

## Demokratie

siehe zu Demokratiedefinitionen: <http://www.susas.com/demo.htm>.

Manfred G. Schmidt (Jb. des Wissenschaftszentrums Berlin 2000) sieht am Ende des 20. Jh.s 85 von 192 Staaten eindeutig liberaldemokratisch verfasst; aber mehr als 60 % der Weltbevölkerung werden nicht demokratisch, sondern mehr oder minder autokratisch regiert.

Wie komplex die Herausforderung ist, eine messbare und klare Definition von Demokratie aufzustellen, demonstriert Sartori in seinem Werk *Demokratietheorie*. Ohne Anspruch auf Allgemeingültigkeit zu erheben, definiert er Demokratie in Abgrenzung zur Autokratie:

"Demokratie ist ein System, in dem niemand sich selbst auswählen kann, niemand sich die Macht zum Regieren selbst verleihen kann und deshalb niemand sich unbedingte und unbeschränkte Macht anmaßen kann."<sup>1</sup>

In einer politikwissenschaftlichen Einführung heißt es: Als westliche Demokratien gelten Regierungssysteme mit folgenden Merkmalen: Mehrparteiensystem, freie Wahlen, freie Meinungsäußerung, Parteien- und Verbandsgründungsfreiheit und unabhängige Gerichte. Regierungssysteme ohne diese Merkmale verkörpern in unterchiedlicher Ausprägung "Diktaturen".<sup>2</sup>

Für Adam Przeworski lautet der wichtigste Aspekt: „In a democracy, multiple political forces compete inside an institutional framework."<sup>3</sup>

Robert Dahl, dessen minimalistisches Demokratiemodell von den meisten Autoren der Transitionsforschung als Richtlinie für die Demokratiedefinition akzeptiert wird, stellt in seinem Werk *Polyarchie. Participation and Opposition*<sup>4</sup> drei fundamentale Demokratiedimensionen vor: die Existenz bürgerlicher Freiheiten, politischer Wettbewerb (political competition bzw. public contestation), und politische Partizipation (participation, inclusiveness).

Der von Dahl aufgestellte Mindestkanon umfasst acht verfassungsmäßige Kriterien und institutionelle Garantien. Da jedoch kein bestehendes demokratisches System sie voll erfüllt, sind seiner Meinung nach nur relativ demokratische Staaten als Polyarchien zu betrachten. Die Kriterien zeigen die idealtypischen politischen Institutionen und verfassungsrechtlichen Grundlagen, die während der Demokratisierungsphase ausgehandelt werden sollten, um für den Konsolidierungsprozess eine Basis darstellen zu können. Sie lauten:<sup>5</sup>

1. Freiheit, Organisationen zu gründen und ihnen beizutreten - Vereinigungsfreiheit (associational autonomy),
2. Meinungsfreiheit (freedom of expression),

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<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Sartori, *Demokratietheorie*, Darmstadt 1992, S. 210.

<sup>2</sup> Dirk Berg-Schlosser/Ferdinand Müller-Rommel (Hg.), *Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft - Ein einführendes Handbuch*, Opladen 1987, S. 217.

<sup>3</sup> Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market. Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, Cambridge u.a. 1991, S. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Dahl, *Polyarchie. Participation and Opposition*, New Haven - London 1971. S. auch Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, New Haven - London 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Dahl, *Polyarchie. Participation and Opposition*, New Haven - London 1971, S. 3.; s. auch Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, New Haven - London 1989, S. 221. Vgl. Michael Krennerich, Im Graubereich zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur. Methodische Ansätze und Probleme, in: *Nord-Süd aktuell*, 13 (2/1999), S. 229- 237, 234; vgl. auch Rüb, Friedbert W.: Die Herausbildung politischer Institutionen in Demokratisierungsprozessen, in: Merkel, Wolfgang (Hg.): *Systemwechsel 1. Theorien, Ansätze und Konzepte der Transitionsforschung*, 2. Auflage Opladen 1996, S. 112f.;

3. Informations- und Pressefreiheit - Recht auf Inanspruchnahme alternativer Informationsquellen (alternative information),
4. Allgemeines aktives Wahlrecht (inclusive suffrage),
5. Allgemeines passives Wahlrecht für öffentliche Ämter (right to run for office),
6. Freie und faire Wahlen (free and fair elections),
7. Gewählte Vertreter (elected officials) - Recht politischer Führungspersonen auf Wettbewerb zur Unterstützung und zum Erlangen von Wählerstimmen,
8. Abhängigkeit politischer Entscheidungen von Wahlen - Institutionen, die politische Entscheidungen abhängig machen von Wahlen und anderen Ausdrucksformen der Präferenzen der Bürger.

Das Polyarchie-Konzept wurde zu Recht erweitert: etwa um die zivile Kontrolle des Militärs bzw. die Beseitigung militärischer Prärogativen<sup>6</sup>.

Und Wolfgang Merkel fügt Robert Dahls Liste institutioneller Garantien für eine gesicherte Demokratie die wichtigen Kriterien Gewaltenteilung im Sinne von Gewaltenteilung sowie Rechtsstaatlichkeit und Geltung der Menschen- und Bürgerrechte hinzu.<sup>7</sup> Darüber hinaus entwickelt er - auf der Grundlage von Juan Linz und Alfred Stepan (Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe. Baltimore 1996.) - ein Vier-Ebenen-Modell. Demnach ist eine Demokratie "weitgehend krisenresistent", wenn sie sich auf konstitutioneller Ebene (Regierung, Parlament, Judikative etc.), auf repräsentativer Ebene (Parteien, Interessenverbände und so weiter), auf der Verhaltensebene (Handeln nach demokratischen Normen) und auf der Bürgerebene (Herausbildung einer demokratischen politischen Kultur) konsolidiert hat.

Der Demokratie-Begriff in der **Transitionsforschung** orientiert sich am Konzept der "Polyarchie" (=Herrschaft mehrerer im Staat, Gegenteil von Monarchie) von Robert Dahl in "Democracy and its Critics" (New Haven / London 1989), in dem die wichtigsten Kriterien politischer Wettbewerb und Partizipation sind. Generell werde Demokratie durch ein Minimum an Verfahren definiert, die das Verhältnis zwischen Regierenden und Regierten regeln. (vgl. Ellen Bos, Die Rolle von Eliten und kollektiven Akteuren in Transitionsprozessen, in: Wolfgang Merkel (Hg.), Systemwechsel 1, Theorien, Ansätze und Konzepte der Transitionsforschung, 2. Aufl., Opladen 1996, S. 81-109, 84) Es besteht zwar Einigkeit darüber, "daß Demokratie nicht an einem bestimmten Satz von Institutionen und Verfahren festgemacht werden kann, sondern auf sehr unterschiedliche Weise realisierbar ist" (Bos 1996: 84), als Voraussetzung gelten jedoch allgemeine, freie und geheime Wahlen. Aufgrund der institutionellen Vielfalt von demokratischen politischen Systemen erscheint es dennoch sinnvoll, den kleinsten gemeinsamen Nenner eines demokratischen Systems herauszufiltern.

Gunter Schubert / Rainer Tetzlaff (Hg.), Blockierte Demokratien in der Dritten Welt, Opladen 1998, S. 14:

„Der diesem Reader zugrunde gelegte Demokratiebegriff, der sich an Robert Dahls Polyarchiedefinition anlehnt (Dahl 1971: 3), läuft ... auf eine Minimaldefinition hinaus, die die Entfaltungschancen des Individuums betont und auch materielle Grundbedürfnisse einbezieht. Sie beansprucht als politische Richtschnur auch in den Gesellschaften Gültigkeit, die nicht unbedingt an eigene Traditionen oder "Vorläufer" demokratischer Kultur anknüpfen können.

Als demokratisch regiert soll ein Land gelten, dessen politisches System die drei folgenden dynamischen Strukturmerkmale aufweist bzw. sich zumindest tendenziell darauf zubewegt:

<sup>6</sup> S. auch Michael Krennerich, Im Graubereich zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur. Methodische Ansätze und Probleme, in: Nord-Süd aktuell, 13 (2/1999), S. 229-237, 229.

<sup>7</sup> Wolfgang Merkel, Systemtransformation. Eine Einführung in die Theorie und Empirie der Transformationsforschung. UNI-Taschenbuch, Band 2076. Leske + Budrich, Opladen 1999)

- freie und faire, regelmäßig wiederkehrende Wahlen, mit der genuinen Möglichkeit einer Abwahl der Machthaber;
- die Rechtsbindung von Politik, was ein institutionelles Minimum an Gewaltenteilung und Machtkontrolle erforderlich macht und der Unabhängigkeit der Justiz einen besonders hohen Wert zumißt;
- die prinzipielle Anerkennung unveräußerlicher Menschen- und Bürgerrechte, womit mindestens die freiheitlich-liberalen politischen Rechte (die Menschenrechte der ersten Generation") und ein rudimentärer Minderheitenschutz gemeint sind.

Demokratische Transition ist ein in Etappen verlaufender, widersprüchlicher und höchst fragiler Veränderungsprozeß, der idealiter in einem Modell mit mindestens fünf Phasen rekonstruiert werden kann:

1. die *Inkubationsphase*: die Zeit der Erosion von Herrschaftslegitimität und der Destabilisierung autoritärer Herrschaftsverhältnisse;
2. die Phase der *Liberalisierung* des Regimes und der Mobilisierung größerer Teile der unzufriedenen, potentiell oppositionsbereiten Bevölkerung;
3. Die schwierige Phase der *Verhandlungen* über eine neue Verfassung und über die Modalitäten des politischen Wettbewerbs zwischen strategischen Gruppen (noch an der Macht) und ihren konfliktfähigen Herausforderern (in der bislang noch einflußlosen Opposition);
4. die Phase der *Neuverteilung von politischer Macht* als Ergebnis der ersten freien Wahlen womit die Transition zunächst einmal erfolgreich abgeschlossen ist;
5. die lange Phase der *Institutionalisierung* und damit *Konsolidierung* demokratischer Errungenschaften, vor allem durch die Verinnerlichung der Normen einer gewaltfreien Streitkultur - die Voraussetzung für die volle Entfaltung einer „civil society“ als Partner und Korrektiv des Staates.“

Merkel versucht, den Prozeß der Konsolidierung sehr differenziert zu begreifen. Er entwirft ein weitreichendes "maximalistisches" Konzept eines Mehrebenenmodells, das eine "institutionelle" < (polity), eine "repräsentative" Konsolidierung (politics) sowie eine "Verhaltenskonsolidierung" (Elitenloyalität) und schließlich die "Konsolidierung der civic culture" (Massenunterstützung) umfasst.<sup>8</sup> Vgl. auch die drei Dimensionen, "Behaviorally" (Verhalten von gesellschaftlichen Akteuren), "Attitudinally" (Einstellung der Bevölkerungsmehrheit), "Constitutionally" (habituell-strukturelle Anpassung) und fünf Arenen der demokratischen Konsolidierung von Linz/Stepan (Linz, Juan J. and Alfred Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press): "Civil society", "Political society", "Rule of law", "State apparatus", "Economic society".)

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<sup>8</sup> W. Merkel (Hg.), Systemwechsel 1. Theorien, Ansätze und Konzepte der Transitionsforschung, 2. Auflage Opladen 1996, S. 38ff.

In der „*Universal Declaration on Democracy*“ der **Interparlamentarischen Union (IPU)** von 1997<sup>9</sup> wird die Demokratie als Ideal, als Regierungsform und als ein universell anerkanntes Konzept bezeichnet, das auf gemeinsamen Werten beruht, die von allen Völkern der Weltgemeinschaft geteilt werden, unabhängig von kulturellen, politischen, sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Unterschieden. Die IPU erklärt die Demokratie zu einem fundamentalen Bürgerrecht, das in Freiheit, Gleichheit, Transparenz und Verantwortung bei Respektierung der Meinungsvielfalt und im gemeinsamen Interesse ausgeübt wird.

Als konstitutive Elemente der Demokratie werden bezeichnet: freie und faire Wahlen, der Rechtsstaat und unabhängige Gerichte, die Beachtung der Menschenrechte (wie in den verschiedenen UN-Konventionen niedergelegt), das Vorhandensein einer aktiven Zivilgesellschaft, demokratische, repräsentative und gut funktionierende Institutionen (vor allem ein mit Gesetzgebungs- und die Regierung kontrollierenden Befugnissen ausgestattetes Parlament, aber auch Institutionen und Verwaltungen auf lokaler und regionaler Ebene) und die Beachtung des Demokratieprinzips in den internationalen Beziehungen.

Demokratie setzt eine echte Partnerschaft zwischen Männern und Frauen voraus. Zur Demokratie gehöre, dass der Prozeß, durch den Macht errungen, ausgeübt und abgelöst werde, in einem offenen politischen Wettbewerb stattfinde und das Ergebnis offener, freier und nicht-diskriminierender Partizipation der Bevölkerung sei. Niemand stünde in einer Demokratie über dem Recht, und alle seien vor dem Gesetz gleich.

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<sup>9</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union (Hg.), *Democracy: Its Principles and Achievements*, Genf 1998, S. III-VIII. (auch im Internet: [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)). Dazu auch Uwe Holtz, *Die IPU und das „Wunder von Kairo“* in *Sachen Demokratie - Akzeptanz einer toleranten Staatsform*, in: *Das Parlament*, Nr. 46, 7.11.97 ; Holtz, *Kairoer Welterklärung zur Demokratie*, in: *edp-Entwicklungspolitik*, Nr.19, 1997, S. 18f.

**THE STRASBOURG CONSENSUS** - This Consensus emanated from the First Strasbourg Conference

The first Conference, organised by the Parliamentary assembly of the **Council of Europe** and held from 4 to 6 October 1983, was devoted to a general debate, the conclusions of which were summarised by the Chairman, who listed the essential elements of a pluralist parliamentary democracy:<sup>10</sup>

"Human freedom and human dignity, freedom of speech, freedom of thought and freedom of conscience, the right to criticise and the right to freedom of movement are indispensable foundations of human co-existence. Their protection and enhancement are central to all action by the state.

This protection is served by:

- the citizen's right to choose and change government in elections conducted under universal suffrage and by secret ballot,
- the responsibility of the executive to the elected representatives of the people,
- the right and duty of those elected representatives to regulate life in society by means of laws and to control the executive.

*A democracy is an open society in which all state power is derived from the people.*

This implies:

- the right to participation and consultation in political decision-making at local, regional and national level,
- free access to information and free choice between different sources of information,
- the freedom of the press and the media,
- the freedom to form political parties and to stand for political office,
- freedom of association, including the right to form trade-unions,
- the right to participate in the determination of working conditions,
- freedom from slavery and the exploitation of human labour.

*Democracy guarantees human dignity.*

This implies:

- the right to life, liberty and respect for the human person,
- freedom of speech, thought and conscience,
- freedom of religious observance,
- free movement of persons, goods and information,
- the right to school and post-school education preparing the individual for life in a democratic society.

*Equality before the law* regardless of sex, race, colour, creed or birth, requires:

- an independent judiciary,
- the possibility of subjecting all decisions of the executive to judicial scrutiny,
- the subordination of the police and the armed forces to the elected government,
- the right to privacy and protection of personal freedoms.

In a democracy these rights and freedoms are subject to only such restrictions as to secure protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

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<sup>10</sup> In: Human Rights Law Journal 9 (4/1988), S. 373.

## Enc. Britannica

### Types of classification schemes

The almost infinite range of political systems has been barely suggested in this brief review. Confronted by the vast array of political forms, political scientists have attempted to classify and categorize, to develop typologies and models, or in some other way to bring analytic order to the bewildering variety of data. Many different schemes have been developed.

There is, for example, the classical distinction between governments in terms of the number of rulers--government by one man (monarchy or tyranny), government by the few (aristocracy or oligarchy), and government by the many (democracy).

There are schemes classifying governments in terms of their key institutions (for example, parliamentarism, cabinet government, presidentialism).

There are classifications that group systems according to basic principles of political authority or the forms of legitimacy (charismatic, traditional, rational-legal, and others).

Other schemes distinguish between different kinds of economic organization in the system (the laissez-faire state, the corporate state, and Socialist and Communist forms of state economic organization) or between the rule of different economic classes (feudal, bourgeois, and capitalist).

And there are modern efforts to compare the functions of political systems (capabilities, conversion functions, and system maintenance and adaptation functions) and to classify them in terms of structure, function, and political culture.

Although none is comprehensive, each of these principles of analysis has some validity, and the classifying schemes that are based on them, although in some cases no longer relevant to modern forms of political organization, have often been a major influence on the course of political development. The most influential of such classifying schemes is undoubtedly the attempt of [Plato](#) and [Aristotle](#) to define the basic forms of government in terms of the number of power holders and their use or abuse of power. Plato held that there was a natural succession of the forms of government: an aristocracy (the ideal form of government by the few) that abuses its power develops into a timocracy (in which the rule of the best men, who value wisdom as the highest political good, is succeeded by the rule of men who are primarily concerned with honour and martial virtue), which through greed develops into an oligarchy (the perverted form of government by the few), which in turn is succeeded by a democracy (rule by the many); through excess, the democracy becomes an anarchy (a lawless government), to which a tyrant is inevitably the successor.

Abuse of power in the Platonic typology is defined by the rulers' neglect or rejection of the prevailing law or custom (*nomos*); the ideal forms are thus *nomos* observing (*ennomon*), and the perverted forms are *nomos* neglecting (*paranomon*). Although disputing the character of this implacable succession of the forms of government, Aristotle also based his classification on the number of rulers and distinguished between good and bad forms of government. In his typology it was the rulers' concern for the common good that distinguished the ideal from perverted forms of government. The ideal forms in the Aristotelian scheme are monarchy, aristocracy, and polity (a term conveying some of the meaning of the modern concept of "constitutional democracy"); when perverted by the selfish abuse of power, they are transformed respectively into tyranny, oligarchy, and ochlocracy (or the mob rule of lawless democracy). The concept of the polity, a "mixed" or blended constitutional order, fascinated political theorists for another millennium. To achieve its advantages, innumerable writers from Polybius to St. Thomas Aquinas experimented with the construction of models giving to each social class the control of appropriate institutions of government.

Another very influential classifying scheme was the distinction between monarchies and republics. In the writings of Machiavelli and others, the tripartism of classical typologies was replaced by the dichotomy of princely and republican rule. [Sovereignty](#) in the monarchy or the principality is in the hands of a single ruler; in republics, sovereignty is vested in a plurality or collectivity of power holders. Reducing aristocracy and democracy to the single category of republican rule, [Machiavelli](#) also laid the basis in his analysis of the exercise of princely power for a further distinction between despotic and nondespotic forms of government. In the work of Montesquieu, for example, despotism, or the lawless exercise of power by the single ruler, is contrasted with the constitutional forms of government of the monarchy and the republic. As a result of the decline of monarchies and the rise of new totalitarian states terming themselves republics, this traditional classification is now, of course, of little more than historical interest.

Ottfried **Höffe** (Gibt es ein interkulturelles Strafrecht? Frankfurt/M 1999, S. 41ff, 92ff) macht im Zuge der Globalisierung eine Tendenz einer Zivilisationsform aus, die sich in immer mehr Regionen der Welt immer stärker durchsetzt und zu der er auch die Trias von Demokratie, Menschenrechten und Gewaltenteilung zählt. Für ihn erweist sich die Demokratie als eine nicht für Europa spezifische Herrschaftsform. Sie ist nicht einmal an die anderen Faktoren des als eurozentrisch verdächtigten Zivilisationsideals, wie rationales Wirtschaften, gebunden.

Sieben Dimensionen betrachtet er für die Demokratie als konstitutiv:

Die ersten drei Dimensionen ergeben zusammen die berühmte Demokratieformel, die der nordamerikanische Präsident Abraham Lincoln während des Sezessionskrieges in der »Gettysburg Address« (19.11.1863) verkündet:<sup>11</sup>

- (1) die Demokratie als »government of the people« (Herrschaft, die vom Volk ausgeht - *herrschaftslegitimierender Begriff*),
- (2) »by the people« (als Organisationsform des Gemeinwesens und als Inbegriff demokratischer Mitwirkungsrechte - *herrschaftsausübender Begriff*),
- (3) »for the people« (die dem Volk im Sinne von jedem einzelnen der Betroffenen dient und sich dem Gemeinwohl verpflichtet weiß, sofern es in jenen schlechthin gemeinsamen Interessen besteht, die den Menschenrechten entsprechen - *herrschaftsnormierender Begriff*).
- (4) Der *rechtssichernde Begriff der Demokratie* geht von der Einheit von Sitte, Herkunft und Recht aus. Zur rechtssichernden Demokratie, in der Moderne: dem Rechts- und Verfassungsstaat, bilden den Gegenbegriff nicht die Monarchie oder die Aristokratie, vielmehr die das Recht beugenden Herrschaftsformen: die Despotie, die Diktatur oder der totalitäre Staat.
- (5) Dem *herrschaftskontrollierenden Begriff* zufolge unterwirft sich die Demokratie einer Selbstbeschränkung. Obwohl alle Gewalt dem Volk entspringt, übt es diese nicht pauschal aus, sondern unterwirft sich der Teilung der öffentlichen Gewalten: der Gesetzgebung, der Regierung und des Gerichtswesens. Dazu kommt eine politische Öffentlichkeit, gebildet von den Medien und zu ergänzen um politische Akademien und ähnliche Institutionen.
- (6) Der *gesetzgebende, legislatorische Begriff*. In der Neuzeit wird das Gesetz gemacht, das heißt vom zuständigen Organ, in der Regel dem Parlament, erlassen; das neue Gesetz gilt als das bessere, und es bricht das alte.
- (7) Der *gesellschaftliche, soziale Demokratiebegriff*. Damit die von Platon und Aristoteles befürchtete zügellose Herrschaft der Armen und Unwissenden nicht zustande kommt, sorgt man für bessere Voraussetzungen, für eine Hebung des Lebensstandards und des Bildungsstands. Hier werden die bisherigen, im weiteren Sinn verfassungsrechtlichen Demokratiebegriffe um einen personalen, überdies demokratiefunktionalen Begriff erweitert, um eine demokratiefähige Bürgerschaft, die man, um eine ökonomische Engführung zu vermeiden, heute nicht mehr die bürgerliche Gesellschaft, sondern lieber Bürgergesellschaft oder auch Zivilgesellschaft nennt.

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<sup>11</sup> Der amerikanische Präsident Lincoln hatte 1863 Demokratie auf die Kurzformel "Regierung des Volkes durch das Volk und für das Volk" gebracht. (U.H.)



## Democracy as a Universal Value

[Amartya Sen](#)

“... among the great variety of developments that have occurred in the twentieth century, I did not, ultimately, have any difficulty in choosing one as the preeminent development of the period: the rise of democracy. (3)

The idea of democracy as a universal commitment is quite new, and it is quintessentially a product of the twentieth century. 4

This recognition of democracy as a universally relevant system, which moves in the direction of its acceptance as a universal value, is a major revolution in thinking, and one of the main contributions of the twentieth century. 5

Throughout the nineteenth century, theorists of democracy found it quite natural to discuss whether one country or another was “fit for democracy.” This thinking changed only in the twentieth century, with the recognition that the question itself was wrong: A country does not have to be deemed fit *for* democracy; rather, it has to become fit *through* democracy. This is indeed a momentous change, extending the potential reach of democracy to cover billions of people, with their varying histories and cultures and disparate levels of affluence. 4

The recent problems of East and Southeast Asia bring out, among other things, the penalties of undemocratic governance. This is so in two striking respects. First, the development of the financial crisis in some of these economies (including South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia) has been closely linked to the lack of transparency in business, in particular the lack of public participation in reviewing financial arrangements. The absence of an effective democratic forum has been central to this failing. Second, once the financial crisis led to a general economic recession, the protective power of democracy--not unlike that which prevents famines in democratic countries--was badly missed in a country like Indonesia. The newly dispossessed did not have the hearing they needed. 9

Indeed, we can distinguish three different ways in which democracy enriches the lives of the citizens. First, political freedom is a part of human freedom in general, and exercising civil and political rights is a crucial part of good lives of individuals as social beings. Political and social participation has *intrinsic value* for human life and well-being. To be prevented from participation in the political life of the community is a major deprivation.

Second, as I have just discussed (in disputing the claim that democracy is in tension with economic development), democracy has an important *instrumental value* in enhancing the hearing that people get in expressing and supporting their claims to political attention (including claims of economic needs). Third--and this is a point to be explored further--the practice of democracy gives citizens an opportunity to learn from one another, and helps society to form its values and priorities. 10

democracy's claim to be valuable does not rest on just one particular merit. There is a plurality of virtues here, including, first, the *intrinsic* importance of political participation and freedom in human life; second, the *instrumental* importance of political incentives in keeping governments responsible and accountable; and third, the *constructive* role of democracy in the formation of values and in the understanding of needs, rights, and duties. 11

## DEMOCRACY: A RIGHT OF ALL NATIONS

By Joshua Muravchik



*Is democracy for everyone? To Americans, the answer is axiomatic. Our own democracy rests on the propositions that "all men are created equal [and] are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights" and that "governments deriv[e] their just power from the consent of the governed." These, says the American Declaration of Independence, are "truths" which are "self-evident." They are, of course, nothing of the sort. No government before had ever been based on them. Rather they were professions of faith or first principles. They could not be proven, but expressed the fundamental notion of justice held by America's founders. Expounding on this theory, Joshua Muravchik, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and the author of *Exporting Democracy: Fulfilling America's Destiny*, looks at the concept of "universal democracy" and defines its parameters and challenges.*

Nothing in the Declaration said that these principles applied only to Americans. On the contrary, the authors aimed to describe principles of just government applicable to "all men." This universality has been vindicated by the success with which the American polity has absorbed millions of immigrants of ethnic origins quite different from those of its founders, as well as America's own emancipated slaves. As the nation has grown polyglot, democracy has not weakened, but rather grown steadily more robust. Americans who believe in our own democracy, and the reasons the founders gave for it, must necessarily believe as well that people in other countries are endowed with the same rights and that governments everywhere ought to rest on the consent of the governed.

### **Challenges to Democratic Universalism**

But this characteristically American, universalistic conviction has not seemed "self-evident" to everyone. For example, the representatives of Asian governments who gathered in Bangkok in 1993 for a regional meeting preparatory to the U.N. World Conference on Human Rights declared that "all countries...have the right to determine their [own] political systems," including, by implication, systems that are undemocratic. And they asserted that human rights "must be considered in the context of...national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds." Although the language was turgid, as it often is in diplomatic pronouncements, the point was clear: Democracy might not be good for everyone. The Bangkok declaration lent implicit support to the idea of an "Asian way" that puts the group ahead of the individual, and that pursues economic development by means of authoritarian governance. Analogous points have sometimes been made about the peoples of other regions, for example, that Middle Easterners prefer political systems based on Islamic precepts or that Latin Americans find some kind of corporative populism more congenial than "mechanical" democracy.

There is also a second line of argument that challenges democratic universalism from a

different direction. Various American scholars have questioned whether the people of poor or non-Western countries are capable of governing themselves. The writer Irving Kristol put it: "I am not one who is thrilled by the success of democracy in Argentina or in the Philippines or...Korea.... I will lay odds that democracy will not survive in those countries" because they lack "the preconditions of democracy...certain... traditions [and] cultural attitudes." The point, in this view, is not that there is a better alternative to democracy, but rather that it may not be attainable. As political scientist James Q. Wilson has written: "Democracy and human freedom are good for everyone.... But the good they bring can only be appreciated when people are calm and tolerance is accepted." This is not the case, he suggests, in China, Russia, most of Africa and the Middle East or much of Latin America. Kristol and Wilson are conservatives, but the same view has been adopted by many liberal scholars, too. For example, political scientist Robert Dahl wrote: "It is a disagreeable, perhaps even tragic, fact that in much of the world the conditions most favorable to the development and maintenance of democracy are non-existent, or at best only weakly present."

Let us consider each of these two objections to democratic universalism. The claim that every country has a right to its own system begs the question, who speaks for the country? Amartya Sen, the Indian economist who won the 1998 Nobel prize, put it, the "justification for authoritarian political arrangements in Asia...have typically come not from independent historians but from the authorities themselves." Because such arguments are obviously self-serving, they are usually presented in the name of the people. "The Chinese people" or "the people of Singapore," or wherever it may be, do not want democracy, we are told. Aside from the irony in this (Why, apart from democratic premises, does it matter what the people want?), there is also the question of how we can know what they want unless we ask them? Rulers often say they know what their subjects want, but why should such claims be accepted? In the American South in the 1950s, white spokesmen often insisted that "our colored" were content with racial segregation. But once the right to vote was secured for blacks, the segregationists were thoroughly repudiated.

Around the world, there have been numerous cases in which people living under dictatorship were finally given a chance to express their will, and the results have never vindicated the dictators. Ordinarily this has occurred when the incumbent regime felt itself under pressure and therefore arranged an election under terms favorable to itself in the hope of hanging onto power. In 1977, when protests mounted against the system of martial law that Indira Gandhi had imposed in India, she agreed to call an election, believing it would give her a vote of confidence. In an impoverished country like India, she reasoned, her economic promises would count for more than political rights. Instead, the election swept her from office, and the opposition was led by the party of the "untouchables," the poorest of the poor. In 1987, Ferdinand Marcos called a "snap election" in the Philippines, giving the opposition little time to organize, but he, too, was defeated. The next year in Chile, President Augusto Pinochet, not willing to risk a competitive election, agreed instead to a plebiscite on continuing his rule. The idea was to give the voters a choice between the status quo or an unknown future, which was bound to seem insecure. Nonetheless, the majority voted "No" to Pinochet's continuance. In 1989, the Polish regime and the opposition agreed to hold a semi-competitive election. Many legislative seats were to be contested, but the full slate of top Communist officials was to run without opposition, so as to preserve their ascendance. The people, however, ruined the scheme. Although there were no alternative candidates, the majority of voters crossed out the names of the ruling bigwigs. They may have been the only candidates in history to run unopposed and still lose. In 1990, as dictatorial regimes were tumbling around the world, the military rulers of Burma were confronted with massive street demonstrations. Soldiers killed a great many protestors, but finally the rulers agreed to hold that country's first election in nearly 30 years. [The National League for Democracy](#) won more than 80 percent of the vote, but tragically the military oligarchy has refused to honor the results.

### **Preference for Democracy**

Many more such examples could be cited. In contrast, where are the examples of dictators who have won free elections approving their rule? When has a people ever voted to relinquish its democratic rights? To be sure, there are cases where freely elected leaders have refused to relinquish power, in effect turning themselves into dictators, but in none of these cases had such an intention been acknowledged when the man was running for office. It is true, too, that one-time Communists have been voted back into power in several of the states of the former Soviet bloc. But none of these candidates has proposed to restore one-party rule. Rather, they have based their appeals on social and economic issues, while affirming their acceptance of democratic procedures.

The two most recent cases in which a people living under authoritarian rule has demonstrated its preference for democracy are Indonesia and Iran. Student demonstrations brought down General Suharto's regime in 1998, and subsequent elections dealt a devastating defeat to the former ruling party, Golkar. Iran has yet to hold fully free elections. Only candidates who pledge support for the Islamic system and are approved by clerical authorities are allowed to run. Nonetheless, parliamentary elections this year demonstrated clearly the popular will for greater democracy. These events contain an element of poetic justice, since Iran and Indonesia were two of the states most active at the Bangkok conference in making the case that Asian people did not welcome international standards of democracy and human rights.

Another variant of this argument that some nations do not want democracy is exemplified in the following quote from the American scholar Howard Wiarda, a specialist on Latin America. "I doubt that Latin America wants...democracy U.S.-style." This makes it sound as if the question is not whether democracy is a universally applicable value, but rather whether every country should have a political system cut from the same mold, namely, the American mold. This is a false issue. Why should any other country want democracy "U.S.-style?" The American system, with its peculiar checks and balances, its powerful, oddly apportioned Senate, its division of powers between state and federal governments, its two dominant parties, etc., grew out of the American experience. Other democracies have parliamentary systems, unitary governments, multiparty elections, proportional representation, unicameral legislatures and a multitude of other such variations. When the Allied occupiers were creating democracy in Japan after World War II, they briefly tried to impose a federal system, but it was so alien to Japanese traditions, that it did not stick. Every democracy is unique, and there are many possible institutional forms.

This is not to say, however, that everything that calls itself democratic deserves the name. Over the years, many Communist or other revolutionary regimes and movements, called themselves "democratic" because they claimed to be devoted to the well-being of the people, even though they had not been chosen in an election. But in the last years of the Soviet Union, President Mikhail Gorbachev acknowledged that this had not been a proper use of the term democracy. "We know today," he said, "that we would have been able to avoid many...difficulties if the democratic process had developed normally in our country." By this he meant, as he said, "representative, parliamentary democracy."

### **Determining What Is A Democracy**

Because the term has been misused, it is important to identify the basic characteristics that determine whether a country is, or is not, a democracy. These boil down to three things. First, the principal government officials must be chosen in free and fair elections. This means anyone can run for office and everyone can vote. Of course, there may be minor derogations from this, but not major ones. South Africa under apartheid held competitive elections, but blacks could not vote. That was not democracy. Iran has an elected president and legislature, but many candidates were barred by clerical authorities, and all elected officials are subordinate to non-elected religious councils. That is not democracy.

Second, freedom of expression must be allowed, namely, freedom of speech, press, assembly and the like. Again, minor derogations may be of little importance, but a state like

Serbia, where the means of mass communication are mostly monopolized by the regime and the few independent newspapers and broadcasters are subjected to legal and physical harassment, is not a democracy even though it has held competitive elections.

Third, rule of law must prevail. When a person has been charged with a crime, he should have reason to be confident that his case will be tried on its merits and not according to orders handed to the judge by political authorities. Likewise, when a citizen suffers mistreatment at the hands of an official, there should be some legal avenue by which he can seek a remedy. Thus Malaysia cannot be considered democratic even though it recently held an election, because the leader of the opposition has been held in prison on charges which were surely instigated by the president.

Let us now turn to the second challenge to democratic universalism, namely the argument of thinkers like Kristol, Wilson and Dahl that democracy, though desirable, is beyond the capabilities of poor or non-Western people.

This argument is not of recent vintage. A similar scepticism was expressed a few decades ago about the democratic capabilities of societies that we are now accustomed to thinking of as firmly democratic. For example, as World War II drew to a close, President Harry Truman commissioned a briefing from the U.S. State Department's leading expert on Japan about what to do with that country once it was defeated. The expert, Joseph Grew, told him that "from the long-range point of view, the best we can hope for is a constitutional monarchy, experience having shown that democracy in Japan would never work." Likewise, when the Western occupation of West Germany ended in 1952, the eminent political scientist Hans Eulau toured that country and wrote despairingly that "The Bonn Republic seems like a second performance of Weimar...giv[ing] rise to the same old, vague forebodings." The problem, Eulau explained, is that "German politics is...grounded not on democratic experience but on a deep emotionalism."

When Italy turned to fascism in the 1920s, the historian Arnold Toynbee wrote that "her repudiation of 'democracy' (in our conventional use of the term) has made it an open question whether this political plant can really strike permanent root anywhere except in its native soil," by which he meant England and America. But even in America doubts used to be raised about the political capacity of some of the citizens. As Senator Strom Thurmond explained to the Harvard Law School in 1957: "Many Negroes simply lack sufficient political consciousness to . . . participate in political and civic affairs...a great number probably also lack certain other qualities prerequisite to casting a truly intelligent ballot."

The argument that democracy requires a democratic tradition is circular. How do you acquire a democratic tradition except by practicing democracy? The answer, the skeptics would say, is that democracy in the West grew out of certain ideas in the Western tradition that can be traced all the way back to classical antiquity. But Amartya Sen has an interesting rejoinder to this. He points out that the Western tradition contains diverse elements. The roots of democracy can be traced to ancient Greece, but Greek philosophers also approved slavery. Modern democracy drew on certain elements from the Western tradition while rejecting others. By the same token, Sen enumerates liberal elements that can be found in Buddhist, Confucian, Kautilyan, Islamic and ancient Indian thought, and he asks why these cannot be drawn upon as a cultural basis for democracy in the non-Western world.

Although we sense that culture is an important determinant of politics, the relationship is hard to specify. Political scientist Samuel Huntington has reminded us that a few decades ago all predominantly Confucian societies were poor, and social scientists argued that something in the behaviors inspired by Confucian beliefs kept them poor. Since then, Confucian societies have experienced faster economic growth than Christian or Muslim societies have ever done. Now, social scientists are trying to understand what it is about Confucian beliefs that generates wealth.

### **Is Universal Democracy Desirable?**

The most telling rebuttal to those who doubt the democratic capacity of poor or non-

Western peoples is the experience of recent decades. According to the most authoritative account, which is the annual "survey of freedom" conducted by the private organization, [Freedom House](#), last year 120 out of the world's 192 countries had democratically elected governments. This amounted to 62.5 percent of the countries, comprising 58.2 percent of the world's population. There were 20 electoral democracies in Africa and 14 in Asia, not counting the small Asian-Pacific island states, among which there were another 11 democracies. Needless to say, these non-Western democracies include a great number of poor countries. Of course it is true that poverty, illiteracy and social tensions make the practice of democracy more difficult. It may well be that some of the fledgling democracies that Freedom House counted this year will revert to dictatorship, just as most Western European states achieved democracy through episodes of progress and regress rather than all at once. But the weight of historical experience argues that the social and cultural obstacles are not insuperable. Considering that the first, quite imperfect democracy was created in 1776 and that now, 224 years later, there are 120 democracies, the striking thing is how far democracy has spread, not how limited it is.

If all of this goes to show that universal democracy is indeed possible, is it desirable? I believe it is. First, it will make for a more peaceful world. Democracies do not fight one another. A great deal of research has been devoted to this observation since it was first pointed out 10 or 15 years ago, and today it stands, in the words of one scholar, "as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations." There is dispute about whether democracies are more peaceful, per se, or only more peaceful toward other democracies. But either way, if more of the world becomes democratic, war will become less common.

In addition to this "democratic peace," Sen has advanced another proposition about democracies to which no one has yet offered a confuting instance. He says that no democracy has ever experienced a famine or comparable calamity. The reason, he says, is that famines are preventable. In political systems that include the "feedback" mechanisms that are inherent in democracy, governments are alerted when famine conditions are building and they act to assuage them before they reach disastrous proportions.

These are strong instrumental reasons in favor of democracy. But, to me, perhaps because I am an American, the strongest reason is not instrumental. I believe that every adult ought to have a voice in his government, if he wants it. This is part of my conception of human dignity, whether or not democratic governments make wise decisions. Individuals do not always make wise decisions in their private lives, for example, in choosing a career or a spouse. But I believe it is better for them to be free to make their own choices and errors, than for others to control their lives. The same, in my view, applies to the public arena. I cannot prove I am right. This is not a provable proposition, but a matter of core values. Yet, judging from the spread of democracy around the world, these values are shared by a great many people whose experiences are quite different from my own.

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**The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. government.**

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## THE RIGHT TO DEMOCRACY

*By Assistant Secretary of State HaroldHongju Koh*

*More than 50 years have passed since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed that all human beings are "free and equal in dignity and rights." Yet for too long, the world's dictatorships have sought to undermine one of its most fundamental precepts: the right to democracy. Although Article 21 of the Declaration provides that "the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government...expressed in periodic and genuine elections," many governments continue to deny their citizens the right to choose their own government. In too many countries, leaders speak of democracy, even as they rig elections, suppress dissent and shackle the press. In this essay on the right to democracy, Assistant Secretary of State HaroldHongju Koh looks at democracy as "a long and complex struggle, which does not come easily," but is certainly worth the wait.*

Since the founding of the Republic, Americans have recognized that constitutional democracy provides the best protection for the full range of human rights. Our democratic system has empowered Americans to challenge their own government and to secure fundamental political change. From the Civil War to the civil rights movement, Americans have demanded that their government adhere to the principles of self-government and civil liberties upon which this country was founded, thereby securing the blessings of equality, liberty and justice.

The right to democratic governance is both a means and an end in the struggle for human rights. Where democratic rights are guaranteed, freedom of conscience, expression, religion and association are all bolstered. In genuine democracies, rights to a fair trial and to personal security are enhanced. Elected leaders gain legitimacy through the democratic process, allowing them to build popular support, even for economic and political reforms that may entail temporary hardships for their people.

Democracy and genuine respect for human rights remain the best paths for sustainable economic growth. In contrast, an authoritarian developmental model may generate prosperity for a time, but cannot sustain it in the face of corruption, cronyism and continued denial of citizens' rights. When severe economic downturns occur, authoritarian regimes cannot respond flexibly or effectively to economic problems. Without genuine democratic mechanisms to channel popular displeasure, the government must often choose greater repression to avoid popular uprising.

Contrast Indonesia -- where a Soeharto regime lacking both accountability and transparency saw an economic downturn quickly deteriorate into a political crisis that ultimately led to the regime's collapse -- with the Republic of Korea, where genuinely democratic elections gave President Kim Dae Jung, a former political prisoner, the popular support he needed to implement austerity measures and economic reforms that helped return that country to prosperity. These events confirm that even in times of economic crisis, democracy, human rights and the rule of law are universal, not regional values.

To be sure, democratization is a long and complex struggle, which does not come easily. Government "of the people" cannot be imposed from the outside. Rather, countries must come to democracy by their own path. As Secretary Albright has noted, "[D]emocracy must emerge from the desire of individuals to participate in the decisions that shape their lives.... Unlike dictatorship, democracy is never an imposition; it is always a choice."

Moreover, democracy means far more than just holding elections. Elections should be regarded not as an end in themselves, but as the means to establish a political system that fosters the growth and self-fulfillment of its citizens by promoting and protecting their political and civil rights. Genuine democracy thus requires not just elections, but respect for

human rights, including the right to political dissent; a robust civil society; the rule of law, characterized by vibrant political institutions, constitutionalism and an independent judiciary; open and competitive economic structures; an independent media capable of engaging an informed citizenry; freedom of religion and belief; mechanisms to safeguard minorities from oppressive rule by the majority; and full respect for women's and workers' rights. These principles -- combined with free and fair elections -- form the basis for a culture of democracy.

The United States supports democracy for the long haul. We foster the growth of democratic culture wherever it has a chance of taking hold. We focus particularly on providing support for countries in transition, defending democracies under attack and strengthening the network of established democracies. Each year, we invest over one thousand-million dollars in these efforts. We do so not just because it is right, but because it is necessary. Our own security as a nation depends upon the expansion of democracy worldwide, without which repression, corruption and instability would almost inevitably engulf countries and even regions.

Democracy holds its leaders accountable to the people. It provides breathing room for civil society. It opens channels for the free flow of information and ideas and, for the development of diverse and vibrant economic activity. History shows that democracies are less likely to fight one another and more likely to cooperate on security issues, economic matters, environmental concerns and legal initiatives. Where democracy flourishes, so too do peace, prosperity and the rule of law.

Democracy also remains the best path to securing the promises in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This past March, while addressing the first United Nations Commission on Human Rights of the millennium, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright called upon all Commission members to reaffirm the fundamental link between democracy and human rights. On April 25, the Commission heeded her call by unanimously adopting a Romanian-sponsored resolution recognizing the right to democracy.

By its action, the Commission reaffirmed, for the second consecutive year, the indissoluble link between democracy and human rights as a critical element of the Commission's work. Last year's U.S.-sponsored resolution on the right to democracy unanimously confirmed that democracy is not a privilege, but a human right. This year's Romanian-sponsored resolution took the message further by reaffirming that member states also have a solemn responsibility to promote and protect human rights by working together to consolidate democracy. The resolution confirmed that democracy is not a regional value nested in any particular social, cultural or religious tradition, but rather a universal value rooted in the rich and diverse nature of the community of democracies.

The Romanian resolution was co-sponsored by the U.S. and 60 other governments, a number of which only recently joined the community of democracies. This year's resolution passed 45 to 0; Bhutan, Congo, Pakistan, Qatar, Rwanda and Sudan abstained, joining China and Cuba, who abstained for a second consecutive year.

The Commission's recognition of the right to democracy represents a genuinely global initiative, developed through a genuinely global process, arising from a powerful global consciousness about the indissoluble link between democracy and human rights. As Secretary Albright noted when she addressed the Commission, "Democracy is the single surest path to the preservation and promotion of human rights."

The two democracy resolutions adopted by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights lay the groundwork for a series of important ministerial-level meetings that will bring together democratic nations to discuss how they can together promote and support democracy. These include the Community of Democracies meeting in Warsaw, Poland, in June, and the new and emerging democracies meeting set for Cotonou, Benin, in December. The millennium meeting of the U.N. General Assembly, scheduled to take place in New York in September, also should address this important issue.

Since 1974, the number of democracies worldwide has quadrupled. In the past 10 years



alone, the number of electoral democracies has almost doubled to 120 nations worldwide, in good measure because democratic institutions offer the best guarantee of respect for human rights as well as the best chance to improve the lives of average citizens. As Vice President Al Gore noted in his November 1998 speech at the APEC summit in Malaysia, "History has taught us that freedom -- economic, political and religious freedom -- unlocks a higher fraction of the human potential than any other way of organizing society." Recent events have only confirmed that democratic governance and human rights remain inextricably intertwined with our efforts to bring the blessings of prosperity, security and peace to ourselves for posterity.

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## Demokratie, Transformation, Systemwechsel

Barbara Esser, Demokratisierung der Dominikanischen Republik, Magisterarbeit - Seminar für Politische Wissenschaft, Bonn 2000

Wolfgang Merkels Systemtransformation liegt der von Robert Dahl definierte Demokratiebegriff zugrunde, nach dem „ein offener Wettbewerb um politische Ämter und Macht und gleichzeitig ausreichend Raum für die politische Partizipation aller Bürger gewährleistet sein muss.“<sup>12</sup> Merkel betrachtet die darüber hinaus von Dahl genannten acht institutionellen Minimalgarantien als ausreichend, eine Trennlinie zu autokratischen Systemen ziehen zu können. „Denn nur wenn diese gewährleistet sind, erfüllen politische Systeme ein generelles Merkmal von Demokratie: nämlich die prinzipielle Unbestimmtheit der Ergebnisse politischer Entscheidungen.“<sup>13</sup> Da den Untersuchungen in der vorliegenden Arbeit das Konzept Merkels zugrunde liegt, wird auch auf den von Merkel verwendeten Demokratiebegriff Bezug genommen. Um die notwendige Prägnanz und internationale Verbindlichkeit eines Demokratiebegriffes als Arbeitsgrundlage zu garantieren, wird darüber hinaus die „Universelle Erklärung zur Demokratie“ der Interparlamentarischen Union (IPU) vom 16. September 1997 in Kairo berücksichtigt.<sup>14</sup> Da diese Erklärung von den Abgeordneten der über 130 Länder des IPU im Konsens angenommen wurde, stellt sie eine im Sinne einer sich entwickelnden globalen Weltordnung verlässliche und verbindliche zumindest theoretische Grundlegung gemeinsamen Demokratieverständnisses dar. Bei der Betrachtung und Bewertung von Demokratisierungsprozessen ist daher diese Deklaration als Grundlage anzusehen.

Hinsichtlich des Begriffes der Demokratisierung wird in der Arbeit Bezug genommen auf Friedbert W. Rüb, nach dem sich Demokratisierung als Prozess definiert, „in dem die unbegrenzte, unkontrollierte und kompromißlos eingesetzte politische Macht von einer sozialen Gruppe oder einer Person auf institutionalisierte Verfahren verlagert wird, die die exekutive Macht begrenzen, laufend kontrollieren, regelmäßig verantwortbar machen und kontingente Ergebnisse ermöglichen.“<sup>15</sup> Die Demokratisierungsphase beginnt mit dem Verlust der Kontrolle alter autoritärer Herrschaftseliten über die politischen Entscheidungen. Sie endet erst, wenn nach Verabschiedung einer demokratischen Verfassung die politischen Entscheidungsverfahren

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<sup>12</sup> Merkel, Wolfgang: Systemtransformation, Eine Einführung in die Theorie und Empirie der Transformationsforschung, Opladen 1999, S. 31Vgl. auch: , Robert: Polyarchy. Participation and Opposition, New Haven/ London 1971, S.5.

<sup>13</sup> Merkel, Wolfgang: Systemtransformation, S. 32.

<sup>14</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU: Universal Declaration on Democracy, Declaration adopted without a vote by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 161<sup>st</sup> session (Cairo, 16 September 1997), ><http://www.ipu.org>< (1.10.2000)

<sup>15</sup> Rüb, Friedbert W.: Die Herausbildung politischer Institutionen in Demokratisierungsprozessen, in: Merkel, Wolfgang (Hg.): Systemwechsel 1. Theorien, Ansätze und Konzepte der Transitionsforschung, 2. Auflage Opladen 1996, S. 114.

verbindlich normiert sind und sie solchermaßen von den politisch Verantwortlichen uneingeschränkt respektiert und angewendet werden.<sup>16</sup>

Der Begriff der Transition wird in der Politikwissenschaft fast ausschließlich im Sinne des Übergangs von autokratischen zu demokratischen Systemen gebraucht und somit „semantisch mit ‘Übergang zur Demokratie’ gleichgesetzt.“<sup>17</sup> O’Donnell und Schmitter definieren Transition als „jene Phasen, die zwischen zwei unterscheidbaren Systemen liegen.“<sup>18</sup> Nach ihrem Verständnis beginnen Transitionen zwar auch mit der Auflösung von autoritären bzw. totalitär-kommunistischen Systemen und enden bei Erreichen der institutionellen Grundausstattung einer Demokratie, jedoch kann ihr Ende auch mit der Rückkehr zum Anfangszustand oder durch eine revolutionäre Situation gegeben sein.<sup>19</sup> Im Bezug auf die Entwicklungen der Dominikanischen Republik ist Transition zwar auch als die Zeit „zwischen zwei unterscheidbaren Systemen“<sup>20</sup> zu sehen, allerdings als eindeutig zielgerichtet auf das Erreichen einer stabilen Demokratie. Insofern findet im Sinne des langwierigen und immer wieder teilweise gescheiterten Prozesses der Terminus der Transitionsversuche Anwendung.

Für Transformationsprozesse, die definitiv zu einem anderen Systemtypus führen, steht der Begriff Systemwechsel. „Entscheidend bleibt [...] für die Begriffsunterscheidung zum Systemwandel, dass nur dann von Systemwechsel gesprochen werden kann, wenn sich der Herrschaftszugang, die Herrschaftsstruktur, der Herrschaftsanspruch und die Herrschaftsweise eines Systems grundsätzlich verändert haben.“<sup>21</sup> Es kann beispielsweise noch nicht von Systemwechsel gesprochen werden, wenn trotz eines dem Grunde nach sich verändernden Systems dieser Reformprozess etwa durch militärische Gewalt gestoppt, behindert oder beeinträchtigt wird.

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<sup>16</sup> Vgl. Merkel, Wolfgang: Systemtransformation, S. 137.

<sup>17</sup> ebenda, S.75.

<sup>18</sup> Rüb, Friedbert W.: S. 112. Vgl. auch: O’Donnell, Guillermo / Schmitter, Phillippe C.: Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Southern Europe, Baltimore/ London 1986, S. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Vgl. O’Donnell, Guillermo/ Schmitter, Phillippe C.: S. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Rüb, Friedbert W.: S. 112.

<sup>21</sup> Merkel, Wolfgang: Systemtransformation, S. 75.