election concluded that ‘the maximum proportion of voters whose vote was primarily decided by an issue or issues cannot have been more than 10 per cent, and may have been much smaller’ (Milne and Mackenzie 1954: 139). These data suggested that it would be unrealistic, as well as controversial on constitutional grounds, to interpret election results as conferring a mandate for the victorious party to pursue the particular policies listed in its election manifesto.

Is there any reason to revise this verdict? The answer to this question has to be a little ambiguous. The constitutional argument against the mandate theory remains, and the argument in terms of the opinions of voters can still be put. A 1970 survey showed that only four out of sixteen policies set out in the Labour Party’s manifesto had the support of a majority of Labour voters (Rose 1976: 309). In 1982 a leading student of voting behaviour reported that ‘for at least the last fifteen years people have voted Labour despite its policies’ (Crewe 1982: 37). A 1987 survey found that only about a third of the voters favoured four of the central proposals put forward in the manifesto of the victorious Conservative Party (Oliver 1989: 128).

In view of these rather powerful arguments against the mandate theory, why is it suggested that the evidence of recent years is slightly ambiguous? The reason is that there has been a growing tendency for politicians to place more stress than previously on the claim that they have a mandate for certain specific policies. The behaviour of the House of Lords has been one reason for this. Their Lordships have adopted the convention, quite voluntarily, that they will not mutilate or reject government Bills to which the ruling party committed itself in its last election manifesto, though they might mutilate or reject other Bills. In consequence, Conservative

ministers in the 1980s were heard arguing that their government had a mandate for such policies as the compulsory sale of municipal housing or the abolition of the Greater London Council, about which the Lords had reservations.

Another relevant development is that British electors have become more volatile since the 1960s, apparently more willing to switch votes between parties in reaction to specific policies carried out or promised. This does not mean that the theory of the electoral mandate is much more convincing, because voters are not any more likely to endorse the whole platform of the party they support at the polls. However, it does mean that parties are apt to place more emphasis on specific policies they have designed to attract votes, and to claim that they have a mandate to implement such policies if they win the election.

The consequence of these developments is that, although the theory of the mandate, in its strong form, may have been undermined by empirical evidence, British politicians still talk about mandates to do this or that, and are likely to continue to do so. The theory of the mandate may be dead, but it won't lie down.

If British government is viewed in comparative perspective, it can be said that the mandate theory at least has the merit of drawing attention to one of the most democratic features of the system. One of the strengths of British democracy is the existence of a closer connection between electoral behaviour and government policies than can exist in a system fragmented by the separation of legislative and executive powers, or competition between numerous parties. British electors have the opportunity to base their vote on the plans of the rival parties, with some expectation that these plans will be carried out by the winner, and that must be regarded as a distinct advantage in democratic terms even if only a minority of electors actually decide on this basis. British general elections give the public a more meaningful influence over future government policies than congressional elections in the United States, parliamentary elections in Italy (where every government is a coalition), or federal elections in Canada (where the parties do not publish detailed manifestos). Perhaps this aspect of the British system should be called 'manifesto democracy', to avoid the awkward connotations of the term 'mandate'.

Another controversy about democracy that has occurred in Britain is a controversy about intra-party democracy. This has been essentially a controversy within the Labour Party rather than between parties, but it raises a question of theoretical interest. Up until 1981, leadership selection and policy determination in the Labour Party were effectively in the hands of the parliamentarians. In 1981, the rules were changed so as to provide that the parliamentary leader would be chosen by an electoral college in which the Labour MPs would have only 30 per cent of the votes, the rest being divided between the local party branches (30 per cent) and the

affiliated trade unions (40 per cent). It was also provided that sitting MPs would no longer have an automatic right of re-nomination, but could be deselected by their constituency party branches. The object of the changes was to give the unions and the party activists in the country more power to influence party policy and the behaviour of Labour MPs.

This objective would not be thought controversial in the United States, but it provoked a storm of controversy in Britain. Within months of the changes, twenty-five Labour MPs had left the party in protest and joined the new Social Democratic Party. They believed, as did many constitutional commentators, that giving extra-parliamentary organizations the power to influence party policy in Parliament contravened the principles of parliamentary democracy. R. T. McKenzie had declared in his magisterial book on the party system that if the extra-parliamentary organizations of the Labour Party 'attempted to arrogate to themselves a determining influence with respect to policy or leadership they would be cutting across the chain of responsibility from Cabinet, to Parliament, to electorate, which is a fundamental feature of the British parliamentary system' (McKenzie 1955: 588). In a much later article he said that 'intra-party democracy, strictly interpreted, is incompatible with democratic government' (McKenzie 1982: 195).

The vigour with which this view was expressed by McKenzie, an academic supporter of the moderate wing of the Labour Party, reflected his concern that radical party activists might gain the upper hand in struggles over party policy. However, the general principle involved has the support of most theorists of parliamentary democracy, in Britain as in continental Europe. It underlay Edmund Burke's famous 1774 speech to the electors of Bristol asserting that MPs should not surrender their judgement to the views of their constituents, to be quoted in Chapter 8.

The modern justification for this principle is that party leaders, when in office, have to balance the doctrinal aims of their party with a myriad of conflicting pressures, financial problems, and international developments. It is the responsibility of these leaders to get the balance right and to answer for their decisions to Parliament, and subsequently to the electorate. It would be wrong, so the argument goes, for leaders to be subject in this difficult task to instructions or threats from party committees whose members do not have the same duty of governing the country, are not engaged full-time in this activity, do not have expert advice from the bureaucracy, and are not answerable either to Parliament or the electorate. The position of ministers in a parliamentary system is very different from that of US Members of Congress and Senators, who do not have executive responsibilities, and this is one of the reasons for the differences between European and American democratic theories. Europeans are rarely populists, in the American sense, and while in the nineteenth century this was partly because Europeans were more sceptical about the political wisdom of the people, in the late twentieth century it is mainly because of the constitutional differences between a

parliamentary system and one based on the separation of powers. These transatlantic differences are so great that any attempt to generalize about democracy which ignores them must inevitably be inadequate.

## DEMOCRATIZATION

The 1990s saw a dramatic increase, indeed a doubling, in the number of countries claiming to have democratic regimes, and a direct consequence of this has been a renewed interest by scholars in the process of democratization. This interest is renewed rather than new because earlier decades saw two attempts by American theorists to generalize about the matter. One of these was the theory that there is a necessary relationship between the growth of free enterprise on the one hand and the development of democratic government on the other. The more ambitious of the writers who suggested this reflected the long-standing American tendency to believe that the destiny of the world is to see a convergence of all societies towards the American way of life.

This theory was always simplistic and historical experience gives little support for it. When Germany followed the British and American examples by rapidly industrializing its economy in the period between 1871 and 1914, it did so under an autocratic system of government, not a democratic one. Despite the growth of a large and well-educated middle class, said by theorists to be the main factor that links economic progress with democracy, Germany did not become democratic (apart from the brief and messy interlude of the Weimar Republic) until pushed into doing so by the American, British and French occupying powers after 1945. Equally, Japan's industrialization and economic progress did not lead to democratic politics until General MacArthur and his colleagues imposed democratic institutions on the country after its surrender. More recently the newly industrialized societies of eastern Asia, led by Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, have achieved very high rates of economic growth with political systems that have been somewhat undemocratic. The Asian countries with the longest experience of democracy, namely India and Sri Lanka, have remained economically backward.

The other attempt to generalize was that by behaviouralist scholars who tried to find statistical correlations between the growth of democracy and a number of other variables. As Paul Cammack has pointed out, and as four or five behaviouralists admitted in the period from 1985 to 1991, this whole effort was unsuccessful (Cammack 1994: 174–5). Having learned from those mistakes, recent scholars have simply used historical methods, producing case studies of democratization in various areas with only modest attempts to generalize about them.

History shows that it is easier to establish democratic institutions than to develop the political conventions and practices that are needed to build a

stable system of democratic government. The latter requires not only a system of free elections but also free mass media, freedom to organize political parties, a non-partisan judiciary, a readiness of voters to accept electoral defeat, a readiness of governing elites to hand over power to their rivals, and a willingness of the military to refrain from using their power to intervene in the democratic process. Some examples of failure follow.

After the defeat of Tsarist Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War, nine successor states in eastern and south-eastern Europe were established with democratic institutions. Of these, only Czechoslovakia remained democratic until 1939. In the other eight, democracy gave way to authoritarian government of one kind or another in the following order: Bulgaria, June 1923; Poland, May 1926; Lithuania, December 1926; Yugoslavia, January 1929; Austria, March 1933; Estonia, March 1934; Latvia, May 1934; and Romania, February 1938 (see Bermeo 2003: 23). It should be noted that none of these moves to authoritarian systems was caused by ethnic cleavages in society, economic collapse, mass revolution or civil war, all of which have led to democratic breakdowns elsewhere. In these eight states the cause was either the unwillingness of the military to keep out of politics or manoeuvres among ruling elites to keep themselves or their friends in power (Bermeo 2003: Chapter 2).

Another wave of newly independent democratic institutions came into being in consequence of the decolonization of European empires in the period 1945–65. In Africa the results have been highly discouraging for democrats. The former Belgian Congo (now Democratic Republic of the Congo) has been a political shambles since the early 1950s, with dictatorship, ethnic violence and periods of civil war. In Portuguese East Africa (now Republic of Mozambique) independence was followed by a period of civil strife, while Angola has seen a protracted civil war lasting since 1976. The former British colonies have seen their parliamentary institutions disrupted by ethnic conflict, military takeovers and personal dictatorships, while Nigeria, the most tragic case, had a civil war that cost up to one million lives. They have also been affected by widespread corruption that has held back economic development and wasted vast amounts of international aid. The former French colonies have been the most stable, partly, perhaps mainly, because the French colonial administrators stripped power from tribal leaders and developed a French-educated elite to whom they could transfer power. Another reason was that after the colonies had nominal independence they retained close economic ties with France, which also provided their new governments with military support in what was often called a neo-colonial relationship. But these states have had long periods of single-party dominance and their claims to be democratic are questionable.

A quite different set of factors has created problems in South America. In that continent, which has seen numerous moves towards democratization, institutional arrangements have been more significant than ethnic cleavages in

leading to reversions to authoritarian rule. Because of the natural influence of US ideas and examples, democratic reformers have generally favoured directly elected presidents. However, the US system has several disadvantages for a newly democratized state that, unlike the United States in its early decades, needs strong central government to cope with the myriad problems of the modern world. It provides for two centres of power, the executive and the legislative, each of which enjoys democratic legitimacy but which may be far from agreement. As Linz and Valenzuela (1994) have pointed out, it is often the case that the presidents owe their majority to the support of large urban centres while legislative houses are more representative of the very different interests of rural areas and small towns. There is no democratic principle to resolve conflicts arising from this kind of difference, so that there is a recurrent temptation for the president to seize power by organizing mass demonstrations or for the military to intervene on one side or the other (Linz and Valenzuela 1994: 7–8).

If no single party has a majority in the country, which is quite common in all systems, a parliamentary system can produce a coalition cabinet, but there cannot be a coalition president. A presidential election produces a winner-take-all situation, and frequently a loser who loses all, having no other office to fall back on. Another disadvantage is that presidential systems normally provide for fixed terms of office, unlike parliamentary systems which are much more flexible. If a new development provokes a crisis, a parliamentary system can respond by a cabinet reshuffle, the replacement of the prime minister by one of his or her colleagues, or a general election focused on the issue in question (Linz and Valenzuela 1994: 8–10).

Yet another disadvantage of the US system is the principle that if a president dies in office the vice-president automatically takes over for the duration of the president's term. This worked well enough in the United States in 1945 and 1963, when exceptionally talented vice-presidents acceded to office, but it is an inherently risky system. It contributed to the downfall of democratic regimes in Brazil in 1964, Uruguay in 1973, and Argentina in 1976, after death had elevated vice-presidents who had different policies from or were thought to be less efficient than their predecessors (see Bermeo 2003: Chapters 3, 4 and 6). This is no place for a catalogue, but it seems clear that a preference for directly elected presidents has played a part in the chequered political history of South American countries, with periods of democracy, one-party government and military dictatorship following one another, not necessarily in that order.

Since 2003, a new focus of interest in democratization has followed President Bush's repeated assertion that he would like to promote democracy throughout the Middle East and sees no reason to believe that Muslim societies cannot support democratic political systems. In fact there are two reasons to be doubtful about this, one theological and the other sternly practical.

The theological reason is that a basic doctrine of the Islamic religion is that all the laws humankind needs are to be found in the Koran and a very early volume of judicial elaborations of Koranic law. The democratic view that a parliament or congress can be a sovereign law-making body therefore conflicts with a fundamental Islamic belief; all that such assemblies can properly do is to interpret the laws that already exist. The current constitution of Iran is strictly correct by Islamic standards. Iran has an elected Parliament that passes laws, but it also has a Council of Guardians, composed of unelected religious leaders, that has the power to nullify these laws if they are deemed to conflict with Koranic law. It was not really surprising that during the 2005 parliamentary election campaign the Council of Guardians was able to disqualify numerous candidates, including thirty-five sitting Members of Parliament, on the grounds that they were unfit to interpret Koranic law.

The practical reason is simply that moderate leaders of Muslim states are afraid that democratic elections and all the liberalizing moves that go with them would increase the influence of fundamentalist groups whose aim is to destabilize the system and push their countries into open opposition to the United States and the western alliance. Egypt, under American pressure, held a general election in 2005 that was more free than it has held for a generation. The main fundamentalist organization, the Muslim Brotherhood, was illegal with many of its leaders in prison. It nevertheless fielded numerous candidates as independents and they shocked the government by getting almost 20 per cent of the popular vote. The government subsequently jailed a candidate who had challenged President Mubarak for the presidency, tightened its emergency laws, and summarily postponed local elections that were due to be held in April 2006.

Of course, successful democratization in a Muslim country is only improbable, not impossible. Turkey has had a nominally secular regime since 1928 and has recently developed a largely democratic parliamentary system. It has had to cope with nationalist agitation and occasional terrorist attacks from its sizeable Kurdish minority, its record on human rights is controversial, and its secular regime is unpopular with other Muslim states. But its leaders have displayed great determination in maintaining their commitments.

In this, Turkey may be compared with India, where commitment of the governing elite to democratic principles has survived every kind of problem since the country achieved independence in 1947. India has Muslim, Sikh and Tamil minorities totalling over 210 million people. It has experienced three major wars with Pakistan, a border conflict with China, civil conflict in Kashmir, a nationalist revolt in Punjab, terrorist attacks on Delhi and Mumbai, and the assassination of two prime ministers. That its democratic parliamentary system has remained intact is a great tribute to its leaders and an encouragement to all who believe, as I do, that democracy is the best form of government yet devised. The problem for social scientists, however,

is that Turkey and India have very little in common apart from human commitment. In 1994 Alistair Edwards concluded that 'general questions about democratization are unanswerable. The infinite variety of conditions, actually present or counterfactually posed, which might facilitate or impede such a process can produce only bewilderment' (Edwards 1994: 101).

The period since 1945 has certainly seen progress in a democratic direction, for nearly all European states outside the Balkans now have democratic systems that seem stable, while in the developing world democratic ideals and ambitions have become more widespread. A Freedom House report has indicated that between 1980 and 2004 22 states in the developing world embarked on a process of democratization (Karatnycky and Ackerman 2005). However, prediction is difficult and the passage of time since Edwards' (1994) conclusion was reached has revealed little to challenge it.