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Frank Hendriks

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Frank Hendriks

Translated by R. Stuve

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Preface

– Why is it that when people talk about democracy they usually talk past one another? One important reason for this is that they often proceed from the idea that there is only a single, superior 'true democracy', while in reality democracy is a plural phenomenon. A simple principle – the contraction of *demos* and *kratia*, the people who rule – gives rise to various forms of thinking and operating.
– How are these various forms built and to what effect? Democracy takes myriad forms, but four elementary forms repeatedly appear in several variants and mixtures whenever and wherever democracy is tried and tested. These four have different strengths and weaknesses which reveal themselves when the models are compared.
– What lessons can be learned from doing this? One important lesson is that productive blending of democratic models, and that sensitivity to the situational and cultural context of democracy are crucial for its development and vitality. Given that democratic idealists are usually keen on pure models and as a rule do not evidence the required contextual sensitivity, this is an important task for democratic realists.

In a nutshell, these are the issues that I elaborate in the book, which I have divided into three parts: concepts (I), practices (II), and lessons (III). This preface outlines the structure of the book and the debate from which I proceed.

The underlying debate

Democracy is a core concept in the public domain. It is a concept that is often played as a trump card in public debates. Any proposed solution can be declared bad and set aside if labelled 'undemocratic'. Any problem becomes more serious if it can be represented as a 'problem of democracy'. An important problem today appears to be the 'chasm' that has grown

between citizens and their government; some maintain that the two have drifted too far apart. This threatens not only the legitimacy of and support for democracy but also its effectiveness and capacity to solve problems. The proposed solution in many cases is 'more democracy' or 'democratic renewal'.

That the solution lies in democracy is usually beyond dispute. Almost nobody makes the case for 'less democracy' or the 'dismantling of democracy'. That is a sign of the times. It was once possible to be *against* democracy – Plato is the classic example – and yet still be respectable. These days such a position would hardly be tenable. Hans-Hermann Hoppe, author of *Democracy: The God That Failed* (2001), is one of the few exceptions. Yet, in principle, even he places democracy on high ('The God That Failed').[1] Another exception is Fareed Zakaria who questions excessive democratization in *The Future of Freedom*. He does not, however, reject democracy itself.[2]

Just like Zakaria, today's critic of democracy is generally an advocate of democracy-in-a-particular-form. The desired form is not sufficiently institutionalized; there is either too much or too little of it. This kind of critique is often heard. There has yet to be a society which has unanimously declared its satisfaction with democracy. In opposition to those who advocate democracy-in-a-particular-form are adherents of democracy-in-another-form. There is nothing wrong with this on the face of it. Quite the contrary: a vital democracy demands serious discussion between adversaries in order to keep themselves and the system sharp.[3] The problem is that this does not happen often enough.

There is sufficient debate on democracy, but all too often it ends up being a dialogue of the deaf, a debate in which participants talk past each other; a series of monologues masquerading as dialogue. Everyone knows what democracy is, don't they? 'True democracy is ...' People who find the rest of this sentence self-evident usually fail to recognize divergent if equally legitimate answers – answers others take for granted. The consequence is Babel-like confusion.

In addition to suffering from poor hearing, participants in the debate on democracy also often evidence poor sight. In particular, myopia – short-sightedness – is all too common. Democratic reformers are often preoccupied with their own favourite model of democracy, and with its advantages. They usually have less interest in the disadvantages and in alternative models of democracy. When examined, the latter tend to be seen in a biased and sombre light.

The literature on the subject does not always help. There are quite a few publications on democracy which present a single model as desirable or ideal, and sometimes even do so beatifically. Alternatively, two models are

juxtaposed in such a way that one of the two is clearly to be set aside: 'weak versus strong democracy', 'thin versus deep democracy', 'old versus new democracy'.[4]

The present volume

In this book I contrast four fundamental forms of democracy without any preconceived notions as to which are good or bad: pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, voter democracy, and participatory democracy. These four models are derived from the contrast between aggregative (majoritarian) and integrative (non-majoritarian) democracy on the one hand and direct (self-governing) and indirect (representative) democracy on the other. These are two well-known dimensions of democracy theory that are usually dealt with separately in the existing literature, but are here approached together.

The combination of two dimensions in a single conceptual framework is illuminating, as this book aims to prove. The framework helps to untwine, compare, and understand democratic practices and reform debates. The combined dimensions broaden our view of fundamental democratic forms and their ramifications. The conceptual framework is refined, but not too refined. Particular expressions of democracy are endlessly variable, but its fundamental forms are not.

The various ways in which democracy is practised are central to this book. The central part of this work, Part II (Chapters 3 to 6), examines how the four basic models of democracy are given form in the realities of states and places, in which capacities and varieties, and to what effects, positive and negative. Special attention is paid to the types of citizenship and leadership compatible with the four models of democracy, and to the political-cultural and social-cultural contexts conducive to them. The approach is realistic and empirical, not idealistic or confessional. Attention is paid to formal and informal democracy at both national and subnational levels of governance.[5] The conceptual framework permits and facilitates this.

Part I sets out the conceptual framework, both in its breadth (plural democracy, Chapter 1) and in its depth (layered democracy, Chapter 2). The resulting model – expounding the four models of democracy in terms of active expressions on the one hand and ideational foundations of democracy on the other – guides the in-depth analysis of the four models in the middle part of the book. Finally, Part III draws some general lessons. A

vital democracy is defined as a productive mixture of substantially different democratic models, a hybrid of interlocking and interpenetrating modalities (Chapter 7) – notwithstanding the penchant for 'pure' models among democratic innovators. If and how democratic reform can come of this is discussed in the final chapter, which ultimately argues in favour of a learning, contextually sensitive, approach to democratic reform (Chapter 8). The book tellingly ends with a democatic debate, just as it began.

Following this plan, 'a theory of democracy in action' is built which contributes to the literature on democracy in a particular way. In addition to the 'confessional' literature on democracy – in which a single model of democracy is put forward or contrasted with an alternative which is portrayed as being 'old,' 'weak,' 'thin', or otherwise inferior – two other inclinations in the literature can be distinguished.

On one side are the genealogical surveys in which the concept of democracy is followed through history via the classic works from successive canonical authors ('from Plato to Habermas').[6] A variant of this is the systematized genealogy in which canonical authors and their works are clustered in historical modalities of democracy ('from classical to cosmopolitan democracy').[7] On the other side are empirical surveys in which democratic institutions in various nations and on various continents are described ('from Austria to the USA').[8] Here too a systematized variant can be distinguished in which a preconceived classification guides the research (e.g. 'presidential versus parliamentary democracy' or 'majoritarian versus non-majoritarian democracy').[9]

This book comes closest to the last category of systematized empirical research into democracy. Canonical authors and their works are discussed, but they are not the ultimate focus of attention. Of foremost concern are tried and tested models of democracy and their empirical expressions. The fourfold classification of democratic models is partly inspired by Arend Lijphart, who distinguishes between majoritarian 'Westminster democracies' and non-majoritarian 'consensus democracies'. Influenced by Mary Douglas's cultural theory, I transform Lijphart's dichotomy into a matrix,[10] which also makes room for participatory and voter democracy. This matrix is sensitive to cultural and sub-statal expressions of democracy in addition to the structural and statal expressions so central to Lijphart's most recent work.[11]

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Democratization, 2009, 12, 2, pp. 243–268), which also contains small parts of Chapter 7. The author and publisher wish to acknowledge the publisher of this journal, Routledge.

Some will recognize their own words and thoughts in the 'six characters in search of democracy' that appear in the opening debate of this book. The characters are fictional but made up of existing and widely held beliefs and ideas. They illustrate that the outlook that people have on democracy is closely connected to the outlook they have on social relations.

Opening Debate

Six Characters in Search of Democracy

It was strange to meet up again after all those years. This is what Jonathan Towers, Victoria Timberland, and Harry Foster thought when they ran into one another at the seventy-fifth anniversary of the university where they had met up. They had last met in June 1995, at the graduation ceremony of Jonathan, who was the last of their gang to receive his much-coveted degree.

Immediately, they were reminiscing about their Politics and Democracy student reading group, which had convened many times in Harry's office, who was then a university lecturer in political philosophy, as indeed he still was. Right then and there, Victoria took it upon herself to invite all six participants in their reading group of yesteryear – including Diana Pinion, Selma Greenwood, and Roderick Blue – for a reunion at her home.

'That's a great idea,' is what Harry said. 'Not only is it fifteen years since we last saw each other but the problems we discussed at the time are still topical issues. The problems with democracy and politics have only got worse, at all levels: local, national, and international.'

'You haven't changed a bit, have you,' Jonathan said teasingly. 'You still take a dim view of everything, but I happen to see all sorts of positive developments. Take the democratic potential of the Internet . . . '

'Let's have this discussion when Selma, Diana, and Roderick are present,' Victoria interjected. 'I'm offering you the use of my home and I'll arrange for all six of us to be there.'

And so, one sunny Saturday afternoon, there they were, assembled in the living room of Victoria's perfectly maintained thirties home. The crucifix above the door hinted that Victoria had remained faithful to the Catholic tradition. During her student years, she had been actively involved in the Catholic Student Society, first as the president of the rag week committee

and subsequently as chair of the entire society. Now she had been active as a parliamentarian for five years, positioning herself as 'social-conservative'.

With her grey woman's suit and her hair gathered up in a bun, Victoria looked more advanced in years than Harry, who, at 49, was in fact ten years her senior. Harry had not changed much. In Victoria's memory, Harry wore a black corduroy jacket and jeans faded at the knees even back then. Harry had remained a bachelor, and had but few enduring relations at work. Supervising student reading groups was what he enjoyed most, and the group that was meeting up again today had always remained the most special one to him. And yet, he was a bit apprehensive about the renewed acquaintance with former students like Jonathan, who, he felt, exhibited their social success with far too much exuberance.

On the occasion of the university's anniversary celebrations, Jonathan had told Harry he worked for a consultancy firm in the IT branch and dashed from one customer to another in his leased BMW. As a student, Jonathan had been actively involved in a great many clubs and societies simultaneously, including a student investment club and a liberal youth organization. With his expensive 'smart casual' clothing, he still looked every inch the man about town, though being a father of two had steadied him somewhat.

With great anticipation, Victoria had looked forward to meeting Selma, Diana, and Roderick, to whom she had only spoken about the reunion on the phone. Three very different characters these were.

Selma had always kept Victoria at arm's length. In her student years, Selma had been actively involved not only in the Politics and Democracy reading group, but also in the Power and Gender women's reading group. She had been the driving force behind the student party called Counterweight at the university council. Selma, who had grown up in a liberal Protestant family in the suburbs, had meanwhile spent a good many years living in an alternative-living commune in the inner city. What with her purple hairdo and ditto T-shirt proclaiming No Such Luck, she stood out in stark contrast to Victoria's floral-patterned four-seater sofa. Sitting on the floor with a cup of green tea in front of her, she told them that, as a freelance journalist, she wrote articles for various journals dealing with the environment and human rights.

Roderick was sitting next to Selma, just up on the sofa, with a leather-cased writing pad on his lap. He had told Victoria that Saturdays were inconvenient for him, what with family commitments and church-board obligations: Roderick came from an orthodox Protestant background. But, as Victoria had more or less expected, he had shown up after all. He had

never been one for no-show in the old days and always kept close track of their discussions, using his experience as the secretary of the Christian Student Union. This experience served him well in his current position as secretary of an agricultural association.

Diana was the last to arrive, an hour later than any of the others, which hardly surprised anyone. Diana had always been a bit of a muddler. After an unhappy student love affair, she had moved in with a retired lawyer, who was keen to foster Diana's passion for gardening. Diana had never found a proper job, and had never looked for one either, if truth be told. She preferred to be by herself. But she was an avid reader of absolutely anything and had indeed managed to surprise the members of the reading group on several occasions. Most of the time, however, she was a still water, which all too often led to her being underrated.

Having supplied everyone with coffees, teas, and chocolate cakes – which used to be her customary treat – Victoria radiantly took the floor: 'Dear friends, we haven't met for fifteen years and that's just yonks too long. We had such an interesting reading group under your capital chairmanship, Harry, and wouldn't it be wonderful if we could find a way to continue it in some way ...'

'Yes, for democracy is not doing at all well,' Harry added. 'Vital democracy has all but vanished. At all levels, local, national, and international, the vital juices are leaking away ...'

'And Jonathan – look at him scowling – has different ideas about it than you do, Harry, and Diana disagrees with Selma; look at them both gasping for air, ha ha,' Victoria laughed. 'But, to be serious, I feel everyone should have their say. How about me kicking off?' As no audible protests were heard, Victoria proceeded.

'In all those years in politics, I've come to realize that the main problem is that representative democracy is losing its support base. I feel this is unjustified. Representative democracy is the most subtle and successful political system of all time: that's what I read somewhere when I was preparing this day and I agree with it wholeheartedly. Democracy simply works the best when elected politicians are given the scope to do their work, which is to be politicians or governors on behalf of others. This is a profession, just like baking bread is a profession; it's best to leave it to professionals who have specialized in it.'

'Well, I hope you don't mind,' Jonathan said, 'but I'm afraid your metaphor is a bit wonky. You can learn how to bake bread according to traditional methods in bakers' school, but there is no school where you get a pass or fail for making good policies. All the time, I see politicians on the

telly and think to myself: "How did you get there, and how are we going to get you out of there?" And, of course, you would answer, Victoria, "in the elections," but you know just as well as I do that we only have elections once every so many years.'

'And just for appearances' sake,' Harry interpolated. 'People cast their vote in the ballot box and then have to wait and see what their vote does in terms of policy-making. Not a lot, usually.'

'You too, Brutus?' Victoria laughed. 'I agree with you in part, Harry. Elections may give off a weak signal, but that depends on the way they are staged. If they are well organized, and properly used, they give off a crystal-clear signal. The government party either gets a new majority vote or it loses its majority. The prime minister in office gets another mandate to govern and put together his government team, or he gets to pack his bags. And I cannot quite agree with you, Jonathan, that having elections once every so many years is a problem. You should be able to take the governors' measure at the end of their ride, but, while they're en route, they should be given the opportunity to govern. Which is not the case in some countries, and in the European Union, where everyone has their hands on the wheel all along the ride, and, when it's over, you have no idea who should be held responsible for what.'

This was the moment for Roderick to put down his pen. 'Well, well, you're cutting a few corners here, it seems to me. I work as a secretary with an organization that, as you put it, likes to have its hands on the wheel. As do other organizations, by the way, representing industry, for instance, or organizations that claim to be good for the environment. All these organizations seek influence. All this produces a lot of talk, which may be difficult and tedious but is actually very useful. Do you think, Victoria, that these politicians of yours have any idea what policy-making and implementation really involves? Politicians can only do their work properly when they are being fed by civil society organizations and collaborate very closely with them, for that's where the real expertise is.'

'Well, Roderick,' said Victoria, grimacing slightly, 'once, I thought like you, but since I've been in Parliament, I've changed my view, particularly owing to talks with a few of my seasoned colleagues. I'm talking about very good parliamentarians. They make sure they're informed by all sorts of social organizations, but they have very strict views on their own responsibility. One of them pointed out to me the famous letter by Edmund Burke to the voters of Bristol; I've got it right here, let me quote it to you: "Parliament is a deliberate assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole – where not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good." Or here: "You choose a member, indeed, but

when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a Member of Parliament." '

'That's the essence of the British model of democracy,' Harry said in a voice that brought out the teacher in him. 'There's also the model that Roderick seems to favour. In my field, this is called "consensus democracy", or "consociational democracy", which is one of its subspecies. And the model Victoria mentioned is called "Westminster democracy", after the political centre to which it owes its name. Or "pendulum democracy" after the swinging back and forth that's common to this system: now there's one party in power, now another. The political scholar Arend Lijphart calls Westminster democracy a "majoritarian democracy" because a simple majority of 50+1 will swing decisions in Parliament, whereas, in a consensus democracy, people try to find the widest possible base for policies, preferably outside the formal representative bodies too.'

'Indeed, this is a very interesting treatise on democratic thought, professor, but where in all of this scheme does Harry Foster himself stand?' said Jonathan, not bothering to suppress a look of daring on his face.

'Oh well,' said Harry, without looking at Jonathan, 'actually I agree with Schumpeter, who once said that "the electoral mass is incapable of action other than a stampede". Voters have a herd instinct, so I wouldn't set my hopes too high. It's a blessing in disguise that we only have general elections once in a while. Schumpeter believed in competing elites, who would have to bid for the voters' favour in general elections. The winner then pulls all the strings: the winner takes all. This is heading the way of your pendulum model, Victoria. Schumpeter even radicalizes it. If I were put with my back to the wall, I'd prefer this model to Roderick's consensus model of endless talk. But I can't take such an untroubled view of the electoral process as you do, Victoria. One cannot expect too much of it. It's an exceptional thing to find the right man for the job, someone who really rises above everybody else.'

'Someone like you, I suppose, a "philosopher-king" who takes the common mob by the hand with his superior knowledge and understanding.' All eyes turned to Selma, who had obviously been getting into a bit of a stew on the carpet. 'I've really been listening to this discussion with growing amazement! Do any of you actually have any idea what "democracy" means? Democracy literally means rule by the people. Democracy is meant to be an antidote to systems that keep the people under their thumb. Where are the people in your stories? With Harry, they're a mob that needs to be kept under control. With Victoria, they're a herd of cattle, led to the ballot once in a while to make their mark. What the people are with Roderick I'm not

sure; the rank and file of interest groups like the AA, I suppose, who say they speak on behalf of large groups of people but in actual fact only defend the interests of the asphalt lobby. You patronize organizations that "claim to be good" for the environment, Roderick, but at least such organizations make a stand for suppressed interests. At least they haven't firmly ensconced themselves on the lap of the elite.'

'Nor have we,' said Roderick, stony-faced. 'The organization I work for has a wide-ranging conception of agricultural interests, which includes both ecological values and the socio-economic interests of farmers, rich and poor, and involves keying these to other relevant interests.'

'And that's just how they've phrased it in their annual report, isn't it?' said Selma sardonically.

'Yes, they have actually, Selma, and it's also everyday practice. You can take it from me that many more members get to have their say at our annual meeting than they do at the meetings of all those environmentalist groups of yours. In practice, these turn out to be rather elitist clubs, with fancy talk about democratic decision-making and the people's rights and interests, all the while blurring on whose behalf they actually speak. On behalf of their ten- euro-a-year members who sign their payment slips to buy themselves a clean conscience? These clubs don't care one straw for "rule by the people", you know.'

'Yes, Selma, Roderick's got a point there,' said Victoria. 'On whose behalf do these pressure and action groups of yours actually speak?'

'As if those political parties of yours were so broad-based,' Selma riposted. 'Political party membership has been dwindling year by year and is now way below the membership figures of organizations such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International, and I have a lot more time for them than for those shrivelled political parties of yours. But actually I don't want to talk about these big organizations. To me, democracy is something that's built from the bottom up, from the base. As I tried to say earlier on, democracy means that "the people rule" and that, in its turn, means that those who are involved in something must also be fully involved in decision-making about it. To me, democracy without direct participation of those involved is not democracy. That goes without saying, doesn't it?'

'Well, does it really?' Roderick objected. 'If you're dealing with complicated things embracing – let's say – traffic, agriculture, the environment, and spatial planning, isn't it impossible to involve all parties concerned in decision-making? It makes much more sense to put expert representatives of the interests involved round the table, doesn't it? Direct democracy is all very well, but it's impracticable when you're dealing with comprehensive issues, which virtually all important issues are. Participation in decision-making may

have its uses – naturally, we also keep in touch with our constituencies – but we shouldn't be taking it too far.'

'Of course the people should be involved in government in a democracy, but that doesn't mean that everyone should always be involved in everything,' Harry lectured. 'If the people can appoint their rulers and dismiss them, the people also rule and this is, in fact, a democracy. You are in favour of maximum feasible participation of all concerned, Selma, which was the ideal of authors such as Pateman and Poulantzas in the 1970s. I'm more inclined towards minimally required participation. My idea of democracy is far from ideal, but your idea of democracy is terrifying to me: the terror of those who out-yell the others. I can't see myself as Plato's philosopher-king at all – being just an academic – but I agree with Plato that the head is higher than the gut, rather than the other way around.'

Jonathan looked flabbergasted. 'Well, isn't this just a load of paternalistic and morbid claptrap! As if citizens hadn't got better educated and more assertive in recent times. As if we hadn't gone through technological revolutions that have increasingly enabled people to look after themselves. Your view of man is a negative one, Harry, and it's one I don't share at all. I'm not with Selma on all counts, but I do agree that democracy and patronization don't go together. Nor do I see why we should call it democracy when people are not empowered to look after themselves and have to put up with other people's condescension until the next general elections, which don't really matter much anyway.'

'Not if they're well organized!' 'So what would be your solution then?' Victoria and Roderick butted in so rapidly that Jonathan continued with a smile. 'Let me start with you, Victoria, because I in fact agree with you that elections could and should be better organized. The question, though, is how, and that's where we disagree. You want a transparent system for appointing rulers, who you would then give every scope to do whatever they plan to do. I want a user-friendly system that enables citizens to defend their interests and that enables them to keep those rulers of yours on their toes. Today's information and communication technology offers a wealth of opportunities: Internet referendums, digital polling, what have you. Computerized voting once every four years is all very well, but modern information technology should actually be used to monitor opinions and preferences every day. Teledemocracy is the future. Bill Gates and Nicholas Negroponte have more to say about the future of democracy than Plato, Pateman, Lijphart, and all the rest of them. The Internet revolution has turned everything upside down. With a PC and an Internet connection, you can turn every living room into a boardroom! Which, incidentally, also

tells you, Roderick, what my solution would be for making democracy do a better job.'

'But you haven't managed to convince me yet,' said Roderick. 'There's a lot the computer can do, but I wonder if people really want all those things the computer's capable of doing. I can't somehow see my neighbours switching on their computers at night and steeping themselves in the digital polls of the day. I can't imagine them surfing the net evening after evening to search for all the information they need to make sensible decisions. They prefer to leave that to others: to politicians, civil servants, and other professionals, who already spend full days working on public matters.'

'There's an even more fundamental objection,' said Harry. 'Jonathan suggests that individual citizens would benefit from having a digital ballot box at home, but nothing is further from the truth: they would put themselves at much greater risk of being trampled on by the herd. Don't forget that, in referendums, the majority, who go for option A, are the winners, and the minority, who want option B, are the losers and are left empty-handed. That's OK if you happen to be with the winners for once, but you may just as well be voted down next time. You didn't really think that those individualistic, assertive citizens of yours were waiting to have such a sword of Damocles over their heads, did you?'

'And do you think that rulers are willing to support changes like that? You know, don't you, that they'll never be prepared to surrender any of their power, unless it's forced down their throats by massive protest,' said Selma, her gaze averted from Victoria's flushed face.

Before Jonathan went on, he stared ahead in thought for a few seconds: 'What you describe, Harry, may indeed be a risk, but I believe something can be done about it. You could agree that certain issues require extra large majorities and that other issues simply don't qualify for majority voting, when genuine individual interests or basic rights are at issue, for example. I feel that the right and the possibility to defend your own interests is essential, and that's what I would want to use ICT for. I need to do a bit more thinking about Internet referendums ... but digital polling seems very useful to me! Actually, it's just like doing market research with modern technology: establishing people's preferences, investigating the demand, and tailoring your supply to match demand.'

'Demand? Supply? We're talking about democracy here, not about a biscuit factory!' Selma resumed where she'd left off. 'You're turning to technology for a solution, Jonathan, but what we need is a fundamental change of mind. And there'll be none of that if we all get glued to our computers. If we really want to have fundamental democratization, we

should rally round and take a stand on our rulers. That's the only way to enforce democratization and promote the rise of a new generation of politicians, a more open generation, genuinely prepared to listen to citizens. Listening carefully to each other, trying to work it out together, through consultation and argumentation, in a power-free dialogue: this is democracy according to Habermas, and I agree with it. This is how we go about it in the editorial boards I'm on. We always try to work things out together; simply voting down a minority is not on. And that's exactly what's wrong with the referendum: that minorities are simply left empty-handed, to use Harry's words. The only thing that I do like about it is that a referendum places choices where they belong: with the people.'

'Actually, things should be arranged in such a way that the referendum is the grand finale of a thoroughgoing debate that has generated wide public support for a particular choice. This way, the referendum serves as the formal validation of a social process of consensus-building, and, at the same time, as a pressing incentive to look for such public support.'

This was the first thing Diana had said that afternoon. With five pairs of startled eyes converging on her, Diana proceeded with composure: 'I doubt, for that matter, whether you can always find such public support. On those editorial boards of yours, Selma, you'll manage to agree among yourselves, but as issues involve more and more different interests and values and get more complicated, you'll inevitably get into a tangle. To which you would say, Victoria, that is why you need rulers to call the shots on behalf of others. For you, Selma, this is a far too limited idea of democracy. It seems to me that your two views of democracy – the Victoria view and the Selma view – are poles apart. They're extremes, in a way.'

'And what way would that be?' asked Roderick, who was the first to recover from Diana's sudden torrent of words. 'I think Jonathan's ideas on teledemocracy are also pretty extreme.'

'I can see how you would think that,' Diana continued. 'Your consensus democracy and Jonathan's teledemocracy are also flatly opposed, in a way. Let me explain what I mean. Earlier on Harry said that political science distinguishes between majoritarian democracies and consensus democracies. Here's how it stuck in my mind. In a consensus democracy, people try to find the widest possible public support for policies; they do so by engaging in all-round talks and looking for compromises that might bridge disparate positions; minorities are included as much as possible and excluded as little as possible. In a majoritarian democracy, to quote Abba, "the winner takes it all, the loser standing small"; the majority rules; a majority of 50+1 is enough to take a democratic decision; no endless talk

required; just count noses and see where the majority is. Is that about right, Harry?'

'Yeah, that's about it, Diana. You might add that consensus democracy tends to be "integrative" and that majoritarian democracy tends to be "aggregative": either you integrate interests by having the parties concerned collaborate, which is what Roderick wants, or you aggregate interests by having elections in which everyone can have their say, which is what Victoria prefers.'

'Well, thanks Harry, these are very useful concepts. It's nice to have someone here who knows his classics. But I'm not done yet, for there's another line I clearly saw appearing today: the dividing line between direct democracy and indirect democracy. Do we entrust our decisions to caretakers or do we want those involved to take the decisions themselves? Victoria and Roderick put a lot of trust in elected representatives. Jonathan and Selma want power to the people. In very different ways, though. Which is where we get back to the former distinction. Jonathan wants to use modern technology to be able to count noses quickly, and Selma wants power-free debate to search for consensus. If I can borrow your writing pad for a sec, Roderick, I'll draw you a diagram.'

	Aggregative	*Integrative*
Indirect	Victoria	Roderick
Direct	Jonathan	Selma

'Victoria combines a preference for indirect democracy with a preference for aggregative democracy,' Diana continued, poring over Roderick's pad. 'And you, Roderick, you prefer indirect democracy combined with integrative democracy. So I'm not surprised that you should think Jonathan's ideas about teledemocracy pretty extreme. His ideas deviate from yours on both dimensions. Selma's and Victoria's ideas are also at opposite ends on both dimensions. Harry tends towards Victoria's position, albeit with a lot more scepticism. His tendency towards governor's government based on periodic general elections, though, seems to be more negatively than positively motivated. So I'm having some difficulty tying him to a democratic ideal, for that's what we're discussing here. I'm also having a hard time positioning myself in this schedule. My heart's inclined towards Selma's combination of direct and integrative democracy as I think that's the most intense kind of democracy, but my mind doubts its large-scale applicability.'

'Fancy schedule, Diana, but what's the point if you can't position yourself in it?' Roderick wondered.

'Well, the schedule helps me to understand and position others who hold more marked views on a particular kind of democracy', Diana said. 'And it also

helps me to get my own bearings, even if my position is more changeable than that of others. This system of coordinates at least allows me to localize my hotchpotch of thoughts. If it's about my ideals, I tend towards Selma's position. If it's about isolated local projects, I tend to move up to Jonathan's position. But if it's about complex national policy issues, I'd rather go with Roderick. And in international relations I have more faith in rulers who work on the basis of a clear voter mandate gained once every so many years.'

'I think it's a useful coordinate system,' said Harry. 'It's not like one of these conceptual prison complexes with impenetrable walls everywhere. It's more like a playing field with chalked lines. Some, like Victoria, take a particular position in the field with their heart and soul. Others, like Diana, move all over the place. Yet others, like myself, are most comfortable on the sideline in a particular corner of the field. I think these four coordinates are very serviceable for grasping all those possible positions and movements. The only problem, though, is what we're going to call them. I don't think somehow that the model of democracy in the bottom left-hand corner should be called "Jonathan democracy", ha ha.'

'Very funny, professor Harry, how about Harryside for the caustic press on the sidelines?'

'Give it a break, boys, let's keep our noses to the grindstone for a bit.' Victoria seized the opportunity to play her part as hostess in charge. 'Who's got any ideas about this? I heard that, in political science, Roderick's position and my position are staked out as "consensus democracy" and "pendulum democracy". Harry mentioned a few other concepts, but "pendulum democracy" is OK by me. Swings of the pendulum: that's what the ballot box can bring about. What Selma wants is called "participatory democracy", I believe.'

'You're pulling a wry face, but I think the only genuine democracy is one in which all people at the very base of society participate fully. Not from a distance, but in full dialogue. So I think it's a good term, though "basic democracy" would also be a good one.'

'I'm fine with "consensus democracy" because there's nothing wrong with consensus,' said Roderick. 'So that just leaves us with the question what to call Jonathan's position in the field.'

'I quite like "teledemocracy", direct democracy based on modern telecommunication technology,' said Jonathan.

'Sounds good, but is it distinctive enough? The indirect kinds of democracy Victoria and Roderick are sold on are also kinds of teledemocracy: they're literally "democracy at a distance". What does the academy say?' Diana cast a questioning look in Harry's direction.

'I think "plebiscitary democracy" might be an appropriate one here,' said Harry. 'The Romans used the term "plebiscitary" to refer to the common people, the plebs, the non-patricians. In a plebiscitary democracy, it's all about the voice of the people making itself heard directly and without any intervention, in hand-raising meetings, referendums, or plebiscites. The common majority decides without the intervention of people's representatives.'

'Hearing him talk like that, I can feel the contempt and also the fear for the common people, the plebeians, with types like Harry. So, in that sense, "plebiscitary democracy" would be a proper kind of sobriquet. But I'm a bit worried that it might keep reminding everyone of brute masses that are easily led up the garden path, and that's not what I have in mind at all. I'm thinking of highly qualified, quality-conscious citizens, who are quite capable of making up their own minds as voters. Such voting by individual citizens ought to be a decisive factor in public choice on a much larger scale. So I think "voter democracy" would be a good term.'

'Alright then, Jonathan, so let's put this down on paper. Allow me, Diana.' Victoria took the leather writing pad from Diana. 'I think we have discovered four basic types of democracy today':

	Aggregative (majoritarian)	*Integrative* (non majoritarian)
Indirect (representative)	Pendulum democracy	Consensus democracy
Direct (self determining)	Voter democracy	Participatory democracy

'That's just typical, isn't it: rapidly appropriating someone else's ideas. It used to be mainly men who did that, but these days it's women pushing and shoving other women aside.' Selma looked at Diana with a questioning look that called for assent.

'I'm not appropriating anything, am I? I'm just summarizing what all of us have discovered today, aided by Diana's bright idea. Surely there's nothing wrong with that, is there?' Victoria responded, stung.

'There's nothing wrong with that,' said Roderick soothingly. 'There's no need for all of us to be the same. Each to their own. You have your part to play, Selma, and Victoria has hers. Fine with me, if only we achieve something. And we have achieved something today. I had some reservations at first, but what we've put down on paper is really a nice summary of the main positions in the debate. Have we actually discovered anything new, Harry?'

Harry pondered this for a bit. 'You know: if new, not true; if true, not new, as the public administration expert Wildavsky once said. All the concepts in this schedule have been around for some time and have been used many a

time. The distinction between direct versus indirect democracy is a basic distinction I have often come across in the literature, just like the distinction between aggregative versus integrative democracy. But I haven't yet seen the combination of both dimensions in a singly typology.'

'Well, professor,' said Jonathan, 'so it's about time that you or one of your confederates wrote a fine book about it.'

'That seems like a good point to end our discussion,' said Victoria, sounding like a seasoned politician. 'I thoroughly enjoyed meeting all of you after all those years. We should do this more often. But now it's time for drinks. Or would anyone like some more chocolate cake ...?'

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Part I

Concepts

Contested Democracy

This part shows how the basic concept of democracy – the people that rule – is tied up with a greatly diverging range of notions and practices. It illustrates the richness in democratic form, the confusion in debates about democratic reform, as well as the need for a sensitizing framework that can guide the understanding of democracy.

'Democracy' is one of those words that is widely used as something that goes without saying, as if everyone knows what it means. In actual fact, however, democracy is understood and operationalized in many different ways – it is an essentially contested concept disguised as a commonplace. This has consequences that make themselves felt when people enter into conversations about alleged problems and potential reinforcements of democracy. Such conversations often tend to go astray because people fail to recognize and acknowledge each other's assumptions for what they are. These are sometimes pointed out to them, as Diana did in the opening debate above, but often people keep talking at cross-purposes without making any headway. This happens in the best of circles, even among people whose training or profession would put them in a position of authority on democracy.

There are many roads that lead to democracy, but people often recognize only one 'straight and narrow' path to it, degrading every other road to democracy into an inferior 'B-road'. This study was written with the intention – as outlined in the preface – of shedding light on the various 'A-roads' that lead to democracy. The principal idea here is quite plainly not that debates on the best road to democracy can or must be resolved – there will always be differences of opinion, which is only for the better. The principal idea here is that such debates would be more fruitful if the various roads to democracy were to be properly mapped, if the supporters of particular roads were to become aware of alternative routes to democracy, and if they were to wake up to the brighter and the darker sides of each main road.

To foster understanding, and to facilitate comparison, we need a conceptual framework. This is what I will develop in Part I of this study. Chapter 1, on plural democracy, introduces the main variations on the theme of democracy. Chapter 2, on layered democracy, maps out these variations at different levels. Figure 2.2 presents an overall framework for the analysis in Part II and for the subsequent argument in Part III of this study.

1

Plural Democracy

Variations on a Theme

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

Robert Dahl, expert on democracy[1]

Introduction

Two thousand and five hundred years of debate on democracy, and still we cannot agree, as Robert Dahl says in the above quote. Does that matter? Well, no, not in principle. Like everything else that must adapt to changing circumstances, democracy thrives on a process of variation and selection. Variation is a basic precondition of democracy; uniformity makes it vulnerable, and multiformity makes it versatile. So democracy continuing to be the endless subject of debate is not a problem at all. The problem lurks rather on the other side, the side of selection, which is often a void in debates on democracy; there is plenty of variation, but far too little selection. As a consequence, relatively weak ideas keep being knocked about endlessly, and comparatively strong ideas do not get the consideration they deserve.

For instance, long-term research by Arend Lijphart and others has shown that the distinction between majoritarian (aggregative) and non-majoritarian (integrative) democracy is of great significance. And yet this distinction is often neglected, reducing democracy to majority rule.[2] In the present study, the distinction between majoritarian and non-majoritarian democracy will be taken seriously, along with the distinction between direct democracy and indirect democracy. The latter distinction is often quoted

but not always understood. The fact that the direct election of an office holder does not entail direct democracy, for instance, is not apparent to every democracy watcher.[3]

Below I will interrelate the distinction between direct and indirect democracy and the distinction between majoritarian and non-majoritarian democracy, resulting in a matrix with four basic types of democracy: consensus democracy, pendulum democracy, voter democracy, and participatory democracy. In subsequent chapters, we will see that these basic types occur in a variety of versions and hybrids. Just as a few primary colours allow us to produce a variegated palette of colours, a few basic types of democracy also allow us to represent a wide range of democratic forms and practices.

In this chapter, I will lay out the primary colours on the palette, as it were, ready for further processing in subsequent chapters. Before that, however, I will provide a bird's-eye view of how democracy managed to lodge itself in the hearts and minds of so many in its roughly two-thousand-five-hundred-year history. For a long time, it seemed as if things were heading quite another way.

How democracy revived

'For a long time, until about a century ago, democracy was an ugly word. Then, within about fifty years, democracy became a good thing.' This is how C.B. Macpherson sketched the relatively recent revival of democracy. One might dispute his timing, but in the main this picture is correct.[4]

For a long time, the way in which Plato and his contemporaries described Athenian democracy was seen as a warning against democracy. Democracy was the 'belly' taking over the 'head', a state of direct popular influence that, if anything, was to be avoided, until democracy was rediscovered in the course of the nineteenth century, when, in its indirect shape, the democratic principle proved to be applicable on a large scale.

The big waves

Democracy seems to be a tidal phenomenon, with alternating high and low tides. Samuel Huntington distinguishes three major waves of democratization, which, by his definition, are periods in which movements from non-democratic towards democratic regimes eclipsed counter-movements, with two intervening periods in which things went the other way:[5]

- the first wave (1828–1926)
- the first counter-movement (1922–1942)
- the second wave (1943–1962)
- the second counter-movement (1958–1974)
- the third wave (1975 to the present).

In Huntington's view, the first wave surged in the early nineteenth century, when more and more citizens were given the vote, and continued up into the early twentieth century, with the number of democratic regimes rising to about 29. This number then went down again to 12 due to the anti-democratic counter-movement – totalitarianism – in the period between World Wars I and II. The second wave of democratization, surging after World War II, reached its crest in 1962, with the counter totalling 36 democratic regimes. A combination of counter-forces, including several anti-democratic revolutions in South America, then caused this number to drop down to 30 in 1974. After that, democratization got the upper hand again, with the number of democratic regimes doubling in a short time-span, swelling into the third wave, which continues to this day.

It is only in retrospect that we will be able to tell how close this third wave has got to its levelling-off point. Whether this is imminent or remote, the advent of a third counter-movement can be neither assured nor excluded. It is quite conceivable that democracy will continue to spread – in Asia, in Africa, in the Arab world – but its success cannot be guaranteed.

In a different way from Huntington, Dahl arrives at approximately the same number of democratic states at the end of the twentieth century. His counter registers 65 states in 1990, with pronounced variations in their state of development and sustainability, for that matter:[6] 23 out of those 65 are 'marginally democratic', 7 are 'fairly democratic,' and 35 are 'most democratic'. This last group includes 22 countries that have known democratic institutions without interruption since 1950: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These are called the 'established democracies'.

The long road

The stormy expansion of the number of democracies over the last twenty-five years of the twentieth century – first in Southern Europe, then in Eastern Europe and in parts of South America and Asia – managed to turn

that century into 'the Century of Democratic Triumph', as Dahl calls it, despite the century's glaring democratic failings.[7] If we take into account the long history of democracy, this hyperbole is not entirely unjustified. The rise of democracy, starting some twenty-five centuries ago, is indeed in no way like a steady climb on a straight upward path; the path of democracy rather resembles that of a traveller walking for ages through a seemingly endless desert, interrupted by just a few scattered hillocks, until he suddenly reaches the long steep climb leading upwards.

After the rise and fall of the Athenian and Roman archetypes of democracy and republicanism, the idea of popular rule[8] was shelved for a long time, until expressions of popular government were rediscovered in several Italian city-states round about AD 1100, as if, after a climate change, a virtually extinct species was given a new lease of life. What we did not yet have at this point was a national system of popular government, reflected in a national parliament, superimposed on a local system of popular government. This pattern would not develop until many centuries later in Great Britain, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, and Switzerland. For a long time, what we had was a rather modest kind of democracy, involving dominant elites, predetermined meetings of the Estates, and severely limited kinds of representation – a far cry from any pretensions of 'popular sovereignty'.

With the American Revolution and the French Revolution, the 'people' and the 'citizen' were gaining a greater say. By 1875, however, there were as yet only two states, the Confederation of Switzerland and the French Third Republic, which had general suffrage for men.[9] For universal suffrage for both men and women, free elections, and the essential civil liberties, most so-called established democracies had to wait until well into the twentieth century.

The apparent advantages

Is it worth the effort of all those many years? Do democratic regimes have advantages that non-democratic regimes do not have?[10] Yes, says Dahl. He mentions ten appreciable advantages of democracy:[11]

- *prevention of tyranny*: democracy prevents the rule of cruel and vicious autocrats;
- *protection of essential rights*: democracy guarantees fundamental civil rights to citizens;
- *guarantee of freedom*: democracy ensures a large degree of personal freedom;
- *self-protection*: democracy helps people to protect essential personal interests;

- *self-determination*: democracy offers the greatest chance of self-determination, i.e., the opportunity to live by self-imposed rules;
- *moral autonomy*: democracy provides the maximum opportunity for exercising moral responsibility;
- *human development*: democracy promotes human resources more than any alternative to democracy;
- *restriction of inequality*: democracy sustains a relatively high degree of political equality;
- *peace-keeping*: modern representative democracies do not fight wars with one another;
- *creation of prosperity*: democracies tend to be more prosperous than non-democracies.

Democratic regimes differ considerably in how and to what extent they truly cash in on the advantages mentioned above. I will come back to that in subsequent chapters.

What democracy entails

Democracy – a contraction of *demos* and *kratia* – is essentially about the rule of the people, either by the people itself or through others that are elected, influenced, and controlled by the people. The underlying idea is that the people are the driving force and the touchstone of all that happens in the public domain. This basic idea is central to virtually any general definition: some call it 'responsive rule' or 'popular rule', others 'popular government' or popular sovereignty'.[12]

The notion of equality is another basic idea in democracy. In democratic decision-making – be it about public officials or about settling public matters directly – the contribution of each citizen is, in principle, equal to that of every other citizen. In line with many others, Michael Saward calls democracy 'a political system in which citizens themselves have an equal effective input into the making of binding collective decisions.' A non-democracy is defined as 'a system in which some individual or sub-group possesses superior power to make binding collective decisions without any formal accountability to citizens.'[13]

In essence, then, democracy is about (1) popular influence on government and (2) equality in exercising such influence. These two elements emerge in most definitions of democracy, albeit in varying terms and with different accents (see Box 1.2). They have also been integrated in the general definition of democracy I use in this study (see Box 1.1).

Box 1.1: A general definition of democracy

Democracy is a political system in which citizens govern, either by themselves or through others that are elected, influenced, and controlled by the people, in a way that puts each citizen on a par with every other.

This definition guides our attention in a particular direction, namely in the direction of political systems and decision-making processes in the public domain – be it at the macro-level of national communities or the micro-level of local communities. This is the kind of democracy that is at the centre here, rather than the kind of democracy that might prevail in, for instance, the family, the company, the church, or the school. These domains require separate treatment, which, for that matter, might well benefit from the analytical framework presented here.

Ideal and practice

Dahl distinguishes between democracy as a guiding ideal and democracy as a sustainable practice. He undertakes to define the hard core of either of

Box 1.2: Some other definitions of democracy[14]

LANE & ERSSON: 'A political regime where the will of the people *ex ante* becomes the law of the country (legal order) *ex post*.'
BEETHAM: 'A political concept, concerning the collectively binding decisions about the rules and policies of a group, association or society (. . .) embracing the related principles of *popular control* and *political equality*.'
HADENIUS: A political system in which 'public policy is to be governed by the freely expressed will of the people whereby all individuals are to be treated as equals'.
POPPER: A type of government in which 'the social institutions provide means by which the rulers may be dismissed by the ruled'.
DAHL: A constitution in conformity with one elementary principle, 'that all the members are to be treated as if they were equally qualified to participate in the process of making decisions about the policies the association will pursue'.
SCHUMPETER: 'That institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.'
FREEDOM HOUSE: 'Political systems whose leaders are elected in competitive multi party and multi candidate processes in which opposition parties have a legitimate chance of attaining power or participating in power.'
GOODIN: 'A matter of making social outcomes systematically responsive to the settled preferences of all involved parties.'
FINER: 'A state where political decisions are taken by and with the consent, or the active participation even, of the majority of the People.'
LINCOLN: 'Government of the people, by the people, for the people.'

these, grounding himself on the principle that, in a democracy, there is political equality among the members of the community in deciding community policy. Ideally, this would require the following:[15]

- *effective participation*: all the members of the political community must have equal and effective opportunities for making their views known;
- *equality in voting*: the members must have equal and effective opportunities to vote, and all votes must be counted as equal;
- *enlightened understanding*: each member must have equal and effective opportunities for learning about the relevant alternative policies and their likely consequences;
- *final control over the agenda*: members must decide what is on the political agenda; the agenda is never closed;
- *inclusion of adults*: the aforementioned civil rights must be valid in principle for all adult permanent members of the political community.

The above is a guiding ideal that, according to Dahl, we should continue to pursue, even if we know that this ideal can never be entirely realized in large-scale systems. What can be achieved and sustained is not ideal democracy – the government of all – but realistic democracy or *polyarchy* – the government of many, alternating and correcting one another. The minimum requirements for such a realistic democracy, sustainable in the long term and on a larger scale, are the following:[16]

- *elected officials*: government decisions are checked and legitimated by elected representatives; achievable democracy is, to an important extent, indirect and representative;
- *free, fair, and frequent elections*: at frequent intervals, citizens can express their views freely and voluntarily in reliable elections;
- *alternative sources of information*: citizens have the right and the possibility to gather their information from alternative sources, including sources other than those within the governmental domain;
- *freedom of expression*: citizens have the right to express themselves, also in a critical and sceptical sense, on all possible political and administrative matters;
- *freedom of assembly, associational autonomy*: citizens are free to organize themselves in associations and groups, including independent interest groups and political parties taking part in elections;

- *inclusive citizenship, civil rights*: no adult permanent members of the political community are excluded in advance from the above-mentioned rights and opportunities, including the passive and active right to vote, and the right to elect or be elected.

The more strongly sustainable democracy is moulded and the closer it gets to the democratic ideal, the better it is, Dahl argues. All those who support democracy would agree with the general requirements that Dahl mentions. Out of our six characters in the opening debate – with their often widely diverging opinions – there is not one who would disagree with Dahl's emphasis on political freedoms and frequent, free elections; where they will start to disagree is over the interpretation and operationalization of the general rights and principles.

Variations on a theme

Not only the popularity but also the contestability of the concept of democracy has caused it to be expressed in a near-endless series of conceptual refinements. The terminological variation is vast, as Saward has shown. In alphabetical order, he deals with the following terms, all premodified versions of democracy:

African democracy, aggregative democracy, ancient democracy, Asian democracy, assembly democracy, associative democracy, audience democracy, Christian democracy, communicative democracy, competitive elite democracy, cosmopolitan democracy, deliberative democracy, delegative democracy, developmental democracy, direct democracy, discursive democracy, ecological/green democracy, electoral democracy, industrial democracy, juridical democracy, liberal democracy, participatory democracy, party democracy, people's democracy, pluralist democracy, polyarchical democracy, protective democracy, radical democracy, referendum democracy, reflective democracy, representative democracy, social democracy, statistical democracy, virtual democracy.[17]

The list could easily go on: new democracy, old democracy, media democracy, teledemocracy, emotional democracy, inquisition democracy, diploma democracy, drama democracy, etc. etc. If we add post- or neo-, their number could effortlessly be doubled, and this is how we get a mish-mash of absolutely anything: rich concepts next to empty slogans; fundamental notions next to superficial characterizations; significant concepts next to meaningless constructions.

This terminological fecundity is a symptom of how widely discussed the subject of democracy is. It also indicates the extent of the confusion of tongues. Clearly, there is a need for a parsimonious framework that makes it

Box 1.3: Categories of democracy[18]

HELD: classical democracy, protective republicanism, developmental republicanism, protective democracy, liberal democracy, developmental democracy, direct de mocracy, pluralism, legal democracy, participatory democracy, deliberative de mocracy, democratic autonomy, cosmopolitan democracy
LANE & ERSSON: constitutional democracy, participatory democracy, egalitarian democracy. Also: majoritarian democracy, minoritarian democracy, unanimity democracy, consociational democracy, elitist democracy, Madisonian democracy, populist democracy, economic democracy, Tocquevillian democracy
CUNNINGHAM: liberal democracy, classic pluralism, radical pluralism, catallaxy, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy. Also: associational democracy, consociational democracy, civic republicanism, democratic pragmatism
HEYWOOD: classical democracy, protective democracy, developmental democracy, people's democracy
YOUNG: inclusive, communicative democracy, deep democracy, deliberative de mocracy, aggregative democracy, representative democracy, associative democ racy, regional democracy, global democracy
DOGAN: genuine pluralist democracy, Dahl's polyarchy, limited, facade or embry onic democracy
MACPHERSON: protective democracy, developmental democracy, equilibrium de mocracy, participatory democracy
DAHL: Madisonian democracy, populistic democracy, polyarchal democracy
SARTORI: electoral democracy, participatory democracy, referendum democracy, competitive theory
STROMBERG: organic or monistic democracy, pluralist or representative democracy
SWIFT: weak democracy, strong democracy
LIJPHART: Westminster democracy, consensus democracy

possible to cover a broad area with only a limited number of concepts. In the following section, and in the remainder of this study, I will undertake to develop and operationalize such a conceptual framework – inspired by Einstein's famous dictum: 'everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler'. The result is a framework distinguishing four basic types of democracy. These relate to empirical manifestations of democracy as primary colours do to factually perceptible shades of colour: they render actual complexity comprehensible, discussable, and comparable.

The classification strategy I will be pursuing here deviates from two popular alternatives. The first of these is the one found in Saward.[19] He distinguishes between a threshold value and a continuum value for democracy. The threshold value can be compared to the first notch on a yardstick: a regime should minimally reach this threshold value – it should, for example, have had several years' experience with free and fair elections – in order to be recognized as a democracy. The continuum value then indicates how far a regime has

advanced beyond the first notch on the yardstick – how far, for example, it has developed civil liberties and rights. The advantage of this strategy is that all systems can be reduced to a single yardstick, which, at the same time, is its major drawback. In assessing democracy, different actors use substantially different yardsticks, and there is not one with superior legitimacy. This is a fundamental given that must be recognized in typifications and assessments of democracy.

A second common strategy is to connect the classification of democracy implicitly or explicitly with schemata that embody value judgements. This is sometimes very obviously the case, as in *weak* democracy versus *strong* democracy, or *thin* democracy versus *deep* democracy. Other distinctions, such as *old* democracy and *new* democracy, or *traditional* democracy and *modern* democracy, are also not free from a normative framework that can easily be translated into a right–wrong dichotomy.[20] I try to stay away as much as possible from such a strategy in this study. What concerns me here is a *classification of bias* in democracy; not a *biased classification* of it.

How democracy is modelled

Democracy can be named and described in a great many different ways. The above survey gives an impression of the host of current categorizations and subdivisions. In this study, I will present an abstraction of this multitude by distinguishing four basic models of democracy. These four models are the result of interrelating two dimensions that are well known but commonly kept apart in theories of democracy:

- *Aggregative versus integrative democracy*. The key question here is: *how* are democratic decisions taken? Are decisions taken in an aggregative (majoritarian, competitive) process, in which a simple majority of 50% + 1 eventually tips the scales, even if this majority is up against sizeable minorities? Or are decisions taken in an integrative (non-majoritarian, deliberative) process, in which people attempt to reach the widest possible – ideally complete – agreement? Is it majoritarian 'voting' or deliberative 'conferring'? Is it 'the winner takes all' or is it a process of consensus-building?[21]
- *Direct versus indirect democracy*. The key question here is: *who* is eventually taking the decisions? Do citizens designate representatives who eventually take the decisions (the option of representative or indirect

democracy)? Or do members of the community eventually take the decisions themselves (the option of self-governance or direct democracy)? Is it public decision-making 'by all concerned' or 'in other people's stead'? Is it audience democracy of 'lookers-on', or popular rule of 'do-it-yourselfers'?[22]

Thus we have four basic models of democracy.

Pendulum democracy refers to the model of democracy in which political power alternates between two competing political parties or formations and their protagonists – like the pendulum of a clock. Its best-known manifestation is the so-called Westminster model. Pendulum democracy is fundamentally indirect and representative in nature. Citizens periodically cast their votes and hand over decision-making powers to their elected representatives. Decision-making is largely majoritarian and aggregative: in constituencies, because of the 'first-past-the-post' electoral system, the winner takes all; executive power is monopolized by the winning party and its leadership, even if the winning majority is minimal. In pendulum democracy, broad-based citizen participation focuses on the brief period of elections. Policy implementation, policy preparation, agenda-setting, and political control are taken over from citizens by the elected politicians as much as possible. According to its supporters, a major advantage of pendulum democracy is that the voters' signals given off in general elections make themselves vigorously felt, first in political representation, and then in government formation and policy-making.

Voter democracy combines aggregative decision-making with direct, unmediated popular rule. Citizens participate in voter democracy by casting their votes in plebiscites, either on a small scale, as in town meetings, or on a large scale, as in referendums. A nice example of voter democracy is the New England town meeting, where citizens take decisions on public matters in assembly (by show of hands, count of ayes and nays, and majority

	Aggregative (majoritarian)	*Integrative* (non-majoritarian)
Indirect (representative)	Pendulum democracy	Consensus democracy
Direct (self-governing)	Voter democracy	Participatory democracy

Figure 1.1 Models of democracy

rule). A more large-scale manifestation of this type is the California-style decision-making referendum, in which a simple majority decides binary questions (for or against a particular proposition; aye or nay). Such plebiscites are often foreshadowed by opinion polls, consumer surveys and the like, which can also be aggregated efficiently and numerically. Its proponents feel that the strength of voter democracy lies in citizens' non-dependence on others for having their voices heard and their preferences in public matters counted – a critical mass of preference indicators enables them to compel attention and force decisions in a way that is clear and straightforward.

Participatory democracy combines direct self-governance with integrative decision-making. It is illustrated by classic as well as contemporary cases of 'communal' self-rule, 'communicative' and 'deliberative' citizen governance. In a participatory democracy, a minority will never be simply overruled by a straightforward numerical majority; minorities should not be excluded but included. If done at all, counting heads only takes place in the final stages of decision-making, and serves to confirm shared views rather than to take decisions. Decision-making is first and foremost a process of engaging in thorough, preferably transformative, and usually lengthy deliberations to seek consensus. The widespread participation of all involved – in agenda-setting, policy preparation, implementation, and control – is considered the best way of warranting the legitimacy of collective decision-making. In a participatory democracy, everyone has the same right to raise and debate an issue, and relations are largely horizontal, open, and 'power-free', that is, no one can issue an ultimatum or a veto from a position of power. The strength of participatory democracy is the cultivation of concord and commonality, its proponents contend.

Consensus democracy refers to a general model of democracy, a specific version of which can be found in countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria; this particular version, developed in the context of historically divided societies, is called 'consociational democracy'. The general model of consensus democracy is basically indirect and integrative. Representatives of groups and sections of society are the prime decision-makers. They go about their business in an integrative and consensus-seeking way, usually in a conference-room or round-table type of setting. Collective decision-making largely tends to take place in co-producing, co-governing, and coalition-oriented ways and aims to establish consensus and broad-based support. The majority preferably does not overrule substantial minorities by simply counting heads; policies are preferably built on a broad platform of support, both politically and socially. In the

agenda-setting and preparatory stages, representatives of social interest groups and specific sections of the population are widely consulted; in implementing policies, civil society and third sector organizations are also widely involved. Integration and collaboration are seen as core qualities.

In subsequent chapters, in which I will elaborate and reflect on these four basic models by means of actual democratic practices, it will transpire that the four analytical coordinates in the above typology never occur in their unadulterated purity. Wherever democracy is practised, it is always a hybrid, drawing, to a greater or lesser extent, on different models of democracy.

What this study has to offer

This study explores the foundations and expressions of elementary forms of democracy and their implications and effects. After the two introductory chapters in Part I, the four chapters in Part II discuss the four elementary forms of democracy in greater detail. Each model will be assessed on its general constructive principles and varying manifestations, on its patterns of democratic leadership and citizenship, and on its comparative strengths and weaknesses. Part III then proceeds to show how models of democracy can be combined and reformed.

This study is both empirical and theoretical in nature. It connects empirical manifestations of democracy with democratic theories and their sensitizing concepts. It supplements the multitude of studies that focus on the history of the idea of democracy (the democratic classics, the democratic canon) or on a single specific realization of the idea of democracy (deliberative democracy, digital democracy, associational democracy, etc.). It puts such specific interpretations into perspective by comparing and contrasting them with others. It deals with the indispensable classics, though always in the perspective of a typology of democratic models that is grounded in empiricism.

This study centralizes democratic practices and concepts as these have taken root in Europe (usually Western, sometimes Eastern), America (usually North, sometimes South), and Down Under (Australia, New Zealand). In these parts of the world – often lumped together as 'the Western world' for the sake of convenience – the idea of democracy seems to have taken hold more than anywhere else, albeit in different ways and to different degrees. 'Western democracy' is an abstract and loosely defined concept. It would be better to refer to it as 'Western democracies', in the plural, for much as these democracies share general notions such as 'free elections',

'public control', and 'public accountability', their manifestations differ widely.

The universalist concept of 'Western democracy' – a concept that might be 'bestowed' or 'forced', depending on one's point of view, on 'non-Western countries' – does not match the multiform reality of democracy. This study celebrates a multiform conception of democracy, which means that it can take many forms: variations and combinations of pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, voter democracy, and participatory democracy. The 'Western world' does not have the exclusive rights to these models.

2

Layered Democracy

Expressions and Foundations

Democracy, like lavatory cleaning, is an uphill task: no sooner have we got it all clean and tidy than someone comes in and pisses all over it.

Michael Thompson, cultural expert[1]

Introduction

Just as you can keep cleaning a toilet because it keeps losing its sterile properties, you can keep polishing democracy, Michael Thompson suggests in the quotation above. He may be putting it a little graphically, but he has got a point, an essential one: democracy is like a beauty ideal that requires ceaseless maintenance because reality never quite lives up to it.

In the previous chapter, I distinguished four such beauty ideals: pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, participatory democracy, and voter democracy. All of them inspire attempts at 'pollution reduction' – as anthropologists would call it – but none of them can be kept clean and tidy on a permanent basis. Constitutional legislators might design a 'pure' kind of pendulum democracy, for instance, but it would inevitably become tainted by everyday use. True advocates of pendulum democracy would be inclined to rub *off* and keep out these impurities as much as possible; at the same time, they would want to polish *up* and keep in what they consider clean and tidy (indirect democracy combined with aggregative democracy).

Others – with competing ideas of 'pure democracy' and 'impure democracy' (see Figure 2.1) – would challenge that approach in part or in whole. What the supporters of pendulum democracy would wish to polish into a

	Pure democracy	*Impure democracy*
Participatory democracy	direct and integrative	indirect (representative) aggregative (majoritarian)
Voter democracy	direct and aggregative	indirect (representative) integrative (non-majoritarian)
Pendulum democracy	indirect and aggregative	direct (self-determining) integrative (non-majoritarian)
Consensus democracy	indirect and integrative	direct (self-determining) aggregative (majoritarian)

Figure 2.1 Pure versus impure democracy

shine (indirect and aggregative democracy) is for instance precisely what the proponents of participatory democracy would wish to rub out and replace by what they regard as worth glossing up (direct and integrative democracy).

With his cleansing metaphor, Michael Thompson proves himself a dedicated follower of the British anthropologist Mary Douglas, whose view of cleaning ritual and pollution reduction is condensed into six words: 'dirt is matter out of place'.[2] Unclean is what does not square with the cherished order. Cleaning means to restore the cherished order, to make distinctions, to polish and shine the one and to rub out and distance the other.[3] To understand cleaning rituals in real and everyday life, Douglas teaches us, we should first get a grip on the notions of order that inspire such cleaning.[4]

This means that, in order to understand 'cleaning' in the home of democracy – where pollution reduction is a popular activity – we should first bring the relevant notions of democratic order into sharp focus. I made a start with this in the previous chapter, defining four essential 'beauty ideals' of democracy, and will continue to do so in the present chapter in two directions. The first is a movement downwards, into the political cultures and societal cultures that are the foundations underpinning the models of democracy. The second is an upward one, into the patterns of citizenship and leadership that are the visible expressions of the models of democracy. Figure 2.2 presents an overview.

Leadership styles

	Prizefighter	*Bridge-builder*
Protagonist	Gladiator	Regent
Facilitator	Advocate	Coach

Citizenship styles

	Voter	*Speaker*
Spectator	Spectator/voter	Spectator/speaker
Player	Player/voter	Player/speaker

Expressions of democracy

Models of democracy

	Aggregative	**Integrative**
Indirect	**Pendulum democracy**	**Consensus democracy**
Direct	**Voter democracy**	**Participatory democracy**

Models of democracy

Political culture

	Contest	*Convergence*
Power distance	Mass democracy	Guardian democracy
Power equality	Protectionist democracy	Grassroots democracy

Societal culture

	Low-group	*High-group*
High-grid	Atomism	Hierarchy
Low-grid	Individualism	Egalitarianism

Foundations of democracy

Figure 2.2 Models of democracy, expressions, and foundations

Democracy and political culture

Models of democracy get their shape in institutions that tend towards integrative or aggregative democracy, and towards direct or indirect democracy. Under these institutional tendencies lurk more or less durable patterns of thought and action that can be lumped together as 'political culture' or, more specifically, as 'democratic ethos': the politico-cultural attitude towards democracy.[5] Four types of democratic ethos come to the fore.

Protectionist democracy – Voter democracy is founded on a particular version of protectionist democracy, centring on the values of self-determination and self-protection. Held distinguishes 'protective republicanism', inclining more to civic self-governance, from what he calls 'protective democracy', inclining more to representative democracy.[6] The self-governance cherishing democratic ethos underlying voter democracy comes closer to the former than to the latter. But the general emphasis on inalienable individual freedoms and rights, which need fierce protection from intrusion, is equally strong in both. Protectionist thinkers of all leanings, including those who cherish the particular model of voter democracy, are in agreement with Locke's classic proposition that 'No one can be ... subjected to the Political Power of another without his Own Consent'.[7] All would agree that public choice requires the active consent of anyone who may be impacted by such choice. The majority principle may be an effective way of protecting individual interests and liberties, but the 'tyranny of the majority' must be reined in at all times by constitutional arrangements, regulations for keeping public choice in check, and other protectionist constructions that serve to shield individual rights and freedoms.[8] The contemporary, neo-liberal version of the protectionist ethos is found in authors such as Nozick and Hayek, proponents of a minimal state that chiefly aims to protect individual rights and to facilitate the operation of the free-market economy.[9]

From a protectionist perspective, the model of voter democracy undeniably holds a great many attractions. Entirely in line with the protectionist culture, voter democracy makes sure that governors are not ranked above citizens, that citizens make their own choices in a one-man-one-vote system, that this system creates a level playing field, and that it offers possibilities for keeping policy-makers in check. From the same protectionist perspective, however, voter democracy has one major drawback: collective decision-making requires no more than a simple majority vote. Individual citizens, and even rather sizeable minorities, can simply be outvoted by a 50% + 1 numerical majority. Wherever the protectionist ethos has developed vigorously, this

disadvantage will be counterbalanced by qualitative majority requirements stipulating that a collective decision must be based on a platform of support that exceeds a mere numerical majority vote (see, e.g., Switzerland)[10] and other arrangements that help to protect minorities, individual interests, and constitutional rights (see, e.g., the US). If voter democracy is employed to act as a curb on overzealous governments, a 50% + 1 majority is, of course, a mighty weapon.

Grassroots democracy – The model of participatory democracy flourishes in a culture of radical democracy or grassroots democracy.[11] The democratic ethos is one cherishing 'concrete action', bottom-up and hands-on public policy-making with strong grassroots involvement. Its advocates are to be found in a variety of New Social Movements – the green movement, the women's movement, the gay movement, the peace movement, and the squatters' movement – which, since the 1960s, have had quite an impact on the terminology we use to think and speak about democracy. Notions that are central to this culture include the following: openness, commitment, equality, solidarity, fellowship, authenticity, smallness of scale, thriftiness, and sustainability.[12]

A major source of inspiration for the radical-democratic ethos is the German sociologist Habermas with his plea for democracy as communicative action: open, power-free, inclusive, and integrative.[13] All participants are equal, and everyone's contribution – provided that it is inclusive (non-exclusive), open (non-manipulative), and power-free (not proceeding from unequal positions of power or information) – deserves equal attention and respect in the communicative process. Collective decision-making by a superordinate elite, using its position of power and information discreetly and strategically, is neither justified nor democratic in this approach. Habermas' idea of communicative action reverberates in recent works on 'deliberative' or 'discursive' democracy. Dryzek, for instance, stipulates that a genuine democracy has no hierarchy or immutable rules and sets no limits on participation.[14] The model of participatory democracy seamlessly matches such requirements.

Guardian democracy – The model of consensus democracy builds, in a democratic way, onto the guardian syndrome as described by Jacobs.[15] The culture of guardian democracy puts its trust in the prudence of 'expert' caretakers (guardians or regents), who do their work in relative peace and seclusion. In consensus democracy, a certain part of the guardian elite is legitimized by general elections. Outside such periodical elections, counting heads is a little-used mechanism. The culture is rather one of pacification and accommodation, cautious deliberation, prolonged conferencing,

getting expert advice, exploring alternatives, and compromising on a pragmatic basis. Such a culture presupposes a particular decision-making elite and prospers in a certain degree of seclusion. Meetings aiming to devise complex compromises need to be set in the peace and quiet of the backroom rather than in the full glare of the public arena.

The guardian democratic culture is founded on an expertocratic ethos whose exponents claim that political issues are far too complicated to be left to ordinary citizens: a decision-making elite is inevitable. In consensus democracy, these are often specialized guardians who need to confer *ex officio* – by virtue of their special position or expertise in their field. As Dahl pointed out, the guardian ethos has a history that goes back a long way, to Plato in fact, who made a strong case in his *Republic* for concentrating power of decision in a minority of people who would have the superior capacities that were crucial for the art of government.[16] Plato's denunciation of democracy as 'the rule of the people' still reverberates in current thinking about democracy and in the search for ways to have at least the most competent people play a dominant role in democracy. In contemporary consensus democracy, these are the experts of the conference-room culture.

Mass democracy – The political elite in a pendulum democracy is susceptible to considerably greater competition and election pressure than its counterpart in a consensus democracy. In pendulum democracy, the democratic ethos tends to 'mass democracy',[17] with a strong focus on mass dynamics, mass psychology, mass communication, and mass media, which are all of crucial importance in pendulum democracy. In order to get the pendulum to swing, or to prevent it from doing so, a political movement needs to generate mass, especially in the setting of general elections. It will not do to secure just a substantial minority of the votes: the winner takes all, and the winner needs to finish first past the post.

Once firmly in the saddle, the winning party or protagonist is not obliged to take into account minority interests as much as integrative models of democracy tend to do. The voters basically do not get another opportunity to have their say until the next general elections. Schumpeter, champion of competitive elitism, influenced by mass psychology, argued that this is only for the better as 'the electoral mass is incapable of action other than a stampede'.[18] Until election time, the citizenry is not much more than a relatively passive mass, which is monitored and influenced as a mass. Large-scale monitoring (surveying) and broad-based communication (broadcasting) are instrumental in doing so.

	Contest (Weeding out)	*Convergence* (Melting together)
Power distance (Each to their niche)	Mass democracy	Guardian democracy
Power equality (All count equally)	Protectionist democracy	Grassroots democracy

Figure 2.3 Political culture and democratic ethos

Figure 2.3 summarizes the above-mentioned democracy-related convictions and preferences into four ideal types. These can be distinguished on two dimensions:

- *Power distance or power equality?* The democratic ethos can be characterized by the notion that all count equally on a level playing field (in protectionist democracy: citizens who stand up for their own interests; in grassroots democracy: participants that have to get on with it together). Or it can be characterized by the notion that all have their own distinct responsibility (in mass democracy: leading politicians vis-à-vis the voting mass; in guardian democracy: professional agents vis-à-vis those they represent).
- *Contest or convergence?* The democratic culture can be characterized by a logic of contest and competition, choosing the one and turning down the other (in mass democracy: candidate 1 or 2; in protectionist democracy: proposition A or B). Or it can be characterized by a logic of convergence and accomodation, accepting both the one and the other (in guardian democracy: through elite collaboration; in grassroots democracy: through bottom-up consensus-building).

Democracy and societal culture

A useful framework for analysing basic types of culture is the cultural typology of the British anthropologist Mary Douglas, also known as the grid-group typology. Douglas distinguishes four basic types of partaking in social life: individualism, egalitarianism, hierarchy, and atomism.[19] These four types are of an ideal-typical kind. They relate to empirical cultural manifestations as primary colours do to real-world colour varieties, or as

primary flavours do to real-life taste sensations. In the reality of culture, hybridity is the rule: all really existing cultures are mixtures. Nevertheless, in particular cultural mixtures or hybrids, the one ideal type may be more pronounced than the other: individualism, for instance, may be the dominant flavour in the cultural cocktail of a particular community.

Douglas's four basic types of culture result from interrelating two dimensions, well known but mostly used separately in the social sciences:[20]

- *Group: me or we culture?* This dimension refers to the degree to which people's thoughts and actions are driven by their engagement in a social group. In the ideal-typical low-group culture (or me culture), the individual is defined as an autonomous being in his or her own right. In the ideal-typical high-group culture (or we culture), people are defined by their having strong solidarity with and commitment to the group.
- *Grid: roles ascribed or roles achieved?* This dimension refers to the degree to which people's thoughts and actions are driven by position-related roles, that is, role requirements specifying how people are supposed to act in certain positions. The ideal-typical low-grid culture is one of 'roles achieved': people themselves decide about the script they play out and are free and equal in doing so. The ideal-typical high-grid culture is one of 'roles ascribed': roles are allocated from the outside and are strongly specifying and guiding for people in particular social positions.

This typology of culture is fundamentally related to both previously presented typologies.[21] I should emphasize here that this is an ideal-typical relation: a relation between ideal types in the Weberian sense, to be clearly distinguished from a causal relation in the Popperian sense.[22] The latter is about a statistically significant relation in the domain of empirical phenomena; the former is about a logically argued relation in the domain of analytical constructs. When I argue that participatory democracy is cognate

	Low-group (Me culture)	*High-group* (We culture)
High-grid (Roles ascribed)	Atomism	Hierarchy
Low-grid (Roles achieved)	Individualism	Egalitarianism

Figure 2.4 Societal cultures

with egalitarianism, I am not saying that there is inevitably an empirical–causal connection between the two. The relation is logically, or, rather *socio*-logically, defined.

This is called *Wahlverwandtschaft* or elective affinity.[23] If all intervening factors are removed, one might expect, in a logical sense, that a magnet and a horseshoe will be attracted. Similarly, in a *socio*logical sense, one might expect that participatory institutions and egalitarianism, in a democratic setting, will be attracted. The attraction is mutual: the former is a favourable 'sociotope' for the latter and vice versa. To what degree and in which way such elective affinity arises in actual fact are codetermined by intervening factors. There are always laws, practical drawbacks, and other factors that operate on cultural-sociological kinship. High-quality democracy research takes such factors into account, as it does the underlying *Wahlverwandtschaften*:

Egalitarianism – On the issue of democracy, there is mutual attraction between a general culture of egalitarianism on the one hand and a radical democratic culture and a participatory model of democracy on the other.

An egalitarian conception of democracy is founded on the idea that human beings thrive in an inclusive community (high-group is preferred to low-group); that collective decision-making in such a community should be widely shared (convergence and power sharing are preferred to contest and competition following a winner-takes-all logic); and that minority interests should be integrated into decision-making processes as much as possible (integrative is preferred to aggregative in democracy).

In addition, an egalitarian conception of democracy cherishes the conviction that positions and roles should be distinctive and discriminatory as little as possible (low-grid goes before high-grid), that everyone should be able to take part in everything, irrespective of their walk in life, age, or expertise (power equality is preferred to power distance), and that all should be able to speak for themselves (direct goes before indirect in democracy). The institutions of participatory democracy – direct/self-determining and integrative/consensus-seeking – fit in well with such a culture of 'togetherness'.

Individualism – The culture of individualism has in common with egalitarianism that it favours a social structure that leaves people free. The major difference is that egalitarianism speaks the language of 'us' and individualism the language of 'me'.[24] With reference to democracy, there is elective affinity between individualism on the one hand and a protectionist democratic culture and the voter model of democracy on the other.

An individualistic interpretation of democracy centralizes the idea that the individual always takes priority over the community (low-group is preferred to high-group); that the individual should be able to choose

between substantially different alternatives that compete for support (contest is preferred to convergence; choice to cartelization); and that public decision-making should be sensitive to citizen demand, just as the market is open to consumer demand (aggregative mechanisms are preferred to integrative systems).

In addition, an individualistic conception of democracy cherishes the principle that people may do or not do as they please (low-grid goes before high-grid); that individual citizens are very well capable of making their own choices, independent of officials (power equality goes before power distance); and that self-determination in general is to be preferred to being patronized (direct goes before indirect in democracy).

Hierarchy – Focusing on democracy, there is elective affinity or *Wahlverwandtschaft* between a hierarchical culture on the one hand and a guardian democratic ethos and a consensus model of democracy on the other. Contrary to what some believe, hierarchy need not be the onset of tyranny: democracy and hierarchy may actually go together.[25]

A hierarchical conception of democracy cherishes the principle that each member of the community is embedded in a comprehensive umbrella unit (high-group goes before low-group); that this collective is kept together by solidarity, communality, and willingness to accommodate (convergence goes before competition); and that, in decision-making, the parts should be incorporated into the whole as much as possible (integrative goes before aggregative in democracy).

In addition, a hierarchical conception of democracy is founded on the idea that different roles go with different positions (high-grid is preferred to low-grid); that everyone, each according to ability and merit, has their own responsibilities within the wider group (each to their niche is preferred to all count equally); and that the system's division of labour decides who is to represent and who is to be represented (indirect is preferred to direct in democracy).

Atomism – In the domain of democracy, there is mutual attraction between an atomistic culture on the one hand and a mass democratic ethos and a pendulum model of democracy on the other.[26]

An atomistic interpretation of democracy is founded on the idea that each individual is a singular unit in a field of other discrete individuals (low-group goes before high-group); that each individual must fend for himself rather than appeal to others (it is win or lose, competing rather than melting together); that, in decision-making, it is the biggest that carries away the spoils (the winner takes all); and that the little ones draw the short straw until they themselves can gain enough mass to win the game (aggregative goes before integrative in democracy).

In addition, an atomistic conception of democracy is founded on the principle that responsibilities in the public domain differ according to position and ability (high-grid goes before low-grid), that not everyone can take part or be involved in everything (each to their niche goes before all count equally), and that some have the role and the position to govern while others do not (indirect goes before direct in democracy). This is considered 'normal' in this context, just as hierarchical, individualistic, or egalitarian relations are considered 'natural' in other cultural settings.

Atomism can take perverse forms: alienation is a common excrescence of atomism, just like anomie is an outgrowth of individualism, tyranny of hierarchy, and totalitarianism of egalitarianism. However, it also has rather mundane, prosaic expressions: see Putnam's *Bowling Alone* for an account of atomistic tendencies in everyday American life.[27] Everyday kinds of atomism are not inherently 'worse' – more undesirable or more inhuman – than everyday kinds of hierarchy, egalitarianism, or individualism. What kind of culture-free meta-norm could vindicate such a judgement?

Citizenship and democracy

Having dealt with the relatively invisible foundations underlying democracy, I will now get round to the more visible expressions of democracy: styles of citizenship and styles of leadership; the *modi operandi* that are expressed in the public domain. I will give a rough outline here and elaborate on styles of citizenship and leadership in the four chapters in Part II.

Democratic citizenship is a classic concept, which still takes pride of place in contemporary debates on democracy. The key question here is: what role do citizens play in democracy? Common answers position themselves on two dimensions:

- *Spectator or player*? Citizens can be primarily spectators in an audience democracy, watching a play in which they themselves are involved only at certain intervals, in general elections, as befits indirect democracy. Or they can be on stage as leading players in the game, in initiatives, referendums, or assembly votations, as befits direct democracy.
- *Voter or speaker*? Citizens can be voters in an electorate, (s)electors who wield red pencils, push buttons, or raise hands in certain quantities, after which a numerical addition is made, as befits aggregative democracy. Or they can be actors who, together with others, have a speaking part in a more loquacious and dialogical process of conferring, as befits integrative democracy.

	Voter ((S)electing)	*Speaker* (Conferring)
Spectator (In the audience)	Spectator/voter	Spectator/speaker
Player (On the stage)	Player/voter	Player/speaker

Figure 2.5 Citizenship styles

In ideal-typical terms, matching our four models of democracy, we then distinguish four styles of citizenship:

Spectator/voter – In a pendulum democracy, citizens are mainly spectators/voters: watchers who (s)elect. The essential act of voting takes place periodically in general elections, whose preparations, results, and effects are followed by citizens as spectators, as a mass audience, through the mass media. The citizens' watching and voting are not without significance, as spectator views and assessments have a reinforced effect on the political landscape through the logic of majoritarian elections. Mood swings may lead to swings of the pendulum at general elections, which can cause landslides in the parliamentary and executive landscape.

Spectator/speaker – In a consensus democracy, citizens do not play such a prominent role as (s)electors. Elections are less selective than in pendulum democracy. Voting is less decisive than conferring, and such conferring mainly takes place between guardians, who will selectively contact citizens as spectators/speakers. Participation and consultation, though part and parcel of a consensus democracy, generally only reach a limited section of citizens (sometimes called 'professional consultees'). Large sections of citizens watch from a distance how others – governors and conference-culture professionals – arrange their business together.

Player/speaker – In a participatory democracy, characterized by high expectations regarding citizenship, citizens are expected to be crucial as players/speakers. This type of democracy cherishes the idea of active citizen participation, which includes joint policy preparation and deliberation as well as hands-on interaction and cooperating in the stages of policy implementation. Making your voice heard, in this type of democracy, clearly involves more than just speaking out and certainly more than just voting. It is contributing to a play in which everyone is considered a crucial and equal actor.

Player/voter – In a voter democracy, citizens also make their voice clearly heard, not so much as meeting-room discussants but rather as (s)electors in comparatively straightforward and efficient votations on matters of public interest. These may be larger-scale referendums but also smaller-scale assembly votations. Citizens do not vote on 'do you want this party or this politician?' (as in representative democracy) but on 'do you want this concrete policy alternative?' Yes or no? In putting such plebiscites on the agenda, organizing them, and in canvassing and mobilizing sufficient votes for proposals, citizens take an active part as players, hence player-voters.

Leadership and democracy

Democratic leadership is a substantial and, for some, charged concept. Here, it means nothing more than 'taking the lead in democracy'. Leadership roles can be outlined on two dimensions:

- *Protagonist or facilitator.* The one in the lead may act as the head (wo)man or 'bigwig' that epitomizes a particular political movement or alignment, as befits indirect democracy. Or he or she may be the chief supporter of players who, in principle, play their own game in the public domain, as befits direct democracy.
- *Bridge-builder or prizefighter.* The one in the lead may act as a moderator or intermediary in a communicative process that requires different voices to be harmonized, as befits integrative democracy. Or he or she may act as a 'prizefighter', focused on winning (and certainly not losing!) a highly competitive game that will inevitably lead to 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down', as befits aggregative democracy.

In an ideal-typical sense, four leadership styles emerge.

Gladiator – Leadership is written with a capital L in pendulum democracy. In this type of democracy – indirect and aggregative – the one in the lead is the chief protagonist of a particular movement or party that must canvass massive voter support in general elections in a winner-takes-all setting. It is crucial in a pendulum democracy that elections are won, as the loser takes nothing home in this model. There are no second prizes here; only the first prize counts, and it counts for a lot. The ability to win the general public over, to swing votes when it comes to it, is an important leadership quality in this type of democracy. A successful leader is usually a powerful mass medium here, effective in winning over and binding large crowds of people

	Prizefighter (Winning over)	*Bridge-builder* (Tying together)
Protagonist (Deciding)	Gladiator	Regent
Facilitator (Supporting)	Advocate	Coach

Figure 2.6 Leadership styles

to his or her person. Leadership in a pendulum democracy is a tight match. Fighting like a gladiator in the public arena, it is about losing or winning all, about (political) death or laurels, thumbs up or thumbs down.

Regent – In consensus democracy, leadership is a less expressive and less combative affair. Elections are not quite as decisive and heated as in pendulum democracy. But acting as the protagonist of a particular party or social movement is still a significant leadership quality here too. This is true before elections – typically multi-party contests – but it certainly continues to be true after elections, when the institutions of consensus democracy go at full blast. Between the black of losing and the white of winning elections, there is a whole range of greys in a consensus democracy. A front man or woman who fails to deliver in the elections may still become an important player in a coalition cabinet, or prove to be worth his or her salt as someone who contributes to 'keeping things together'. A leader in a consensus democracy is someone who helps to build bridges for and on behalf of others and thus contributes to political peace-keeping.

Coach – In a participatory democracy, 'leadership' tends to be written in quotation marks and in lower case. High expectations of active citizenship go together with low expectations of decisive leadership. Someone who takes the lead in this type of democracy acts as a coach more than anything else: someone offering support and inspiration, aware that the real game is up to others. Occasionally, if the coach possesses exceptional virtues, he or she is set apart as a shining example, as a guru or great master. Usually, however, the coach is no more than the *primus inter pares*: the chief facilitator and bridge-builder among his or her equals, who contribute to bridge-building and support processes in equal measure.

Advocate – In a voter democracy, the one who takes the lead is more like an advocate, someone who, on behalf of others, must swing win-or-lose decision-making processes. Winning a sovereign citizenry over in assembly

votations or referendums on issues, or in citizen initiatives and petitions leading up to these: these are the things that persons need to be good at if they wish to be frontmen or women in a voter democracy. They need to possess a subtle combination of putting up a convincing personal performance (influencing votations in favour of a particular position) and of offering support to others (facilitating movement from the bottom up). Just like a legal counsellor must manage to persuade independent men and women in the jury box, and must assist autonomous clients, an advocate in the public domain must be effective in winning over free, self-steering individuals.

From theory to practice

In the following, attention will shift from the theory to the practice of democracy, in which leadership and citizenship are concretely expressed. Theory will not vanish. Prominent authors and works on democracy will be given ample attention, albeit strictly in relation to tried and tested models of democracy. So I will not start from (canonical) text a, b, c or (classic) thinker x, y, z, but from pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, voter democracy, and participatory democracy. These are the models that shape democracy as a vital practice.

Using these models, or ideal types, as analytical lenses I will, in the next part of this book, trace important authors, such as the ones that are

Expressions of models	*In the world of democracy*	*In the literature on democracy*
Pendulum democracy	E.g. in the UK, the Commonwealth, the US, Latin America, 'Latin Europe'	E.g. in Burke, Weber, Schumpeter Berelson, Sartori
Consensus democracy	E.g. the Low Countries, the Alpine Countries, Scandinavia, the EU	E.g. in Daalder, Lijphart, Huyse, Lehmbruch, Steiner, Pedersen
Voter democracy	E.g. in Switzerland, the US, particularly New England, California	E.g. in Jefferson, Hayek, Nozick Ostrom, Kriesi, Möckli
Participatory democracy	E.g. in Athens, Porto Allegre, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Chicago	E.g. in Rousseau, Proudhon, Pateman, Habermas, Dryzek

Figure 2.7 Expressions of democratic models dealt with in Part II

mentioned in Figure 2.7. Mentioned in this figure are also examples of places – countries, regions, and towns – where elements of the various models of democracy can be found. These places, and others, will be dealt with at length in the chapters of Part II. There, it will transpire that real and existing systems of democracy – especially the large-scale systems – often display elements of more than one model, even when a particular model of democracy strikes the eye.

Part II

Practices

Tested Democracy

This part of the book shows how the four models of democracy distinguished in the previous chapters work out in real life. Just as a few primary colours allow us to produce a variegated palette of colours, a few basic types of democracy – pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, voter democracy, and participatory democracy – allow us to represent a wide range of democratic practices. In the next few chapters, I will sketch the main colours and variations of the four basic models, together with the opportunities and limitations in the fields of leadership, citizenship, and good governance.

The distinction between pendulum democracy (Chapter 3) and consensus democracy (Chapter 4) follows on from Lijphart's distinction between Westminster democracy and consensus democracy but also goes beyond it. Lijphart's distinction is geared towards the formal democracy at the level of the national state. In pendulum democracy and consensus democracy as these have been conceptualized in the present study, informal, subnational, and parastatal institutions have also been taken into account. In Chapter 3, for example, we will be looking 'Beyond Westminster and Whitehall' when we explore pendulum democracy in the United Kingdom.[1] In Chapter 4, exploring consensus democracy in, for instance, the Low Countries, we will be looking 'beyond the State directory'.[2]

By adding voter democracy (Chapter 5) and participatory democracy (Chapter 6), our palette of colours allows us to paint with greater range and richness.[3] Without these models, we can understand neither major debates nor interesting expressions of democracy, such as expressions of voter democracy in Switzerland and California, or participatory democracy in Brazilian and Dutch metropolitan areas. If we wish to see more than just the umbrella institutions of representative democracy – and we do – these models of democracy must not be overlooked.

3

Pendulum Democracy

The Winner Takes All

At the bottom of all the tributes paid to democracy is the little man, walking into the little booth, with a little pencil, making a little cross on a little bit of paper . . .

Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister[1]

Introduction

Pendulum democracy institutionalizes – mobilizes and sustains – a movement that resembles a pendulum motion: now the pendulum swings to the left, now it swings to the right. Politico-administrative power follows the movement of the pendulum, and the pendulum follows the movement of the electorate. The winner of the last elections gets everything: 'the winner takes all' is the name of the game. If you manage to get a decent enough number of votes in your constituency but fewer than your competitor, you will be left empty-handed. If you get a substantial number of seats in Parliament, or electors in an electoral college, but not the majority, you will have little say in government. This is accepted because the pendulum swings to and fro: now this political party benefits from pendulum democracy, now, after a reverse electoral landslide, the other one may benefit.

Behind all this is the man referred to by Churchill in the above quotation: 'the little man' who, with a simple movement of his hand in the voting booth, can bring about landslides. That is, if he does so simultaneously with a sufficient number of other people in a general election. Under this condition, the electorate can make waves in pendulum democracy with a power that is unavailable to the electorate in consensus democracy. However, in

the period between elections and if they have less than a majority, citizens in pendulum democracy have far greater difficulty to enforce movement.

Westminster as cradle of democracy

With the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the English Parliament gained the upper hand in its struggle with the monarchy, which gave rise to the myth of Westminster being the cradle of democracy. As a centre of parliamentary sovereignty, in any case, Westminster is a powerful symbol of pendulum democracy. We can safely call Westminster democracy an archetype of pendulum democracy as well as its best-known operationalization.

In *Patterns of Democracy*, Lijphart describes the democratic structure of Westminster democracy at the national level of the state.[2] Below, we will see that the democratic logic underlying Westminster democracy – indirect and majoritarian – is more far-reaching than the formal structures at the macro-level. Nevertheless, we will start here with Lijphart's ten-point typology of Westminster democracy:

- *concentration of executive power in one-party and bare-majority cabinets*;
- *cabinet dominance in monistic relations* between parliament and cabinet; the *front bench* of the majority party rules;
- a *two-party system*, with one party in power and the other in opposition; dichotomy of government and opposition;
- a *majoritarian, district-based, disproportional electoral system*; the electorate divided into *constituencies*;
- a *pluralist* interest group system with free-for-all competition; uncoordinated and competitive; every interest group for itself;
- *centralized and unitary* government; a centralized unitary state; one and undivided;
- *unbalanced or absent bicameralism*; concentration of legislative power in one chamber of Parliament;
- *constitutional flexibility*; an 'unwritten constitution'; constitutional rule-making in the hands of simple majorities;
- *parliamentary sovereignty*; absence of external judicial review; legislatures have the final word on the constitutionality of their own legislation;
- a *central bank dependent on the executive*; no independent central bank.

The first five points make up the *executives-parties dimension*, pertaining to the political and party-political power configuration and the organization of the executive branch at the national level. The last five points make up the *federal-*

unitary dimension, pertaining to the organization of power beyond the centre of government. Concentration and centralization of power are the dominant characteristics of Westminster democracy. Power is considered a value that cannot be shared very well: 'to share it is to lose it, to divide it is to diminish it, and in doing so, to diminish its holders,' Marquand wrote.[3]

The British archetype

Between 1945 and 1970, the United Kingdom fitted the Westminster model to a T. The politico-administrative power in this period was clearly concentrated and centralized in 'Westminster', or rather in the one party – sometimes Labour, other times Conservative – that had won the most seats in the House of Commons in the last general elections. In one period, the pendulum would swing to the left, and, in the next period, it would swing to the right. As politics and policies followed this pendulum motion, several policy areas also exhibited U-turns and zigzags.[4]

Democracy in the United Kingdom was set up in such a way that the national government, the front bench of the majority party in Parliament, had full control of the reins until the next elections. The back bench was made to toe the line by way of party discipline. There was no need to compromise with any other parties in the House of Commons, nor did the government MPs in the House of Commons have much political thrust and parry to fear from the House of Lords. The same went for subnational government. There was no regional government. Local government remained firmly within the bounds of its own compartment in the Dual Polity, well aware that it lacked constitutional protection against simple majority decisions made in Westminster. The constitutional acceptability of legislation was assessed by a Parliamentary majority, not by a body such as an independent constitutional court.

State and society

If we distinguish between the internal state structure (within-state relations) and the external state structure (relations between state and society),[5] we find that nine out of ten of Lijphart's points relate to the internal state structure. The institutionalized relations between the state and society only surface at point no. 5. Nevertheless, the majoritarian-indirect logic of Westminster democracy also has quite a forceful effect on the external state structure.

Leaders in Westminster democracy need to take into account other parties in the social domain (interest groups and citizens) a little more than other parties in the politico-administrative system, but, compared to leaders in many other countries, they have a fair amount of freedom of action. There is comparatively ample scope for 'unnegotiable policy', as Page calls it.[6] The multitude of independently operating agents in the pluralist system of interest groups are more amenable to strategic manipulation than are the more clustered and more organized set of 'social partners' that governments in a corporatist system are up against.

In Westminster democracy of an unadulterated kind, individual citizens are not invited to be partners in government. The unwritten though institutionalized duty of the government – which was particularly evident in the period specified above – is to govern. In between general elections, the government is expected to take up the reins, but, during general elections, voters may crack the whip: losing elections and yet taking part in government, as in some other countries, is out of the question here. Elections need to be won, or else the pendulum will swing the other way, dragging the entire government system in its wake.

Westminster remains Westminster

After 1970, the features of the Westminster model have remained dominant in the United Kingdom, while its prototypical character has been somewhat eroded by developments such as the – long overdue – devolution of executive power to Scotland and Wales, the – reluctant – regionalization on English territory, the – timid – growth of several smaller parties, and its – hesitant – joining the European Union, all of which have implicitly eroded the sovereignty of Parliament. Despite these institutional adjustments, the United Kingdom has remained very clearly classifiable as falling within the Westminster category of democracies.[7] Other countries, especially those that were under British influence at some point, also show a propensity for Westminster democracy, as do New Zealand, Canada, Australia, and most former British colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean.[8]

Looking at the Westminster model at election time, we can appreciate Churchill's awe for 'the little man, walking into the little booth, with a little pencil, making a little cross on a little bit of paper': in a Westminster democracy, this little cross may have far-reaching consequences. In the inter-election period, on the other hand, we may appreciate Lord Hailsham's typification of British democracy as an 'elective dictatorship',

enlightened or not,[9] with the historical character of Churchill and his own enlightened-despotic political performance serving as a case in point.

Despite his commanding performance during World War II, the sum total of all 'little crosses' failed to keep Churchill in the saddle shortly after the war. This is often interpreted as a token of the power of Westminster democracy: the system makes it possible to get the right man in the right place fairly quickly and invest in him all the concentrated power that comes with the position. But the system also allows people to distinguish between – in this case – a wartime democracy and a peacetime democracy and the different types of political leadership these require. An aggregate of 'little crosses' can put a great deal of power into a small number of hands, but it can also take such power away and redistribute it in the very same way.

Owing to these kinds of interpretations – the political office is powerful, but so is the ballot box – Westminster democracy has always enjoyed a firm reputation of being the 'cradle of democracy'. Though his research would eventually take him in a different direction, Lijphart started out his life-long investigation of democracy in the 1950s with the conviction that the British Westminster democracy was indeed superior to the non-majoritarian representative democracy he was familiar with from the continental Rhineland, including the Netherlands, the country of his birth. Patent power in clear structures: this is what many of his contemporaries in Europe and certainly in the US considered to be ideal. District-based elections that, with a winner-takes-all logic, have a powerful effect on political representation and decision-making: this remains the ideal guiding many democratic reformers.

State and place

In the debate introducing this study, one of the characters in search of democracy quotes Edmund Burke's famous words addressed to the Bristol voters and, beyond them, to those elected on behalf of Bristol. The message is clear: voters select their representatives, who then have to accept their own responsibility for the whole, just as voters have to take their own responsibility in another way. There is assumed to be a functional gap between the electorate and the elected.[10] Representatives not only get a much-coveted seat but must also accept the solemn duty to defend the interests of the nation as a whole, at least until the next elections arrive.

What goes for the nation or state also goes for the town or place governed by local representatives. In *Second City Politics* by Kenneth Newton, a study of post-war local democracy in Birmingham, Burke's conception of

democracy figures as a prominent guiding concept to local politicians.[11] As in other British towns and cities,[12] local politics in Birmingham is controlled by one of two dominant parties in the council: Labour or the Conservatives, which have often been in power in turns in the post-war period, with the pendulum swinging now towards the Conservatives, now towards Labour. The third party, the Liberal Democrats, has never been able to gather sufficient mass to claim executive power. In contrast to the Netherlands, for example, it is not customary for those who lose the elections to be given a (small) part to play in government anyway.

Government of post-war Birmingham takes place through council committees, which operate in a sector-based way and are fused with civil service departments. The Public Works Committee, for instance, is a symbiotic unit with the Public Works Department. The Committee Chairman is in charge, closely assisted by the civil service head. Supra-sectoral institutions, which might promote a certain degree of power sharing or fusion of responsibilities, are weakly developed. There is no such thing as a collegial board of Mayor and Aldermen. The vertical lines are much more dominant than the horizontal ones. Rather, prominently positioned above the respective Committee Chairmen is the Majority Leader, leader of the majority party in the local council and, hence, in local government.

Relations between the Committee Chairmen and the Majority Leader are characterized by the idea that separate responsibilities must not be mixed, unless there are special grounds for doing so. Each is in charge of his own domain. The same goes for the relation between local and national government: each has its own compartment in the Dual Polity in which they call the shots. The local council controls its own territory. There is no tradition of neighbourhood councils or 'sub-municipalities' sharing power with the local council. The so-called Constituency Committees, established in ten city districts in 2006, are not to be understood as sub-municipalities but as a subdivision of the city council, assembling the local councillors elected in the various electoral districts. When citizens are approached, they tend to be approached as individual citizens, individual voters, and individual service-users. The interest-group system is fragmented and pluralistic. There is no such thing as 'local corporatism'.[13]

Pendulum democracy at the local level

Abstracting from specificities, we can break down pendulum democracy at the local level into ten general characteristics as well:[14]

- *concentration of executive power in one-party local government* supported by a simple local council majority;
- *executive dominance in monistic relations* between local council and government;
- a *two-party system*, with one party in government and the other in opposition; dichotomy of government and opposition;
- a *majoritarian, district-based, disproportional electoral system*; local districts as *constituencies*;
- a *pluralist* interest group system with free-for-all competition; uncoordinated and competitive; every interest group for itself;
- *centralized and unitary* local government; weak sub-local institutions and strong central institutions; 'consolidated corporation', one and undivided;
- *concentration of regulatory powers*; local government along the vertical lines of council committees and related sectorial bureaucracies;
- *home rule*; strong sense of local autonomy, weak sense of co-government;
- *limited legal-administrative supervision*; preventive and repressive tutelage weakly developed;
- *financial-economic auditing under local government control*; independent local auditing weakly developed.

The translation of the *executives-parties dimension* – the first five points – from the national to the local level is pretty straightforward; these five points have been explained above. Translation of the *federal-unitary dimension* requires a little more pliancy. The basic question here is whether the governmental relations resemble those of a decentralized federation, involving a great deal of power spreading and sharing, as well as checks and balances; or whether they rather resemble those of a centralized unitary state, involving little of the former but a great deal of 'home rule', local autonomy, and concentration of regulatory powers, combined with few 'autonomous nosy parkers', such as independent financial-economic auditing and independent legal-administrative supervision.

Politics and administration

Democratic decision-making is channelled not by political leaders and parliamentarians only but also in considerable measure by administrators and civil servants. Complementing the Westminster model, referring to the British parliamentary centre, there is such a thing as the 'Whitehall model',

referring to the Whitehall departments that concretely implement democratic decision-making.

The Whitehall model complements the Westminster model. To some extent, it is also a corrective system aiming to prevent the pendulum from swinging out of bounds. If the Westminster model tends towards adversarial politics, resolute action, making U-turns, the Whitehall model tends rather towards selective interventionism, incrementalism, and appeasement of powerful, established interest groups.[15]

In the United Kingdom, the government is strong in theory, but this is not to say that this power is always operationalized in practice. The United Kingdom has a potentially powerful state, which, however, is also a relatively 'minimal state'. In contrast with some continental countries, the UK does not have a highly developed state tradition.[16] Many aspects of the private domain are beyond the compass of the government. Many private interests may bank on lenient treatment. In specific areas, however, which do fall within the government's remit, it has ways and means to act with strength and resolve.

The government, in sum, can show determination in resisting interventionism while it can act with resolve when necessary. Public policies may be presented and implemented as 'non-negotiable' if required, though such occasions do not always arise.

Variations on a theme

In the pre-1970 United Kingdom, we see pendulum democracy of a rather unadulterated kind. Besides this special case, however, there are many cases where the addition of different elements has produced special hybrids and specific versions of pendulum democracy.

British accents

The British democratic tradition has been very influential in countries that used to come within the British sphere of influence, such as New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the United States.[17] These countries have also developed accents of their own. New Zealand comes closest to the ideal-typical Westminster model; in the 1990s, it even came to be known as the country that out-Westminstered the United Kingdom.[18] The United States, Canada, and Australia are typified by Lijphart as mixed models with more hybrid manifestations of Westminster democracy. On the executives-parties

dimension, these countries tend towards the pendulum model, but on the federal-unitary dimension, on the contrary, they deviate from the unitary and relatively centralist pattern that is salient in countries like the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

An interesting combination of models is found in the United States. Owing to the relatively strong delegation of power and its relatively activist civic culture, the United States will also feature prominently in a later chapter, the one on voter democracy (majoritarian and direct). At the same time, the logic of pendulum democracy (majoritarian and indirect) also finds strong expression in the US, albeit in a model of *strong presidentialism* rather than in a model of *strong parliamentarism* as practised in Westminster. The former model puts a strong President in a position of prominence in the White House; the latter model puts a strong Prime Minister in a position of prominence in the House of Commons. Both models share the presupposition that the concentration of power into the hands of a single person and a single party makes for unambiguous and resolute government.[19]

Latin accents

A penchant for concentrating power in the hands of one person or one party also characterizes democracy in countries that fall within the Latin rather than the British sphere of influence, for example the presidential systems in countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, and Costa Rica. In Lijphart's binary schedule, they incline towards the category of Westminster democracy. The same goes, to an even higher degree, for the presidential systems of Greece and France. These systems are also called 'delegative democracies': the people elect the president, and the president, once he has been elected by the people, finds a significant degree of power concentrated in his office. Critics of the Latin approach pejoratively call this a '*caudillo* model', a populist kind of democracy in which, once every few years, the masses get to vote a ruler, who can do as he pleases until the next elections.

It may at first seem surprising to find France in a position quite close to that of the United Kingdom, but this may seem less curious if one takes into consideration the strong centralization of the French administrative system and the French state tradition, where, just like the British, few intermediaries are recognized – either corporatist or consociational – in the space between the state and the citizen. It would be stretching things to call France a Westminster democracy – symbolically quite challenging – but it would be quite unobjectionable to say that monocentric leadership,

concentration of power, and centralization of power have been institutionalized in the French democracy at least as solidly as in the British system.

Leadership in pendulum democracy

In pendulum democracy, leadership is written with a capital L. The embarrassment about the 'L-word' that one encounters in some Northern European countries is much more subdued in pendulum democracies. In Anglo-American culture, a common backdrop of pendulum democracy, leadership is a positive term. In pendulum democracy, leadership is simply expected of anyone wishing to move into the forefront of the political system. Election time is exciting: in a winner-takes-all system, it is about winning or losing, laurels or death in the election arena; you need to be an effective 'gladiator' to survive. And when you have succeeded as an electioneer, you then need to make sure you live up to expectations.

As we have seen, pendulum democracy puts a lot of power into the hands of a few. But it comes at a price: those few must then show that they are worthy of the power invested in them, that they are equal to it, and that they will wield it for the general good. If they are unable to do so, the next elections might prove to be lethal for them. Taking refuge behind joint responsibilities is not appreciated. Its opposite, taking and showing responsibility, is much esteemed. Giuliani, the former mayor of New York, renowned for his strong leadership after 9/11 and well known for his zero-tolerance policy on crime, had a sign on his desk saying 'the buck stops here'. In his book called *Leadership*, he explains all without any embarrassment.[20] Giuliani's leadership style was supported by political institutions that, in the main, tend towards the pendulum model as outlined above.[21]

As said before, the political institutions of a major English city like Birmingham are a perfect fit for the expressions of the pendulum model. Centralization and concentration of power have been institutionalized and cultivated in a long tradition of powerful political leadership. Majority leaders in the local council typically do not tend to conceal themselves. Harry Watton, for example, one of the best-known post-war majority leaders, had nicknames that said it all: 'the boss', 'the führer', 'the Caesar of Birmingham'.[22] 'He believed in giving a lead and was highly contemptuous of the growing fashion for "grass-roots" participation in the 1960s,' Sutcliffe wrote.[23] The grassroots never had much of a chance anyway, partly owing to the institutionalized leadership culture, partly owing to the associated citizenship culture (see the next section).

The national level also clearly manifests a leadership culture that befits pendulum democracy, as exemplified by Tony Blair, who was the British Prime Minister from 1997 until 2007.[24] With a number of constitutional reforms, supporting, among other things, the regionalization trend, Labour leader Tony Blair slightly toned down the Westminster nature of British democracy while preserving the dominant logic of pendulum democracy. More than anyone else, Prime Minister Blair grasped the fact that a political leader in a pendulum democracy must be, to all intents and purposes, a mass medium that is effective in mobilizing mass forces to propel its own movement: the pendulum must be swung one's own way with some vigour to prevent it from swinging the other way. As elections are never far off, governors need to keep an eye on pointers that foreshadow election results. Opinion polls and popularity polls have everyone's interest. Any way to positively impact such polls will be seized, by calling in spin doctors, for instance, who specialize in massaging the mass media.

All countries with free elections and free media – old and new – show tendencies towards 'mediacracy', but the rise of spin doctoring is the most pronounced in countries that tend towards pendulum democracy, particularly on the executives-parties dimension. The United Kingdom is a case in point, but the same is true for the United States, which tends towards majoritarian democracy on the executives-parties dimension.[25] Strong one-party presidentialism (as in the US) and strong one-party parliamentarism (as in the UK) share the expectation that concentration of power into the hands of a single party or a single person will produce responsive and resolute government. Voters expect their leaders to live up to this expectation, or else they will use their 'little pencil' to give the pendulum of the political system a jolly good wallop in the next elections. Political leaders must pull out all the stops to restrain the pendulum's moving the wrong way. Whenever the pendulum threatens to do so, it is the spin doctors' duty to prevent critical mass from developing behind this movement. This requires strategic reinterpretation and politically intelligent use of ideas from mass communication and mass psychology.

Citizenship in pendulum democracy

In pendulum democracy, citizens act as voter-spectators. The voting itself is limited to periodic general elections, whose preparation, denouement, and effect are watched by citizens as spectators, in particular via the mass media.

Pendulum democracy, therefore, is also a manifestation of 'spectator democracy', or 'audience democracy' as Manin calls it.[26]

For many, this term 'spectator democracy' has negative connotations of citizens just sitting and watching, preferably in front of the telly with a bag of crisps – that type of image, consonant with Barber's depiction of mass society in 'McWorld'.[27] Democratic theory, however, also gives us another picture of spectator democracy, as in the classic *The Civic Culture* by Almond and Verba.[28] They described the British civic culture of old as a 'deferential civic culture', underlying an extremely stable democracy. Average British citizens were loyal to the system, had confidence in politics, regarded those placed above them with some respect, and were moderately forthright in making demands. Although, on average, the British were confident about their options and skills for political participation, many decided not to do so in practice and tended to adopt an onlooking, expectant, and docile attitude, not out of fear so much as out of trust. In general elections, they made their voices heard, and in between general elections they observed from some distance whether the elected politicians were up to the trust and the considerable power they had been granted. The next elections would then be the moment of reckoning.

Almond and Verba noted that a stable and stabilizing civic culture is one in which a fundamental attitude of loyalty to the system and to the authorities brought forth by the system is linked to an activity pattern in which passive and active political orientations – deference and participation – balance one another out. They perceive such a balance in the British civic culture, with a little more deference mixed into the blend, and in the American civic culture, with a greater dash of participation going into the mixture. Despite these different blends, in both cases the civic culture is supported by citizens who know they can be active but are aware at the same time that they cannot be active anytime, anywhere, and all at once. This would overtax the political system and make it ungovernable, and, at the end of the day, untenable, Almond and Verba wrote. Therefore, they considered a certain measure of restraint, or, in other words, a certain measure of spectator democracy, a necessity for a stable democracy.

Research for *The Civic Culture* was conducted in the late 1950s. Since that time some feel that the political culture has tipped towards relatively passive kinds of spectator behaviour. If the civic culture used to be able to bank on the 'informed citizen', the current political system has to make do with the 'monitorial citizen',[29] who informs him- or herself of public affairs only very selectively if these matter to him or her. The consequence is a pattern of 'sporadic interventionism', with the role of citizens increasingly

resembling that of the choir in a Greek tragedy: they are on stage, they watch the plot unfolding, they lament the drama, but they do not participate in the play – all in all a rather fatalistic pattern of behaviour, according to Hood.[30]

Some critics regard these selectively onlooking citizens as an all too easy prey for spin doctors, as subjects of mass media in a mass democracy that offer too little resistance. Such critics often advocate adding elements of direct democracy to redress citizen docility. Subsequent chapters will show that adding such elements to the civic culture has happened more in the US than in the UK. Others oppose such measures, arguing that a division of tasks and a considerable distance between voting citizens and governing politicians are part of the fabric of democracy.

In democratic theory, this view is supported most clearly by authors such as Weber, Schumpeter, Dahl, Sartori, and Berelson. Weber argues that in mass society, direct democracy is simply not feasible; the problems of mass citizenship in modern society require above all competent democratic leaderhip at the apex of a higly selective – 'competitive-elitist' – type of representative democracy.[31] Following up on Weber, Schumpeter argues that voters should be well aware 'that once they have elected an individual, political action is his business and not theirs.'[32] According to Dahl, the driving force in a realistic version of democracy (which he prefers to call a 'polyarchy') should be 'competing minorities', and, according to Sartori, it should be the even more select 'competing elites'. 'The people must react, they do not act,' Sartori writes; political leadership is crucial, and civic apathy is no one's 'fault' nor need it be redressed. We must stop longing for direct democracy, Sartori says. Limited participation, disinterest, and apathy have a positive effect on the stability of democracy. They soften the 'shock of disagreement', Berelson et al. agree.[33]

Discussion: commendation and criticism

Pendulum democracy has received many commendations. There has always been great acclamation for its clarity and decisiveness. Responsibilities are clearly demarcated and allocated, and the required means are always placed into one pair of hands as far as possible. Each government knows what it must set out to do, and each government has a clear voter mandate. The voting system produces elections that 'really matter'. Politicians must do their utmost to get the pendulum to swing their way. Simply following in the party leader's slipstream, common enough in consensus democracies, is

just not good enough. Representatives must know their constituency well and represent it with the largest majority in order to emerge as the victor.

Doing the numbers in pendulum democracy is straightforward and distinct: it is either win all or lose all. This clear-cut zero-sum culture gives politicians and governors an additional impetus to be fully concentrated and focused and to do their utmost at all times. If a large majority of voters is out to have a major political spring-cleaning operation, an all-out changing of the guard, pendulum democracy offers full scope for doing so. If a large majority of voters wishes to topple a party leader, it can do so. Getting poor election results and taking part in government anyway – insulting the voter, as some will say – is impossible in pendulum democracy. In this sense, this chapter has evinced many commendations and legitimations of pendulum democracy.

All this, however, is counterbalanced by criticisms and objections. Once upon a time, Lijphart commenced his study of democracy with the conviction that the majoritarian type of Westminster democracy was superior, but little of this conviction remains in his latest work. First of all, he had to let go of the idea that majoritarian democracy is superior to consensus democracy in terms of government performance, as in maintaining public order and managing the national economy. In both these areas, majoritarian democracy is not doing better, but rather slightly worse, than consensus democracy in his comparison of 36 democracies.[34]

In addition, he argues that the quality of representative democracy in the Westminster model is inferior to that in the consensus model. Perhaps citizens have a real choice in pendulum democracy, but they also risk losing a great deal. Votes for the non-winning party are wasted. Representatives outside the dichotomous party setting do not stand much of a chance. If the majority rule is applied twice – first in the constituencies and then in the legislature – this may lead to quite the opposite of majority government: undemocratic minority government. In a relatively homogeneous society, this may perhaps be viable, but for a plural society it will be disastrous, as corroborated, for example, by the plural societies of West Africa.[35]

Finally, Lijphart concludes from his comparison of countries that majoritarian democracies are less 'kind and gentle' in terms of protecting the vulnerable interests of the natural environment and the social system, at home and abroad. Follow-up studies, by Roller and by Norris among others,[36] replicate and largely confirm Lijphart's conclusion that majoritarian, power-centralizing and -concentrating democracy does not present the functionally superior system that others have made of it.

What weight these objections carry depends largely on one's perspective on the issue.[37] Kindness and gentleness are not uncontested criteria for a democratic system. Pendulum democracy, with its clear-cut, eat-or-be-eaten, winner-takes-all approach, is, on the whole, a tougher system, but from certain cultural perspectives this will be approved or even appreciated. The same goes for some of the points Lijphart considers crucial for the quality of democratic representation, such as the representation of women, as well as political and economic equality. These are valuable issues to many but not at any cost to all. Some will admit a certain degree of inequality in the results as the drawback of a system that, in a tough and straightforward way, offers equal opportunity to all. Besides, political battle has not only an instrumental dimension but also an expressive one. Many people's preference for pendulum democracy is also founded on the beauty of the game, the race, the suspense.

The quality of democracy is, to some extent, in the eye of the beholder. This makes it interesting to take a look at the level of citizen satisfaction with democracy. As we do so, it turns out that citizens in Westminster-type democracies are significantly less satisfied with the performance of their democracy than citizens in consensus democracies.[38] In Westminster democracies, moreover, there is also a considerable satisfaction gap between those on the winning and those on the losing side of the democratic process.[39]

Supporters of pendulum democracy will take this latter point – the difference between winners and losers – as being all in the game; however, the former point – lower citizen satisfaction – should really make them sit up and take notice. Wasn't concrete achievement and decisiveness precisely what was supposed to make Westminster democracy superior? Lijphart argues that Westminster democracies are indeed faster and more decisive in decision-making: but fast decisions are not necessarily wise decisions. He gives the example of the poll tax, swiftly introduced by Prime Minister Thatcher and just as speedily declared a fiasco. Successful policies, especially economic ones, do not require a strong hand so much as a steady one. And a steady hand is not the forte of a system that is based on pendulum motion.

Lessons: strengths and weaknesses

There is a well-known schedule in which core 'qualities' are contrasted with their related 'allergies', 'pitfalls', and 'challenges'.[40] Having come to the end

Quality: decisiveness, swiftness	Pitfall: over-commitment, fixation
Allergy: indecision, inertia, vagueness	Challenge: reflection, counterweight

Figure 3.1 Pendulum democracy: qualities and drawbacks

of this chapter, we could complete such a diagram for pendulum democracy in the way shown in Figure 3.1.

To illustrate this figure, let us return to the UK city of Birmingham, whose institutionalized tendency towards pendulum democracy we had already established earlier. Entirely in line with the pendulum kind of logic, the Birmingham city centre was radically reconstructed after World War II. With a great show of strength and decisiveness, an inner ring road was built, including the comprehensive road infrastructure this involved. All this took place in the spirit of the city's motto – 'Forward' – which already has an undertone of an allergy for inertia and indecision.[41]

The city centres of quite a few European cities were actually overhauled, selectively demolished, and prepared for growing car traffic volumes, but none as fast and as extensively as Birmingham; and none was to end up in trouble sooner and more deeply. The city got caught in the classic pitfall of pendulum democracy: a surplus of decisiveness, showing itself as over-commitment to one specific problem definition and one specific problem-solving strategy. Once the city had woken up to the one-sidedness of the course it had taken, decades later than many other European cities, sweeping counter-measures were taken, with the same decisiveness and expedition, to be sure.

Reflection – the ability to reflect scrupulously on standard problem definitions and obvious problem-solving strategies – could have saved Birmingham a lot of money, trouble, and aggravation a lot sooner. However, reflection is not fostered by the institutions of pendulum democracy of their own accord: this requires alternative institutions to act as a counterpoise and demand checks and balances. These are not given much elbow room in pendulum democracy, as the Birmingham case shows.

Reflection could rightfully be considered a challenge, not only at the local level but also at the national level. 'My God, we have to be careful here. Before you know what is happening, the thing is carried out everywhere, in the most remote corners, and you are responsible,' said a British minister in a study by Heclo and Wildavsky,[42] who then proceed to observe: 'The Great American weakness lies in implementation. The danger in Britain is just the opposite. The government may agree all too quickly,

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Decisiveness, swiftness	Over-commitment, fixation
Clarity, lean and mean	Oversimplification
Unambiguous government	One-sided government
Sensitive to the majority	Insensitive to the minority
Electoral effect	Electoral bias, misrepresentation
Changing of the guard	Zigzagging government
Clear-cut accountability	'Throwing out the baby with the bathwater'
System of winners	System of losers

Figure 3.2 Pendulum democracy: strengths and weaknesses

before the major implications of the policy are understood or the affected interests realize what is about to happen to them, leaving all concerned agape and aghast as the machine implements the policy.'

Conclusion

The tension between decisiveness and over-commitment – between going for it and going too far – is a fundamental given in pendulum democracy. Both are potentially inherent in the model and both need to be taken into account in the practice of democracy. Beyond the fundamental tension between 'going for it' and 'going too far', there are the additional strengths and weaknesses highlighted earlier in this chapter. They have been listed in Figure 3.2.

4

Consensus Democracy

Pacification and Accommodation

For when you say . . . 'look who we have here: the boss of the Netherlands', it gives me the shivers, and it isn't down to the temperature out there. This just isn't how you feel . . .

Wim Kok, former Prime Minister of the Netherlands[1]

Introduction

Contrary to common belief, consensus democracy is based not so much on consensus but on dissensus, that is, on differences in conviction and outlook on life, differences that need to be taken on board in democracy. Consensus democracies are often rooted in divided or 'pillarized' societies. Consensus is not something that goes without saying in consensus democracy but is rather something that requires active pursuit. It involves collective effort and individual self-restraint. The representatives of different points of view must make an effort to find common ground and refrain from getting in each other's hair unnecessarily. In a deep-seated consensus democracy, people accept that this is what it takes to keep everything together. They accept that unbridgeable differences must not be politicized or inflated too much and that fords in the river – common ground – must be cherished as much as possible. This also calls for people to be open to a process of pacification and accommodation, give and take, and compromise, in which no one has it entirely their way and no one falls entirely by the wayside. This requires pliability, obligingness, and readiness to adjust in order to serve the common cause. All this, finally, requires some seclusion and some paternalism, possibly the most controversial characteristics of consensus democracy.

Consensus democracy as an alternative

Although the logic of consensus democracy goes beyond the structures of the national state in a formal sense, it is practical to launch our discussion of this type of democracy with Lijphart's ten-point typification of consensus democracy (with the contrasting Westminster democracy indicated between brackets):[2]

- *executive power sharing in broad-based coalitions* (versus concentration of power in one-party cabinets);
- *dualistic and balanced relations* between cabinet and parliament (versus cabinet dominance in monistic relations);
- *a multi-party system* with usually more than one ruling party and more than one in opposition (versus a two-party system);
- an electoral system of *proportional representation* with elections at large (versus a majoritarian, disproportional, district-based system);
- *a coordinated 'corporatist' interest group system*; institutionalized consultation with umbrella organizations (versus a pluralist interest group system);
- *decentralized and federalized government*; vertically segmented and complementary government (versus centralized and unitary, one and undivided government);
- *balanced bicameralism*; distribution of legislative power over relatively equal representative chambers (versus unbalanced or absent bicameralism);
- *constitutional rigidity*; a fixed constitution protected by qualified majority requirements; a written constitution that is hard to rewrite (versus constitutional flexibility);
- *a supreme or constitutional court* that can subject laws to *external judicial review*; legislatures do not have the final word on the constitutionality of their own legislation (versus parliamentary sovereignty);
- *a government-independent central bank* (versus a dependent central bank).

The first five points above concern the *politics-executives* dimension: the political and executive power configuration at the national level. The common denominator here is *power sharing*. The last five points concern the *federal-unitary* dimension: the power configuration beyond the administrative centre. The common denominator here is *power distribution*.

Power distribution and power sharing are institutional patterns that supplement one another in the context of consensus democracy. With power being

dispersed, governors are, as it were, institutionally condemned to each other. With power being segmental, governors are forced, as it were, to establish forms of cooperation. In consensus democracy, power is always contingent, always dependent on power that is based elsewhere. So as to be able to accomplish anything at all, you need to secure the cooperation of others, and these others are often involved in a great many matters. The Dutch system, an example of long-standing consensus democracy, was once summarized with the ominous acronym EMIE: 'Everyone Meddles In Everything'.[3]

Images from the Rhineland

Classic examples of consensus democracy are to be found in the European Rhineland, extending on one side to the Low Countries, Belgium and the Netherlands, and on the other side to the Alpine Countries, Austria and Switzerland.[4]

The Netherlands is the starting-point of Lijphart's investigation of what was first called consociational democracy and subsequently, with more comprehensive ambitions, consensus democracy.[5] In its factual operation, the Netherlands still offers a powerful illustration of consensus democracy, even if, in formal analyses that were recently performed, the country proved to be less prototypical than Belgium[6] due to the absence of formalized systems of federalism and power distribution in the Netherlands.[7]

Belgium is an interesting case because this country has increasingly moved towards the prototype of consensus democracy, not only on the politics-executives dimension, but also on the federal-unitary dimension. In a series of state reforms, Belgium has grown into a fully-fledged federal state, with all the formal checks and balances this entails.[8] While the old provinces remained intact, administrative power has been distributed over three geographically based regions (the Flemish Region, the Walloon Region, and the Brussels-Capital Region) and three identity-based communities (Dutch-, French-, and German-speaking). The written constitution, recording the administrative distribution of responsibilities, is protected by qualified majority requirements, meaning that the regions and communities could only forfeit responsibilities in the most exceptional of circumstances. Since its state reform, Belgium now has a constitutional court and an independent central bank.[9]

On the executives-parties dimension, Belgium is clearly on the consensual side with its PR (proportional representation) voting system, supporting a highly plural multi-party system, and its practice of power sharing in broad-based coalitions. Since the end of the 1960s, moreover, the major

political movements (social-democrats, Christian-democrats, and liberals) have also been subdivided into French-speaking and Dutch-speaking political parties, a pattern that would later repeat itself with new political parties, such as the Greens. In 1970, Belgium formalized the rule that national cabinets must be composed of equal numbers of French-speaking and Dutch-speaking members. Since 1980, all national cabinets have been broad-based coalitions involving four to six parties. Relations between the House of Representatives and these relatively disconnected cabinets are based on give and take. The government is certainly not in a position to keep a tight leash on Parliament, as demonstrated by the relatively short lifespan of government coalitions.

Switzerland is another prime example of consensus democracy, or *Proporzdemokratie* as it is called here and in neighbouring Austria. In the case of Switzerland – unlike in Austria, Belgium, or the Netherlands – a strong version of consensus democracy is combined with a strong version of voter democracy, which makes it a special case to elaborate on in Chapter 5.[10]

State and society

Compared to the United Kingdom, a country like Belgium has a clearly corporatist interest group system, with tripartite consultations between the leaders of the government, the corporate world, and the trade unions.[11] Corporate and trade union (umbrella) organizations are called 'social partners' and are gathered under the common denominator of 'civil society organizations'. The practical and symbolic significance of such forms of social co-government should not be underestimated: civil society is, in a way, the layer of humus soil that allows consensus democracy to flourish. Civil society comprises all those organizations and umbrella organizations between the state and the individual that stand up for supra-individual interests, often on a non-profit basis. Michels' iron law of oligarchization[12] also applies to these organizations: professional guardians have long since hauled in their share of the work.

Civil society in a country like Belgium has always been grouped into denominational and identity-based segments. In various domains of life – education, housing, healthcare, services for the elderly, welfare, social services – a Catholic Fleming, for instance, would be served by Catholic Flemish organizations and by Catholic Flemish professionals and governors, who, on behalf of their Catholic Flemish grassroots, would arrange services, protect interests, and engage in consultations with third parties,

including representatives of governments and other civil society organizations. Representatives of Catholic Flemish civil society would, as a rule, be closely connected with Catholic Flemish politicians at the top and with Catholic Flemish volunteers at the bottom of the Catholic segment in society. In other social and denominational segments, things were much the same. Social life was thus organized into vertical 'pillars', whose leaders would maintain relatively close ties, but whose grassroots would not – that is, not across the boundaries of their pillars.

Consociational democracy

The historical pattern of pillarization in Belgium closely resembles the Dutch kind of consociationalism that attracted international attention in Lijphart's early work. Consociational democracy, or pacification democracy, distinguishes itself with respect to four characteristics: broad-based coalitions, proportionality, minority veto, and segmental, in-group autonomy.[13] Besides elements of formal democracy, this typification also comprises elements of informal democracy. The proportionality rule, for example, affects not only the formal voting system but also informal distribution issues. In-group autonomy has been formalized in specific legislation on education, for instance, but it has also been informally institutionalized in a relatively modest state tradition in which social rather than state institutions are expected to take precedence: the social institutions come first, followed by the state institutions.

Such institutions – formal and informal, statal and parastatal – are crucial for democratic praxis in the Netherlands and Belgium and, in a slightly different way, in Switzerland and Austria. It is a pity that the informal and parastatal aspects have been largely omitted from Lijphart's more recent study of democracy, which is likely to be due to the rationale of the author's large-scale comparative research.[14]

Consensus democracy is all about pacification and accommodation

Consensus democracy is based on power distribution and power sharing. Governors must manage to work things out together because they are dependent on each other and, for better or for worse, condemned to get along with each other. In countries where consensus democracy has struck deep roots, this is not felt to be a sentence, but, on the contrary, the practice

of consultation and cooperation is considered nothing out of the ordinary but matter-of-fact.

The Netherlands is a good example of a country where consensus democracy goes back a long way. Though complaints about the drawbacks of consensus democracy may sometimes be quite vociferous – especially governors with ambitious reform agendas tending to complain about the viscosity of decision-making processes – the underlying idea of cooperation has always been widely endorsed. In texts by politicians and governors, the word 'together' is habitually used as a seasoning ingredient. There has always been appreciation for 'bridge-builders' and governors that 'manage to keep things together', and also for social parties that adopt a 'constructive' attitude and are prepared to 'do their bit.'

Polder politics in the Low Countries

The historical struggle against the water, forcing disparate parties to collaborate, is commonly considered a driving force behind the development of consensus democracy in the Netherlands. This collaboration later gelled into water boards, whose logic had a substantial impact on the subsequent development of the state. It was not until the nineteenth century, after the French occupation, that the unitary state – amounting to little more than a decentralized unitary state – came into its own in the regions we now call the Netherlands. Before that time, government was highly fragmented, polycentric, and – for a long time – both federal and confederal. The seven united provinces were the building blocks of the Dutch Republic (1588–1795), and the inlying towns, in their turn, served as the powerhouses of the provinces.

So from the very early days, this fostered a structure of mutual dependence, inducing mutual 'persuasion' and consultation. The administrative culture that arose was one involving pacification and accommodation: Consensus, Compromise, and Consultation, the three Cs of the Dutch conference-room culture.[15] Co-optation is sometimes added as a fourth C,[16] as pacification and accommodation have traditionally been driven by elites, by 'regents' and, subsequently, by 'governors', who have always relied more on being accepted by their own kind than on being accepted by the masses or the electorate.

With the democratization process in the twentieth century, the electorate in the background has come into greater prominence, albeit considerably less so than in the United States, for instance, where many more governors rely on a voter mandate that, once granted, allows them to act with considerable autonomy. In the Netherlands, as a rule, governors need

one another and civil society leaders to find negotiated solutions. The best-known example here is the collaboration between representatives of the government, the corporate world, and the trade unions, which goes by the name of the 'polder model'. This polder model, in fact, encompasses much more than just the field of socio-economic politics; the 'polder' can be seen as the perfect metaphor for an administrative culture that grew out of dike-building and shaped a landscape that – politico-administratively, socio-economically, and spatio-physically – could be called 'level' or 'horizontal'.[17]

State and place

The integrative and representative logic of consensus democracy makes itself felt not only at the national level but also at the local level. The following ten characteristics come to the fore (with the contrasting tendencies of pendulum democracy indicated in brackets):

- *executive power sharing in broad-based local coalitions*, local government by coalition (versus concentration of power in one-party local government);
- *dualistic and balanced relations* between local council and local executive (versus executive dominance in monistic relations);
- a local *multi-party system* with usually more than one ruling party and more than one in opposition (versus a local two-party system);
- an electoral system of *proportional representation*; no winner-takes-all district model for allocating town council seats (versus a majoritarian, disproportional, district-based system);
- *a coordinated interest group system; 'local corporatism'* stressing interest mediation and coordination (versus an uncoordinated, pluralist interest group system);
- *decentralized and 'federalized' local government*, power distribution over strong sub-local institutions, neighbourhood councils, and the like; complementary government (versus unitary and centralized government);
- *dispersal of regulatory powers*; power distribution over mutually dependent sectors; strong need for horizontal coordination (versus concentration of regulatory powers in semi-autonomous sectors);
- *institutionalized interdependence*; strong sense of co-responsibility; tradition of co-government and co-production in addition to autonomous responsibilities (versus home rule and autonomy);

- *legal-administrative supervision*; preventive and/or repressive tutelage by higher agencies (versus limited legal-administrative supervision);
- *independent financial-economic auditing*, independent audit committees or local 'courts of audit' (versus financial-economic auditing under local government control).

The first five points sketch the outlines of a power-sharing system at the local level, of which there are many examples in the European Rhineland, including Dutch local government. Broad-based executive bodies of Mayor and Aldermen are a common feature here, and often their composition is more broadly based than would strictly speaking be required for a simple council majority. This is due to the great importance attached to public support in local councils that are often politically fragmented, which is inherent in a system of proportional representation.[18] The relation between the local council and the daily executive body of Mayor and Aldermen used to be monistic for a long time but has been 'dualized' in recent years, causing Dutch local government to move closer towards consensus democracy as characterized above. A quasi-corporatist 'polder culture' is evident in a preference for frequent consultation with umbrella organizations above infrequent meetings with a multitude of splinter groups, and in a preference for round-table meetings where the one interest group is introduced to another, with the government acting as the custodian of the public interest in the middle.

The latter group of five points centres on the question whether the inter-organizational relations in local or urban government resemble those of decentralized, cooperative federalism, involving a lot of checks and balances, power dispersal, administrative intertwining, mutually binding co-government, external financial control, and legal-administrative supervision. Checks and balances in Dutch local government take a variety of forms. In addition to traditional forms of preventive and repressive supervision, new forms of efficiency control mechanisms (local audit offices and local audit office committees) evolved in the 1990s. In many Dutch towns, local community offices or neighbourhood councils have been installed. The two biggest Dutch cities, Amsterdam and Rotterdam, have been split into sub-municipalities whose elected politicians co-govern the city together with the central city council.

The keyword in all of this is 'complementary government', with different administrative tiers supplementing each other. These have their own responsibilities but also face shared tasks. The sub-municipalities in Rotterdam, for example, organize residents' participation in neighbourhood-oriented policies that are funded by the central town council. This has served to institutionalize a considerable degree of interdependence, with

the central town council being in charge of the most means. This, however, does not make Rotterdam a 'centralized unitary city', as we saw earlier in the example of Birmingham, UK.

In the government of cities like Rotterdam and Amsterdam, administrative power is distributed over aldermen who must manage to find negotiated solutions both as an executive body and in collaboration with the city council. The local centre is co-dependent on the activities not only of sub-local institutions (such as sub-municipalities) but also of supra-local institutions such as provinces and national departments, who are involved in local practice by way of supervision, co-government, and – hence – co-funding. There is little institutional scope for solo efforts, and a culture of collaboration is greatly encouraged in metropolitan government.

Politics over administration?

In consensus democracy, much more so than in pendulum democracy, 'democracy' goes way beyond the workings of formal councils, offices, and bodies. In British pendulum democracy, 'Westminster' has all the trappings of being the epicentre of power: this is where the pendulum is set in motion; this is where the primacy of politics is shaped in a symbolic and practical sense.

In Dutch consensus democracy, or polder democracy, it is harder to maintain that the seat of the Dutch Parliament in The Hague is an equivalent epicentre of power.[19] It is rather just one of many conference rooms where polder democracy is being practised, in addition to the ramified conferencing networks of the socio-economic polder model, the 'green polder model', the public–private partnerships, or any other name that has been bestowed on such 'interactive' decision-making.[20] This – all those consultation and conferencing assemblies – is where the search for consensus takes place. This – all those parastatal networks – is also the source of the watering-down of the notion, or the myth, of 'political primacy'.

Whatever one's point of view, the primacy of politics over administration is a much more contested concept in the Netherlands than it is in the UK, where politics takes greater precedence over administration.[21] In the Netherlands, this relation between superordination and subordination is a great deal less evident. Politics and administration merge and fade one into the other, as demonstrated by the untranslatable notion of a *bestuurder* (governor), referring to a range of actors that, to the non-initiated, must seem something of a hodgepodge: leaders of medium-level organizations;

chairpersons of councils and boards; heads of civil services and departments. Governors, in this sense of *bestuurders*, are usually not elected to their office by voters; as a rule, their electoral legitimation is indirect. Such a fabric of governors, embedded in complex administrative networks, has recently acquired the neologism of 'governance', but in the Netherlands this is nothing new.

If reforms in pendulum democracy are often driven by politics, the driving force in consensus democracy is often sparked off by administration. We could typify the Dutch kind of consensus or polder democracy as an 'administrators' democracy': a democracy that is controlled to a large extent by administrative professionals who jointly develop public policy in committees and consultations. As these administrators are embedded in networks, it might also be called a 'network democracy'. It is not without good cause that academic research dealing with the development of networks and the related 'displacement of politics' flourishes in the Dutch Public Administration discipline.

Variations on a theme

In countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Austria, tendencies towards consensus democracy go hand in hand with tendencies towards consociational democracy, which we labelled above in terms of four characteristics: broad-based coalitions, proportionality, minority veto, and segmental, in-group autonomy.

Nemawashu in Japan

This specific constellation of consensualism and consociationalism is not what we find in other versions of consensus democracy. In Lijphart's typology, a country like Japan, for instance, inclines towards the side of consensus democracy.[22] Japan has a decision-making culture and a cohering decision-making practice that goes by the name of *nemawashu*, denoting something like 'tying the roots'. A shared course of action, in Japan, is established through extensive and protracted talks; a quick count of heads is not done. It should be noted, however, that, while converging towards consensus democracy in Lijphart's current operationalization, there is no such thing in Japan as consociational democracy in the sense of a system of cohabitation by way of patterns of vertical pillarization and

horizontal pacification, embodied in a set of rules governing coalition formation, proportionality, minority veto, and in-group autonomy.[23]

The German Sonderweg

Another specific path, a *Sonderweg*, to consensus democracy is taken by Germany, a country that is not commonly classified among the consociational democracies either. Germany has always experienced a large degree of denominational and regional diversity but has lacked the cohesive institutions at the national level that are typical of pacification democracy. In part, this is owing to the country's scale, and in part to its relatively late state formation.

A strong inclination towards consensus democracy in the present-day Federal Republic of Germany is, in any case, unmistakable.[24] In terms of power distribution, the Federal Republic – with its advanced federalism and its constitutional guarantees, its institutionalized checks and balances, its strong Upper House, federal bank, and its federal constitutional court – even proves to be more consensual on the federal-unitary dimension than Switzerland and Belgium.

In Lijphart's scheme, the Federal Republic rates as a little less consensual in terms of formal power sharing, on the politics-executives dimension, than consensus democracies like Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The voting system slows down the development of a multi-party landscape, but, in all other respects, the Federal Republic shows all the characteristics of power sharing, coalition politics, and cooperative governance. There is plenty of opportunity for social co-production, participation, and involvement, but, unfortunately, these are not taken into consideration in Lijphart's current operationalization. Hereafter we will see that such facilities do actually make a difference to the quality of democracy.

The European Union

The European Union is not a state in the way the Federal Republic of Germany is. It is, however, a decision-making system – an intergovernmental decision-making system, to be precise – whose democratic logic can be analysed. This is what Lijphart does in *Patterns of Democracy*, and he concludes that the logic of consensus democracy is the dominant one in the European Union.[25] The EU is a system in which power is distributed and must be shared. There are a great number of mechanisms aiming to prevent smaller countries from being overruled by bigger countries, or substantial minorities from being drowned

out by simple numerical majorities. Compared to the early days of the European Union, the unanimity requirements have been toned down, but, in the present-day European Union too, strength remains a fragmented commodity, just like its opposite, power of veto. This was proved once again in the process that should have led to the acceptance of a draft 'European Constitution': each Member State was to accept the draft, which turned the French and Dutch 'nay', dictated by the 'nay' of their populations, into the kiss of death for the decision-making process.

If the EU manifestly tends towards the integrative side of the aggregative-integrative dimension, the Union is profoundly inclined to the indirect side of the indirect-direct dimension. The EU is an out-and-out representatives' kind of administration. Delegates from the worlds of political and social administration, well versed in the ways of Brussels committees, dominate the decision-making process. The 'European citizen' – a curious concept anyway – has been shunted off to a remote distance as a spectator. The distance from the stage is, in fact, so great and the spectacle so subtle that citizens can hardly see what is happening on stage and, hence, have averted their gaze. There are periodical elections for the European Parliament but these are felt to be of little significance. Opportunities for citizen participation, therefore, are very few and far between. Owing to its *modus operandi*, the EU is considered by many as distant and expertocratic.

Leadership in consensus democracy

On average, leadership in consensus democracy is a more moderate and less expressive affair than it is in pendulum democracy. Elections certainly create a bit of a stir in consensus democracy. And, of course, the growing influence of the mass media – and, with it, the personalization of politics – is manifest in consensus democracy as well. At the same time, however, the development of a leadership culture is inhibited by the political and administrative institutions that have been discussed above.

In coalition government, the 'principal parts' are handed out to several actors, with the chairperson acting as *primus inter pares*, as the first among equals, but rarely as the ultimate decision-maker. A multi-party system is about matching several small-sized and a few medium-sized parties rather than settling a man-to-man fight between giants. In the end, there is not a single winner who takes all. Nor is there any requirement for a politician to be the single remaining 'gladiator': even if your election results are modest, you may still take a seat at the board table next to the others who did not

take all either. One party or person gaining an absolute majority is a rarity. Parties and people almost always need one another, not only within a particular government body but also in the game played among government bodies. This is a situation in which you cannot afford to overdo rubbing your adversaries up the wrong way, as, eventually, you will be called upon to work in unison anyway.

In consensus democracy, mass psychology and mass communication are less important than they are in pendulum democracy. Negotiation, deliberation, and consultation skills are far more important. To be an effective governor, you need to be able to come to an understanding with a diversity of people and perspectives. You need to be able to operate with prudence in complex socio-political constellations. People who are adroit at bridge-building, finding creative compromises, and maintaining socio-political peace are the most likely to be recognized as 'good governors'. Wim Kok, who was Prime Minister of the Netherlands for a very long time, always characterized his work as 'keeping things together'. Job Cohen, the equally highly respected mayor of Amsterdam, is well known for using the exact same phrase.[26]

The mayoralty in the Netherlands offers considerably less scope for decisive leadership than, for instance, the office of the Majority Leader in a city like Birmingham.[27] The Dutch mayor can gain standing for him- or herself as a binding agent, but for politicians with ambition, such as Bram Peper, the former mayor of Rotterdam, this is far too puny. He typified the Dutch mayor as a 'pitiful figure'.

In his book on leadership styles, Henk te Velde takes the rather non-personalistic governing approach to be the dominant leadership style in the Dutch consensus democracy, especially in the post-war period.[28] In a previous period, a personalistic, even prophetic leadership style had been apparent in men like Kuyper, Troelstra, and Domela, men who, in the decades around 1900, spearheaded the political emancipation of the various social and denominational pillars. This style, however, was strongly tied up with a particular transition period in the development of consensus democracy and with specific individuals whose personal leadership styles did not attract much of a following in subsequent decades. The post-World War II period was dominated by pragmatism, technocracy, and downplaying personal leadership. Besides Wim Kok, already quoted at the start of this chapter, this was also personified by former Prime Ministers such as Drees and Lubbers.

The most notable style change in this respect was exhibited by politician Pim Fortuyn. His personalistic and prophetic style of conduct had not been displayed in the level polder landscape of Dutch consensus democracy for

well over a hundred years.[29] With the assassination of Fortuyn, just before the 2002 elections, this change in style received a major blow. It was not the flamboyant Fortuyn, but the stolid – and, according to some, boring – Balkenende who became the next Prime Minister. Though Balkenende holds his own in terms of policy content, many wonder whether his appearance would emerge victorious in competitive, personalized elections, like those held in a pendulum democracy.[30] The same goes for Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of the Belgian consensus democracy of the same period. Though Balkenende and Verhofstadt regularly argue in favour of 'new politics', they have not been able to steal a march on those who argue in favour of vigorous, reform-oriented, clean-sweeping leadership.

Despite their differences, parties such as Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest) in Belgium and the Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in the Netherlands have one desire in common: they yearn for a drastic reform of consensus democracy, especially in the matter of the gap they assume between political leadership and the will of the people. On this issue, there are also similarities with fractious political parties and people in Austria (FPÖ, Haider) and Switzerland (SVP, Blocher), who are just as set against the kind of compromise-seeking politics and consensus-seeking leadership that is part and parcel of consensus democracy.[31]

Citizenship in consensus democracy

In consensus democracy, citizens play the role, primarily, of spectator and, secondarily, that of consulted party. With regard to the former, there is a parallel with pendulum democracy: consensus democracy is also a spectator democracy. With regard to the latter, there is a major difference between consensus and pendulum democracy: in consensus democracy, citizens may have less clout as 'voters' in competitive elections; but as 'speakers' in talks with government they have more opportunities for making their influence felt. In countries like Belgium and the Netherlands, such speaking (*inspreken* in the Dutch language) usually takes place in the context of consultative meetings. Such speaking, it should be noted, implies a difference between insiders (those who do the consulting) and outsiders (those who are consulted). In this respect, consensus democracy differs from participatory democracy, where all are expected to have an equal say in the decision-making.

The customary insiders of consensus democracy are the representatives of political parties, social groups, and professional institutions. If pendulum democracy is driven by competing elites, consensus democracy is

driven by collaborating guardians of special interests. The postulated 'aristocracy of reason' has a Platonic, paternalistic, and meritocratic ring to it.[32] It is not the monitorial citizen but rather the monitorial guardian that takes pride of place in consensus democracy: the custodians and promoters of interests, who are expected to know what is good for their backing, are constantly on the lookout for relevant information, and, to this end, keep their ear to the ground. Opportunities for public involvement, participation, and consultation are convenient facilities in all this. In Dutch consensus democracy, for example, such facilities are widely available. This often tends to make professionals looking for policy information a lot happier than citizens looking for involvement.

Consensus democracy has always shown a relatively hierarchical relationship between citizens and governors, or between those governed and those governing. The Dutch-speaking regions used to have a compartmentalized mentality; the German-speaking regions used to have a *Lagermentalität* (camp mentality). Citizens were loyal to the social or denominational compartment in which they belonged and conformed to the leaders who looked after matters of public interest on their behalf. The collectivity that extended outside their own domain was regarded with a considerable measure of detachment, if not distrust: inward commitment and outward detachment. In consociational democracies like the Netherlands, the separated march of the social pillars was compensated by a pillarized elite that, at the top, was quite adept at consultation and collaboration. Within their pillars, these elites could fall back on a relatively active civil society, serving as an important intermediary in the vertical relations between the narrow top and the wide base. The political culture was one of 'guardianship and resignation',[33] with guardianship being located at the top of the pillars and resignation at the bottom of a pillarized civil society.

By combining vertical ties (within pillars) and horizontal ties (among pillars at the top), consociational democracy managed to establish a remarkably stable and integrated system. *Lagermentalität* without such connective tissue, however, produced a defective political culture, in the view of Almond and Verba, referring to the early post-war Federal Republic.[34] Germany was a *Lagergesellschaft*, but it was not a consociational democracy. In late 1950s Germany, Almond and Verba found a detached subject culture that deviated markedly from the civic cultures they found in the US and the UK at the same time. Citizens in Germany considered themselves subordinate to the state and displayed a detachment from politics that bordered on cynicism. Citizens maintained hierarchical relations with politics that were founded on distrust and awe.

In *The Civic Culture Revisited*, Conradt wrote that, in the course of the 1960s, the civic culture also got off the ground in Germany, and that, in the years following, it even expanded more vigorously than in the classic civic cultures, partly owing to the booming growth of action groups, *Bürgerinitiativen*, and new social movements in Germany.[35] The Federal Republic thus shows that an active civic culture can certainly go hand in hand with a highly developed consensus democracy, provided that this consensus democracy manages to establish a productive alliance with actors and institutions that deviate from the indirect-democratic consensus culture.

The establishment of such a productive alliance should not be taken for granted. Precisely those countries that have been categorized as resilient consociational democracies – the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, and, to a lesser extent, Switzerland – appear to be having difficulties with it, as is evident from the floods of complaints pouring in about 'patronizing institutions that don't take citizens seriously'. Despite their many, and sometimes major, differences, this is the theme that links the Dutch system's critics in D66 and LPF (whose dates of birth are more than thirty years apart) and the respective *leefbaar* (meaning, literally, 'liveable'), 'white', and 'regional' movements in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Austria. In Switzerland, criticism of 'patronizing institutions' is a little more tempered as direct-democratic institutions have been added to a system that is, in many other respects, a consensus democracy.

Discussion: commendation and criticism

Opinions about consensus democracy in circles of democracy watchers are the reverse of those about pendulum democracy: whereas consensus democracy mainly came in for criticism at the outset, it has met with growing appreciation in recent years.

For a long time, pendulum democracy ranked as the benchmark of democracy, especially in the period following World War II, in which British Westminster democracy had shown its sterling side. Compared to the institutionalized decisiveness and clarity of this model, democracy in countries across the Channel appeared viscous and hazy. Characteristics that we now tend to associate with consensus democracy – corporatism, coalition politics, administrative intertwining, and fragmentation – were held in disrepute or came in for criticism.

Lijphart's earliest study of Dutch consensus democracy was founded on his conviction that Westminster democracy was superior and worth

emulating. With some mild surprise, he then showed in *The Politics of Accommodation* that a consensus system, besides dysfunctions, actually also had functions.[36] Anyhow, it proved to be able to sustain the relatively peaceful coexistence of Catholics, Protestants, socialists, and liberals, who all secured a position for themselves in the system through their representatives, preventing a Northern-Ireland-type escalation of denominational differences. On the flip side, though, it had and still has an ingrained tendency for cartel politics, with a limited number of oligopolists dividing the market between them in mutual arrangement.

Even more sceptical was the Dutch political scientist Van Thijn, who, as a politician, was later to leave his mark on the debate on democracy in the Netherlands. In a series of contributions to this debate, Van Thijn drew attention to the hazards of Dutch consensus democracy, or 'fan-like democracy' as he called it, and the blessings of British Westminster or pendulum democracy.[37] In British Westminster democracy, he felt, citizens had a much greater influence, through their votes, on government formation and, hence, on policy-making. In the Dutch 'fan-like democracy', democratic signals tended to fan out and, hence, evaporate.

Van Thijn pointed to the danger of a fan-like democracy turning into a pincer-like democracy:[38] when moderate choices are all much of a muchness, voters might increasingly turn to political extremes. With the fan's outer edges rigidifying, these might then turn into political pincers, crushing democracy between its jaws. In addition, Van Thijn criticized the complexity and chaos of the system, besides its viscosity and administrative slowness, which, in his view, might give rise to a serious crisis of legitimacy. Similar criticisms have been voiced in other consensus democracies, with their own accents and terms, such as *Politikverflechtung* (political entanglement, Germany) and backroom politics (Belgium).

Appreciation for consensus democracy grew more markedly at a later point in time. In the second half of the 1990s, the Dutch polder model was paid tribute by such government leaders as Clinton, Blair, and Schröder, who saw in Dutch consensus politics a viable 'third way', a creative compromise between supplementary approaches. In evaluation studies, the image of the Dutch Disease was dispelled by the image of the Dutch Miracle. At last, here was a case to clearly contradict the classic thesis that consensus democracy may perhaps do well at representing minorities but does not do well in terms of concrete performance.[39]

Having compared 36 democracies, Lijphart argues that, in general, consensus democracies are no less capable of performing well than majoritarian democracies. With regard to maintaining public order and managing the

national economy, consensus democracies even do better on average. The idea that consensus democracy does rather better at representation than pendulum democracy is confirmed by Lijphart's study on a whole range of indicators, such as voter turnout; representation of women; equality on political and economic dimensions; government and voter proximity; reduction of corruption and nepotism; and citizen satisfaction. Consensus democracy, moreover, proves to be a 'kinder and gentler' system in such matters as development cooperation, environmental performance, and the protection of society's vulnerable.[40]

Whereas he once started out his study with reservations, Lijphart now ventures to be vocal about propagating consensus democracy as a desirable model, especially for the young democracies of Eastern Europe and the Third World. Its consensual and communitarian culture might touch the right chord in Asian and African countries, where 'unhurried deliberation' and 'concern for harmony' have long since characterized the decision-making culture.[41]

Once again, however, it should be stressed that how one values these things is strongly tied up with personal and cultural preferences. Consensus democracy is a rather 'feminine' model of democracy, and pendulum democracy is a more 'masculine' model.[42] This means that people and cultures that rate feminine values more highly – such as women, upholders of the more feminine cultures of Northern Europe – will tend to be persuaded by the 'kind and gentle' strengths of consensus democracy more readily than people and cultures that rate masculine values more highly, such as men, upholders of the more masculine cultures of Southern Europe and South America.[43] Authors who sympathize with communitarism will tend to be more impressed by the connective qualities of consensus democracy – or associative democracy, as they often call it – than authors who feel that communitarism is rather vague and non-committal.[44]

This is not to say that the beauty of consensus democracy – or the lack of it – is entirely in the eye of the beholder. Its specific strengths and weaknesses happen to be part and parcel of its institutional design, ingrained in the system, as it were. How one evaluates these pluses and minuses, however, is influenced by personal and cultural preference.

Lessons: strengths and weaknesses

On the issue of strengths and weaknesses, consensus democracy is exactly the reverse of pendulum democracy. Its core quality is not decisiveness

(cutting the knot) but controlled integration (including different values in making common cause). The pitfall of consensus democracy is not so much fixation (the difficulty of abandoning a chosen path) but rather viscosity (the difficulty of taking strong action in government).

A striking example of controlled integration is offered by post-war Munich, in many respects the counterpart of post-war Birmingham, whose decisive tendencies I have already discussed in the previous chapter. Contrary to Birmingham, the consensus model is the one most emphasized in Munich, and this goes for both the city and the wider framework of the state. Within the umbrella framework of consensus democracy, alternative approaches prove to be able to exert counter-pressure and enforce checks and balances in the case of Munich.

I have already observed that facilities for involvement, participation, and social co-government are strongly developed in the Federal Republic of Germany. This was even more so in post-war Munich, where *Bürgerinitiativen* (action groups) played a major role, with dissentient voices being given plenty of opportunity to be heard in public decision-making.[45] Populism, unilateralism, and authoritarian behaviour in general were taboo, which was predicated not only on gruesome associations with the city's Brownshirt past but also on its post-war present, in which the city decided to opt for having fundamentally opposed institutions.

The power of the post-war system in Munich was that it not only caused dissentient voices to be represented but also pushed them into cross-fertilization, into developing creative policies.[46] In contrast with Birmingham, Munich managed to liberate itself at a relatively early stage from the single-problem/single-solution approach to dealing with urban space. The blueprint of a mono-functional inner city, contemplated at the beginning of the post-war period by Munich as by so many other cities, was reconsidered and replaced by the multi-functional inner city model. This has turned Munich into a popular habitat for people, organizations, and pursuits that every city would love to attract. In contrast with Birmingham, the various flows of urban traffic – car drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, skaters, and public transport users – mix and mingle remarkably well in an urban space that caters to all tastes.

Quality: controlled integration, collaboration	Pitfall: viscosity, coagulation
Allergy: populism, unilateralism	Challenge: transparent decision-making

Figure 4.1 Consensus democracy: qualities and drawbacks

This is not to say that Munich is a Valhalla that cannot be faulted. Under the banner of *mehr Demokratie wagen* (hazarding more democracy), some believe Munich has also ushered in an over-complicated kind of *Demokratismus* that exposes the local government to excessive workloads and backlog. While institutionalized checks and balances may perhaps produce well-considered decisions, they can also over-complicate matters or leave them in a state of uncertainty for too long. Non-decision-making in the matter of the Munich ring road, for instance, has caused ecological and spatial problems elsewhere in the greater Munich area. The *Politikverflechtungsfalle*, the pitfall of joint decision-making sketched by Scharpf at the macro-level of the Federal Republic,[47] is also valid at the micro-level of planning in Munich. Making decisions in transparent ways is and continues to be a challenge.

Conclusion

The tension between controlled integration (attunement) and excessive complexity (viscosity) is a fundamental one. This tension holds true for consensus democracy in general. Either may be more pronounced at different moments but both are ingrained in this type of democracy. As derivatives from this fundamental tension, other strengths and weaknesses have come up in this chapter. They are listed in Figure 4.2.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Controlled integration, collaboration	Viscosity, coagulation
Proportional representation	Effect of elections
Broad-based support in policy networks	Accountability in political institutions
Channelled multiformity	Cartel and backroom politics
Administrative expertise	Technocracy, expertocracy
Pacification and accommodation	Avoidance and ostrich behaviour
Integrated policy programmes	Compromise politics
Caring, 'kind and gentle'	Paternalism, 'suffocating'

Figure 4.2 Consensus democracy: strengths and weaknesses

5

Voter Democracy

Fend for Yourself

Good evening, citizens. The electronic town meeting is about to begin.\ Everyone take your seats and make sure your voter ID number is handy and your touch phone or remote control device is by your side . . .

Evan Schwartz, author on new technology[1]

Introduction

In voter democracy, the voter takes pride of place. A direct, unmediated kind of democracy that is propelled by citizens themselves is favoured above an indirect kind of democracy that is mediated by representatives and guardians. Aggregation by counting votes and measuring preference indicators is preferred to integration through discussion. Citizens take pride of place, particularly in their role as voters: as individuals who raise hands in town meetings, press buttons in referendums, tick preference boxes in user questionnaires, etc. The classic role of the *citoyen*, who immerses him- or herself in public discourse for the sake of discourse, takes a backseat here.

Voter democracy appeals to citizens-cum-voters in a capacity that to some extent resembles that of the modern role of the customer: the user of public goods and services, the consumer choosing to go along with public provisions or opting out of them of his or her own accord. Adherents of voter democracy sometimes liken their role to the model of the free market, where the customer is king and demand incentives prevail. 'Putting the customer first', say the supporters of the New Public Management, an approach of Public Choice that endorses the market mechanism in public matters.[2] 'Putting the voter first', or 'the voter is king', could easily serve as

the motto of voter democracy in many of its contemporary expressions. More generic, more fundamental, and therefore more apposite would be the dictum 'fend for yourself', which combines notions of self-rule and self-protection that prevail in all places where voter democracy prevails – as we will see below.

Voter democracy, for instance

In today's world, voter democracy is most clearly exhibited in the United States, albeit not as the encompassing model of democracy. In sizeable democratic systems, the encompassing model is always that of indirect democracy, with elements from direct democracy possibly being mixed in as additives or correctives.

The dominant encompassing model of democracy in the United States is pendulum democracy, in which the indirect-aggregative logic of elections – citizens voting and governors being elected – prevails. The Founding Fathers, especially Hamilton and Madison, were receptive to their contemporaries' fear of democracy conceived as the unconstrained rule of the common people. They were also receptive to the idea that the biggest interests should only be put into the 'best hands'. In the constitution they developed, they included many constructions that served as protective measures against mass delusion, collective tyranny, and the oppression of individuals and groups. Essential responsibilities were put into the hands of those who were indirectly elected and were each given a solid mandate, also to keep an eye on each other.[3]

From Massachusetts to California

Although indirect democracy is the dominant kind in the US, direct democracy has a remarkably strong presence in certain domains, certainly in an international-comparative perspective. This is true in particular for the special combination of direct and majoritarian democracy that we call voter democracy here.

The history of direct voter democracy precedes that of representative democracy. In the colony that was subsequently to become Massachusetts, the first referendum was held as early as 1640. Up until the end of the nineteenth century, a series of federal and particularly state constitutional legislation was submitted to the people by way of referendums. Once the constitutional framework had been established, indirect democracy gained the upper hand, and the referendum lost some of its appeal until, in the

1970s, a new wave of referendums surged, starting with the renowned referendum on Proposition 13 in California.[4]

Today, direct interventions by the electorate are more popular than ever. In 27 states and hundreds of cities, American citizens now have the right to put issues to the vote of their fellow citizens. On a nationwide scale, this occurred with 88 issues in the 1960s, 181 issues in the 1970s, 257 issues in the 1980s, and 378 issues in the 1990s. Local governors in 36 states and federal governors in 16 states can be subjected to recall procedures, meaning they can be forced to resign by majority vote in a plebiscite.[5]

Of all US states, voter democracy has advanced the furthest in California, not only with referendums and recall procedures but also with opinion polls, consumer surveys, and other forms of political market research that aim to augment the responsiveness of politics to citizens and to make sure that government supply matches citizen/voter demand as closely as possible. The above-mentioned instruments have in common that the input they require can be presented in a binary format (do you agree yes/no?, do you want to pay for this yes/no?) and can then simply be aggregated numerically. This allows for the rapid identification and servicing of the majority, responding to the 'critical mass'.

Californian voter democracy is characterized by a distinct market culture that is led by demand incentives: 'putting the customer first', in New Public Management jargon.[6] Voting for A or B (for the one camp or the other) and voting with one's feet (staying with the one supplier or switching over to another one) are clearly correlated here. With reference to Hirschman, 'voice' comes first, meaning to be vocal about your dislikes, followed by 'exit' if this has no effect, meaning to opt out and choose an alternative.[7]

New England town meetings

On the east coast of the US, in New England, voter democracy has another history and another context different from that on the west coast. In New England, we find not only the oldest constitutional arrangements for referendums but also the – sometimes idealized – New England town meetings. These go back to the early seventeenth-century Pilgrim town meetings and to the Pilgrims' blend of Protestant, individualistic, and communalistic convictions; to their rejection of hierarchical subordination, one man – one vote, and their acceptance of bottom-up majority decision-making.[8]

By way of the early nineteenth century Progressive Movement, which idealized the New England town meeting, related institutions and customs made their way to other parts of the nation. Many Americans already learn

in school how to formulate proposals, motions, and amendments, how to put them to the vote, and how then to draw conclusions from them.[9] These days, the New England town meeting, together with the school district meeting, is the only kind of meeting in the US in which binding collective regulations are laid down by an assembly of citizens that are not elected representatives but interested parties. As a rule, decision-making proceeds in strict majoritarian fashion: matters are settled by a majority of raised hands, unless there are any special circumstances.

Although the New England town meeting allows for more joint deliberation than the Californian referendum practice and, hence, leans more to the right-hand side of the aggregative-integrative dimension, the town meeting should not be equated with direct-integrative participatory democracy, which is the subject of the next chapter. The town meeting clearly inclines more towards voter democracy, not only owing to its majoritarian headcount principle (as opposed to the integrative kind of consensus-seeking common to participatory democracy) but also owing to its reductionism and efficient decisionism (versus the holism and consultative jumble in participatory democracy).

'We the people'

Champions of New-England-type town meetings tend to turn to one specific Founding Father: Jefferson, who waxed lyrical about ward republics. And yet, men like Hamilton and Madison also understood the importance of bottom-up legitimation and endorsement; witness the famous 'We the people' heading their constitutional labour. Madison thought it essential that the new republic was legitimated by 'the great body of society'. Hamilton called 'the consent of the people' the foundation on which authority ought to be built. They contemplated how the power of the state was to be distributed, not so much to develop it as to control it, and not so much in opposition to individual interests but precisely to warrant their protection.[10]

Right from the outset, protectionism, or self-protection, has been an important element in American settlement history and, hence, in the political culture that evolved: 'People came together for mutual protection,' wrote Cronin. 'Beyond this, they created government for the purpose of securing and enhancing their natural rights. The rights come first. People are primary, governments secondary.'[11] At face value, democratic institutions that aggregate citizens' preferences from the bottom up, such as referendums, appear to match this order of importance perfectly.

Such institutions, however, have one major drawback: individual citizens and even sizeable minorities can be outvoted by numerical majorities: 50% + 1 will do. Hence the American preoccupation with legal constructions serving to protect individual interests and freedom rights.[12] Hence, too, the ambivalence Cronin observes in many Americans: 'Most Americans are of two minds about populist democracy. They want more of it in the abstract, but they are often cautious and concerned about its excesses in practice.'[13]

Cronin talks about 'populist democracy', but the context makes clear that 'voter democracy' would in fact be a better name for what he means. Because the combination of direct and aggregative democracy is often erroneously equated with populism or simply referendum democracy, accuracy is of the essence here.

Voter democracy = plebiscitary populism = referendum democracy?

Plebiscitary populism?

In his unremitting struggle against direct democracy, the political scientist Tromp invariably warns against the slippery slope down to 'plebiscitary' democracy and 'populist' politics; against the dangerous symbiosis of an unrepresented mob armed with ballots on the one hand and a tribune of the plebs armed with populist rhetoric on the other; against a system in which, in his words, 'a leader replaces the political class and eliminates bureaucracy'.[14] In plebiscitary democracy as depicted by Tromp and like-minded authors, the cushioning intermediate layer between the *populus* and the populist has dropped away. Tromp writes: 'To put it simply, plebiscitary democracy means that you elect someone who can do as he or she pleases until the next elections, unchecked by a representative body to which he or she is accountable in the meantime.'[15]

This description is evocative of a particular Latin American version of strong presidentialism: a system with few checks and balances in the relations between the political leader (depicted as a strong man) and the *populus* (depicted as a helpless collective), a system that is rather authoritarian, stages elections every now and again, but, in the meantime, hands over power to a *caudillo*.[16]

As such, a description like this is very far removed from the essential characteristics of voter democracy. In voter democracy, the initiative in everyday government does not go top-down; on the contrary, it goes

bottom-up as much and as often as possible, starting with the citizenry, which is not a helpless organic entity but a collection of vocal individuals who have a keen sense of their combined self-interests. In voter democracy, those elected can precisely *not* do as they please until the next elections; they must always be alert to the interim deployment of instruments such as recalls, referendums, citizens' petitions, consumer surveys, opinion polls, and the like.

Governors, of course, try to wield such instruments strategically, even manipulatively, but this is a far cry from the idea that they can do as they please. Formally, town meetings do not even have a separate board; they have just a preparatory committee to support the self-steering voter community.

Referendum democracy?

As an instrument, a referendum is much like a knife: a knife is highly efficient for a particular usage (cutting), but it can also be used for other purposes (buttering bread, modelling clay, jabbing holes). Things are exactly the same for the referendum: the main properties of the instrument (direct, majoritarian) imply a particular usage but do not enforce it.[17]

Some feel that the referendum inevitably leads to a kind of direct, uncontrolled majority decision-making that is even more dangerous to minority interests than the elite-driven kind of majority decision-making in Westminster democracy. 'Because they cannot measure intensities of beliefs or work things out through discussion and discovery, referendums are bound to be more dangerous than representative assemblies to minority rights,' write Butler and Ranney.[18] And yet, this need not necessarily be the case. It depends on the way in which the referendum is used and the political context in which the referendum acquires its significance. In California, the referendum reinforces and supplements a system of democracy that is majoritarian anyway, in this case via the direct-democratic route of voter democracy. In Switzerland, however, the referendum creates scope for voter democracy, on the one hand, while indirectly supporting and supplementing consensus democracy, on the other.

The function and significance of the referendum as an instrument also depend on the kind of referendum that is used: creating or rejecting, binding or consultative, citizen-initiated or government-initiated, mandatory by statute or optional. All of these are options that have widely diverging implications. Once you grasp that these options only acquire significance in different combinations and in different settings, you also grasp the impossibility of generalizing about '*the* referendum' ('this is what

the referendum will do, just look at California' – 'no, this is what the referendum will do, just look at Switzerland').

If circumstances closely resemble those in California, or those in Switzerland, comparison seems self-evident. However, besides similarities, there are always inevitably differences in the government setting that need to be taken into account.

Voter democracy = self-determination and self-protection

Voter democracy is a double-sided coin. On the one side, we find the notion of citizens' self-determination: public choice propelled from the bottom up by individual preferences and considerations. On the reverse side, we find the idea of civil self-protection, with the sword-carrying voters at the Swiss *Landsgemeinde* of Appenzell-Innerrhoden as a salient illustration and the American phrase of 'fending for yourself' as a telling motto.[19]

In the west of the US, especially in California, the convergence of self-determination and self-protection is perhaps the most pronounced. The referendum, dreaded by some as a majoritarian crowbar, mainly functions as a protective device here. The best-known example here is 'Proposition 13', which, in 1978, served to fix taxation at the level of 1975 and sharply defined the limits to potential future tax increases. A series of successive referendums – on Propositions 4, 62, 98, and 218 – then served to curb and tighten the screws on state and local governments. In the end, this has put 85% of the budget of the state of California beyond the reach of Californian executive and representative politics.[20]

Ideals . . .

The Californian referendum practice has brought the reality of government closer to the ideal, cherished by some, of the minimal state or, even better, the weak state, which puts but few obstacles in the way of the free market and individual liberty. According to Hayek, one of the most influential neo-liberal thinkers, the *raison d'être* of the state is the protection of individuals' rights, the protection of 'life, liberty and estate'.[21] Freedom to choose and act – guided by the invisible hand of the market, free from state regulation – serves to increase prosperity, as Adam Smith's classic work shows.[22]

Some in the classic liberal tradition hold that the minimal state should be a weak state in the domain of the economy but should take a firm hand – or at least the appearance of it: the shadow of hierarchy – in protecting

individual rights and guarding the public domain. In Madison and Hamilton (co-founders of the US constitution), Locke, Bentham, and Mill (arch-fathers of liberal democracy), the free-market-and-individual-rights philosophy is combined with notions of indirect, representative democracy. In their conception of democracy, governors and governed are clearly separated: 'sovereignty ultimately lies in the people, but is vested in representatives who can legitimately exercise state functions,' writes Held, calling this a key feature of 'protective democracy'. The latter should not be confused with 'protective republicanism', which assumes self-governance by citizens, for 'if citizens do not rule themselves, they will be dominated by others'.[23] Comparing the two variants of 'protectionism', voter democracy as we understand it here is closest to Held's model of 'protective republicanism'.

Authors in the 'neo-liberal' school of thought such as Hayek, Nozick, Friedman, Rand, Murray, and Sorman tend more towards an undiluted free-market approach – cherishing self-governance and self-steering without the direction of a central authority – than the authors in the classic liberal tradition described above.[24] Hayek, the standard-bearer of neo-liberalism, feared elite democracy at least as much as mass democracy and is strongly in favour of a *laissez-faire* society combined with a minimal, constitutional state. 'It is at least conceivable that under the government of a very homogeneous and doctrinaire majority democratic government might be as oppressive as the worst dictatorship,' Hayek warned.[25] Governance institutions should be as tightly circumscribed by law as necessary; they should also be as close as possible to the logic of the market, the least directive and most sensitive mechanism for determining public choice on an individual basis.

Hayek championed the voluntary association of individuals, the ultimate and best judges of their own ends. In line with this, in his classic *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, Nozick wrote: 'There is no social or political entity other than individuals,'[26] a statement that would later be reiterated by Margaret Thatcher, the champion of political neo-liberalism in the 1980s. Nozick championed a constitutional framework in which individuals are 'at liberty to join together voluntarily to pursue and attempt to realize their own vision of the good life ... but where no one can impose his own utopian vision upon others'.[27]

In Public Administration, the market economy is held up as an example to the government by public-choice theorists such as Vincent Ostrom. In this approach, the fragmentation of metropolitan government into different suppliers of public goods, with many different and even overlapping service areas, is not considered a hindrance to decisive top-down integration but a blessing for efficient bottom-up aggregation.[28]

. . . and practices

The work of Ostrom and sympathizers can be read as a justification of the Californian model: fragmentation both on the demand side and on the supply side of the public domain; the public domain conceived as a marketplace, regulated by market laws; bottom-up coordination, impelled by enlightened self-interest and demand-driven purchasing power; and the curbing of political forces that might intervene in any of this in all too activist ways. Voting with your feet (leaving if things are not to your liking) and voting with your hands (in referendums, opinion polls, consumer surveys, and the like) follow the same kind of logic: the logic of majoritarian and direct democracy.

Californian voter democracy, however, does not stop at voting with hands and feet. This is evident in a city like Los Angeles. On the one hand, LA is the tough City of Quartz,[29] the city of gated communities, where the privileged protect their interests in every possible way, and the city of the secession movement, with residents attempting to flee the city's framework by way of their ballots. On the other hand, LA is also the city of the neighbourhood council movement, devoting itself to establishing neighbourhood councils all over the city and to accomplishing goals in the public domain, such as gentrifying neighbourhoods, improving traffic flows, improving garbage collection and disposal services, etc. Voter democracy in LA, therefore, is not only inhibiting but also facilitating action, with democratic structures that are reminiscent of the New England town meetings and the Jeffersonian ward republics discussed earlier.[30]

The fact that voter democracy not only inhibits but also creates raises mixed feelings in conservative circles, especially now that the Californian liberals (social and political movements for women's lib, gay rights, ethnic minorities, etc.) use voter democracy to seek support and protection for their special interests and rights.

State, place, and society

We have explored pendulum democracy and consensus democracy in terms of their typical characteristics as umbrella systems. This cannot be done in the same way for voter democracy. Nowhere in the world is voter democracy the encompassing system of democracy, not even in those places in the US (see above) or Switzerland (see below) where the model has a relatively strong presence.[31]

Voter democracy does not present an encompassing framework but it does press for certain expressions of politics and government and for certain relations between the parts and the whole of a political community. What voter democracy presses for on the 'politics-executives' dimension (elaborating on Lijphart's dimension of the same name) and on the 'parts-whole' dimension (a variation on Lijphart's federal-unitary dimension) is listed ideal-typically below. In practice, expressions of voter democracy will tend to the following to a greater or lesser extent:

On the politics-executives dimension:

- *Curbed government* – division and restriction of executive power;
- *Civil co-governance* – citizens take an active part in day-to-day governance by way of citizens' assemblies, plebiscites, and other 'aggregators' of individual preferences;
- *Civil co-control* – citizens are permanently ready to blow the whistle on executive actors contributing to variegated checks and balances;
- *Pluralism of interests* – fragmentation and divergence in promoting interests.

On the parts-whole dimension:

- *Home rule* – local or sectional autonomy; decentralization and (con) federation;
- *Reductionism* – the whole is less (certainly not more) than the sum of its parts; the whole is dependent on its parts;
- *Market logic* – bottom-up coordination; loyalty dependent on end-user satisfaction; if not satisfied: voice, and if that does not help: exit;
- *Individual protection* – multiple safeguards against tyranny of the collective.

Just as the ideal type of pendulum democracy is an abstracted version of pendulum democracy in the UK, the ideal type of voter democracy is an abstracted version of voter democracy in the US. The ideal type is more comprehensive than the specific version of it. The US type of voter democracy is a particular expression rather than the inevitable destination of voter democracy.

Variations on a theme

One thing should be clear: if a referendum is being held somewhere, we do not yet have voter democracy. If you have one symptom, you do not yet have the entire syndrome. Much more important than having referendums is having citizens' initiative in governance. 'The referendum by itself entails

a very modest step toward direct democracy,' Lijphart wrote, 'but, combined with the initiative, it becomes a giant step.'[32]

The 'giant step' of the citizens' initiative – the possibility of citizens putting subjects on the election agenda with binding electoral results – is actually operational in a few countries only (the US and Switzerland). In countries such as Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and the UK, referendums are held with some – modest – regularity; citizens' initiative, however, is not an option. The referendums are constitutionally prescribed as after-the-fact checks in legislative processes that are subject to representative democracy. Or they are *ad hoc* referendums, held on the initiative of a parliamentary majority.[33] All in all, very modest steps towards voter democracy.

Referendums that are used *ad hoc* and strategically by the executive branch as legitimation of its power can hardly be considered as a strong expression of voter democracy. Setälä proposes to reserve the terms plebiscitarianism and populism for those special practices in which an authoritarian regime makes a direct appeal to the 'alienated masses' by way of a referendum, without the intervention of the mechanisms for control, self-determination, and self-protection that are typical of voter democracy.[34] In the recent past, such referendums were mainly held in Latin America and 'Latin Europe' (France, Spain, Italy). The most extreme and darkest examples of authoritarian-inspired and strategically used plebiscites were the ones held in Nazi Germany, to orchestrate massive acclaim for Germany leaving the League of Nations, Austria being joined up with Germany, and the offices of chancellor and president coming together in the leader of the Nazi movement, Adolf Hitler.[35]

Switzerland: a special case

Switzerland is a special case. This country presents both an alternative to the Californian referendum practice and a variation on the New England town meeting.[36]

The Swiss referendum practice can be broken down into: citizens' initiatives, in which citizens can place proposals on the ballot paper and enforce binding voter decisions; referendums that are mandatory by statute, in which the legislator is legally bound to submit its own legislation to the electorate for approval; and optional referendums, in which citizens or their democratic representatives may take the initiative to postpone the adoption of legislation by the federation pending a referendum outcome.[37]

The Swiss referendums impact not only federal politics in Bern but also politics in municipalities and cantons, which all have an established tradition of autonomy. The concept of the nation-state is weakly developed in Switzerland. Rather than the terms 'nation' and 'state', the Swiss prefer to use the terms 'federal' and, in earlier times, 'confederal'.[38] The 26 cantons are the pillars on which the (con)federation has been built. Anything that has not been explicitly allocated to the federal level (the *Bund*) falls within the self-evident competence of the cantons, whose sovereignty is constitutionally guaranteed and protected. Whatever has been allocated to the Federation is 'on loan' from the cantons rather than 'in possession' of the *Bund*.

In all Swiss cantons, citizens have the right to initiate referendums, both on constitutional and on legislative matters. In all cantonal constitutions (except those of the mountain cantons discussed below), it has been decreed that all crucial financial decisions, all legislation, and all constitutional changes must be submitted to the entire population by way of a referendum. At the local level, the use of the referendum is also widespread, although variable, with German-speaking towns generally surpassing French-speaking towns in this respect.

The mountain cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Glarus occupy an exceptional position, in which the assembled citizens can exercise direct power in the *Landsgemeinde*, an open-air assembly of all citizens,[39] who then decide on all major issues of the year by show of hands. These gatherings are generally held on the last Sunday in April or the first Sunday in May. In about 85% of the many small Swiss municipalities, a similar gathering of citizens takes decisions on local matters by a show of hands two to four times a year.[40] This 'municipal assembly' has interesting similarities with the New England town meeting, also a basically majoritarian form of direct democracy, with some deliberative elements added to it.

However, the political and governmental contexts in which these two institutions are operating, are quite different. The encompassing framework in the US chiefly tends towards pendulum democracy, supplemented with elements from consensus democracy in inter-governmental relations. The umbrella framework in Switzerland chiefly tends towards consensus democracy. In Lijphart's view, Switzerland and Belgium most closely match his ten characteristics of consensus democracy.[41] Swiss voter democracy, remarkably enough, cannot be understood in any other way than in tandem with Swiss consensus democracy. In Switzerland's divided society, voter democracy is only viable in combination with consensus democracy; in combination with pendulum democracy, it would be very hard to reach any compromise, which is imperative in Switzerland.

In the Swiss system, compromising between political rivals has been institutionally fixed. The distribution of seats in the federal government follows a standard formula, the *Zauberformel* of the *Proporzdemokratie*: 2:2:2:1. This used to be two seats for the Free Democrats, two for the Social Democrats, two for the Christian Democrats, and one for the Conservative People's Party. Since 2003, the last two parties have changed position, with the Christian Democrats now taking one seat and the Conservative People's Party taking two. Chairmanship rotates by way of tradition. Responsibility is shouldered collectively, not only at the federal level but also at other governmental levels, and also among the different levels of government. The Swiss desire to maintain solidarity in diversity led to the creation of an intimate complex of consultation, accommodation, and integration.

In a consensus system in which governmental responsibilities are interwoven to such a degree, voter democracy can play a useful role as an external lever, allowing outside influence to penetrate an insider system. Giving each other a rough time – difficult to accomplish among insiders of the consensus system – can be introduced from the outside by way of voter democracy. Parties that keep running into one another in the meeting room may start circulating stale air. A dose of voter democracy, as in a well-organized referendum, may help to prise open the door and let in a breath of much-needed fresh air.[42]

In the Swiss context with its many intertwined regional and sectional interests, public support of policy – the foundation under the house of cards – must be broad-based and solid if a plebiscite is to be faced with any kind of confidence. Swiss consensus democracy is thus reinforced and confirmed by voter democracy. Consensus democrats in Switzerland must do their utmost to keep the support necessary to keep things going. While consensus democracy is sharpened by voter democracy in Switzerland, voter democracy is in turn softened by consensus democracy. The consensual context in which it is embedded takes some of the edge off voter democracy as we have seen it in action in the US, especially in California. This is why Switzerland is discussed here as a more refined and special case of voter democracy, whereas California is presented as a less diluted and more typical example. Political elites have more room for manoeuvre in Switzerland than in California.[43] In Switzerland, voter democracy has a binding effect, which, however, tends to suit the government in many respects.[44] In California, voters put the squeeze on governors to a larger extent.[45]

In administrative practice, Switzerland does indeed turn out to be 'an uncommon exception rather than a trendsetter'.[46] This does not mean,

however, that it cannot serve as an instructive example to other countries that, just like Switzerland, are embedded in a context of consensus democracy: countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, and Germany.

Citizenship in voter democracy

In voter democracy, the individual voter and the act of voting are most prominent. Citizens are first and foremost voters, not just in general elections once every so many years, as in pendulum democracy, but as often as possible. Citizens and their choice signals are determining factors in the game of politics and government. This does not require citizens to be active in any hands-on sense, as in participatory democracy: other parties may do the hands-on job, as long as citizens can play a prominent part in making choices.

Citizens in voter democracy resemble customers in the marketplace, actively choosing between options presented to them as buy-or-not decisions. Do you want to see this policy proposal implemented, including its financial paragraph? Yes or no? Are you prepared to pay more tax to have this service improved? Yes or no? Voters make their choices, vote counters do their sums, and then it is decided whether there is sufficient critical mass – the required majority – to move on with a particular proposal. In line with all this, some consider the public domain as a kind of joint venture, with contractors on the one hand and 'citizen owners'[47] on the other, who, like shareholders, can vote with their hands and with their feet.

The idea that voter democracy embodies a consumerist kind of citizenship is often confirmed in California, the Valhalla of voter democracy. Citizens tend to hold the view that their wish is their governors' command. Voter democracy also has more classic expressions, as in the neighbourhood councils in Los Angeles, which have developed on the model of the town meeting. Here too, however, citizens are first and foremost voters (show of hands in town meetings) and demanders of public goods and services that are to be delivered by other parties (as the neighbourhood councils lack an executive branch).

In voter democracy, citizens are spectators who actively and regularly intervene in the action on stage. The modern interactive telecommunication media offer more and more opportunities for doing so. Some have visions of teledemocracy, involving citizens actively in steering and control mechanisms by way of televoting and thus providing input and feedback to public government through mobile phones, TV remote controls, and PC keyboards, all interlinked in networks of course.

It is a moot question whether such push-button citizenship will ever really take off. Isolated teledemocracy experiments so far have not had much follow-up and have mainly raised a lot of mixed feelings. Clearly, the public sector is having greater difficulty than the commercial sector in kindling the enthusiasm of large groups of citizens for televoting formats. Compare this to the massive success of TV shows like *Idols* and *Big Brother*, in which TV audiences play an important and recurrent role as voters. The fact that large groups of people are prepared to pay for being able to cast their vote (via text messages, for example) would seem to indicate that televoting is far from doomed. Voting is fun! Or, at least, it appears to be so to masses of people.[48]

Can commercial formulas for success also be used to make political voting more attractive? This question has already been taken up by the Flemish station VTM, considering a programme called 'Idols for politicians'. What we are waiting for is governors who have their activities monitored by a webcam and citizen-viewers who may then cast their televotes in order to adjust the course of action.

Leadership in voter democracy

In voter democracy, the distinction between leadership and citizenship is smaller than in pendulum or consensus democracy. Public leaders are often private individuals: volunteers organizing petitions, members of citizens' committees attempting to enforce a referendum, or public entrepreneurs who, by way of voter democracy, try to canvass support for an enterprise in the public domain. Such an enterprise may have a commercial or a non-commercial background, or a mixture of both.

An interesting example here is the website of MoveOn.org initiated by the Californian software entrepreneur Wes Boyd.[49] Having got rich selling screen savers, Boyd has now turned to 'the market of ideas' through MoveOn.org, free of charge, as he emphasizes. MoveOn.org is a virtual marketplace where campaigning ideas are put forth to 1.7 million Americans with e-mail connections to MoveOn.org. If they do not like a particular idea or want to adapt it, the campaigning idea is adjusted and submitted to larger audiences. Boyd considers his website a new, high-tech means of mobilizing voters, a means that serves not only the established voters but especially dissenting voters. Boyd's financial independence has turned MoveOn.org into a relatively inexpensive means of mobilizing voters in voter democracy and, as such, into something of a rarity in the Californian

setting. In Californian voter democracy, the voter mobilizing function has increasingly tended to fall into the hands of highly paid consultants, lawyers, and agencies specializing in rousing popular feeling and canvassing by phone, through the Internet, in door-to-door campaigns, in shopping malls, or in any other possible way. Half in jest, this is also called 'the initiative-industrial complex'.[50] If you wish to take the lead in Californian voter democracy, you had better be flush with funds.

In Switzerland, on the other hand, rules have been formulated that aim to prevent such Californian excesses. Signatures, for instance, are usually gathered by volunteers, to prevent citizen initiatives from being taken over by specialized interest groups. The integrative institutions of consensus democracy offer the representatives of interest groups other, and often better, channels for influencing policy-makers anyway. In the Swiss practice, leading actors may be ordinary citizens, or committed journalists, alarmed scientists, retired civil engineers, or anyone else, whatever their background, with an aptitude for organizing.

Leadership roles that suit consensus democracy or pendulum democracy are not accepted just like that in voter democracy. People who act patronizingly or high-handedly will meet with resistance in voter democracy. Compared to participatory democracy, however, voter democracy has little aversion to people who take the lead and, as such, claim a special position for themselves. If only they do so in a way that is appropriate in the eyes of the assertive individuals that are their grassroots or audience. If only they get their act together and manage to gain popular support.

Whether they act in a more 'private' context (California) or in a more 'public' context (Switzerland), initiators in voter democracy are expected to be effective and responsive brokers of political movement. In relatively horizontal and individualist settings, they must generate movement and rally support for a point of view on the public market of ideas. Some will call such brokers Pied Pipers. Advocates of voter democracy prefer to draw their metaphors from the domain of free professions – brokers, lawyers – who are there for free citizens to maintain transactional relations with.

Besides the image of political movement brokers, another image that suggests itself is that of a solicitor before a lay jury. Referendums and town meetings bear some similarity with trial by jury in the sense that collective decisions can go either way (yes/no, for/against), and that the opposing interests are promoted by advocates who need to win over the hearts and minds of a lay jury. An interesting detail here is the fact that the Californian organization that initiated the recall that was to be the downfall of Governor

Davis and was to usher in former movie actor Schwarzenegger went by the name of People's Advocate.

The setting of public meetings is sometimes modelled on the example of the lay jury. In the US, the Jefferson Center stages so-called citizen juries and policy juries. Members of such juries are citizens who may or may not be convinced by the arguments for or against particular policy plans or other proposals. The relation between such juries and official representative democracy is bound to be an awkward and tense one.

Discussion: commendation and criticism

Advocates of voter democracy, such as Jonathan in our opening debate, often claim that voter democracy is the purest form of democracy. First of all, they assume that this is where the literal meaning of democracy is most clearly expressed as 'the rule of the people'; each citizen counts for as much as the next one; and there is no distinction between subjects and those put above them. In addition, they assume that voter democracy is the clearest expression of the democratic principle: one man – one vote; each vote counts for the same; and the majority rules. Anything that deviates from these principles, such as *in*direct democracy and *non*-majoritarian democracy, they feel, is a deviation from true democracy.

Advocates of voter democracy seek justification for their preference in the long tradition of liberal, libertarian, and partly anarchistic thought.[51] Contemporary supporters of voter democracy are remarkably often to be found in the world of the Internet and the new media. The Internet journal *Wired* calls libertarianism 'the dominant political philosophy of the Internet'.[52] The Internet, the network of networks interconnecting the new media, is assumed to play a crucial role in the process of what Murray calls 'returning power to the citizens', in his book *What it Means to Be a Libertarian*.[53] And this is true democratization, as ICT gurus like Gates and Negroponte proclaim from every platform where they speak.[54] ICT specialist and political scientist Frissen sings the praises of the anarchistic dimension of the Internet: its centrelessness, its individual impetus, and its horizontal, communicative, and transactional relations.[55] All of these are matters that are celebrated in voter democracy.

Such admiration is not only inspired by abstract and philosophical considerations. Concrete expressions of voter democracy often have a spirit of great optimism, vitality, and public responsibility in a way that does not leave even critics unmoved. A good example is the French aristocratic

freethinker De Tocqueville, who, despite his fundamental criticism of American democracy, also wrote admiringly about democratic practices such as the New England town meeting, about the active civic culture that supports such democratic practices and that, in return, is summoned up by it. US democracy inspires individual citizens to engage in voluntary association, which is a great good, as De Tocqueville recognized: 'Sentiments and ideas renew themselves, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed only by the reciprocal action of men upon one another.'[56]

Opposed to this is De Tocqueville's fundamental criticism of majoritarian equality thinking in US democracy. In the Frenchman, raised in a hierarchical, aristocratic world in which all knew their place and higher thoughts always prevailed over simply counting votes, the logic of US democracy – all men are equal and the majority rules – raised fundamental questions. De Tocqueville was particularly concerned about the 'velvet tyranny' into which majoritarian equality thinking might degenerate. 'The power that the majority in America exercises over thought' is what De Tocqueville called it: 'When the majority has irrevocably settled on a question, there is no more discussion.'[57] Essential values that do not take pride of place in day-to-day life may be liable to suffer. The fact that this is not happening on a massive scale in the US, according to De Tocqueville, is due to two counterbalances: the constitution and, in particular, the ethics of American civil society.

If these two counterbalances lose weight or if voter democracy gains too much weight, democracy is in danger. According to Zakaria, the danger of inadequate counterbalances is a very real one in those young democracies in the Third and the former Second World that did not first take or get time to develop a civil society and a liberal constitution-cum-market economy.[58] In a situation like that, risking too much democracy too fast would be playing with fire. There is the very real danger of majority decision-making being abused to curb fundamental freedoms and political ways and means of minorities.

In the First World, however, there is also the danger of an excess of voter democracy. In California, where voter democracy has progressed more than anywhere else,[59] the point has been reached where voter democracy, instead of serving the individual, has become a threat to the individual. Californian voter democracy has increasingly become the playground of well-to-do interest groups and other Pied Pipers, who have the funds and organization to make the initiative-industrial complex work for them and to buy individual referendums and citizens' initiatives. As a consequence, as Zakaria writes, we have a state verging on anarchy: 'A jungle of laws that

are often contradictory and have come into being without a trace of the debate, the appraisal, and the compromises that are characteristic of sound legislation.'[60]

Critics of direct and majoritarian democracy have long since warned against the kind of majority decision-making that is ill-considered, helter-skelter, and rushing from incident to incident. This appears to have become reality in California. Zakaria compares such precipitate rushing of yet another majority, impelled by yet another opinion poll, to the behaviour of lemmings. It is also not unlike the so-called tragedy of the commons: for each individual separately, voter democracy may seem like a good idea, but for all individuals together it may have tragic effects.[61] The tragedy is rooted not only in the quality of the resulting decision-making but also in the quality of political leadership and democratic citizenship. Barber points to the decline of the American civic culture, once acclaimed by De Tocqueville and many after him, but now increasingly in the clutches of cynicism and consumerism, the shallow culture of 'McWorld'.[62]

At this point, the image that is invariably produced is that of the bored couch potato, or 'Joe Citizen – bored with baseball and too broke for video gambling'.[63] Voter democracy is increasingly coming his way, causing him, perversely, to sink deeper and deeper into his proverbial couch. Politicians in voter democracy have bowed deeper and deeper in their effort to keep their ear to the ground. This bowed position has eroded respect for and trust in politics,[64] with two types of politician being the particular butt of criticism: the compliant weathervane and the touting Pied Piper. Both of these need to be able to please majorities and wait on popular sentiment. In both cases, however, this generally does not engender long-lasting respect and trust.[65]

As voter democracy is most clearly expressed in the US, this is also where commendation and criticism are expressed in the most vivid colours. The picture is much more variegated in less sharply defined forms of voter democracy, as in Switzerland, where the sharp edges of voter democracy have been rounded off by a dominant consensus model. For Swiss governors, with voter democracy hanging over them like a sword of Damocles, the combination of voter democracy and consensus democracy not only means that they must stay alert. It also means that they must pay extra attention to what is at the core of consensus democracy: closing gaps in public support. In the Swiss context, this is imperative in order to launch a referendum with any kind confidence. This is a lever that does not appear in voter democracy on its own, but it does appear in combination with consensus democracy.[66]

Lessons: strengths and weaknesses

The core qualities of voter democracy are the mobilization of private initiative, the activation of individual responsibility, and trust in the voluntary association of citizens on the basis of their enlightened self-interest. The associated pitfalls, allergies, and challenges ensue from these qualities. Again looking for a city to illustrate these aspects, we turn to the biggest and most Californian of metropolises on the American west coast: Los Angeles.[67]

An example of private initiative with political implications is the previously mentioned neighbourhood council movement, which, in the multitude of Los Angeles neighbourhoods, is trying to achieve many different kinds of popular, bottom-up neighbourhood government. Structure (neighbourhood government) follows strategy (private initiative) rather than the other way around. Citizens' preferences come first; the rest follows from there. The same logic is manifest in the city's spatial planning, which is strongly guided by private housing preferences (detached low-rise housing, preferably with a private plot) and individual mobility needs (no restrictions for motorists, preferably on the freeway).

The logic of the buyers' market affects the supply of public policy, which has been dissolved over many suppliers in many different spheres of action and tax areas. In voter democracy, tolerance of such dissolution is relatively high. An allergic reaction tends to occur against comprehensive collective arrangements, which are associated with collective viscosity and inflexibility. Among the array of public policy suppliers, there is one monolith: the Los Angeles city council, which has been causing antagonism for many years. This antagonism has manifested itself not only in the above-mentioned neighbourhood council movement but also in the more radical secession movement. Citizens in districts such as the San Fernando Valley and the Port Area have devoted themselves with great doggedness to referendums that aim to achieve secession and independence.[68] Concerned observers fear political Balkanization and further harmful effects on the urban tissue.

Core quality: private initiative, voluntary association	Pitfall: public recklessness, tragedy of the commons
Allergy: collective viscosity	Challenge: collective self-control

Figure 5.1 Voter democracy: qualities and drawbacks

This takes us to the right-hand side of Figure 5.1. Balkanization of the city, one could say, is a particular act in the tragedy of the commons, which also poses a threat to the city in other respects, as in its spatial planning. What is a quality in some respects – receptiveness to individual preferences – may turn into its opposite if taken too far: each individual wish to be mobile in the end causes everyone's collective immobility; everyone's desire for a free living space causes the city to run up against its natural boundaries ('sprawl hits the wall') and imperils its quality of life.

Not quite by chance, there is a parallel here with the tragedy of Californian voter democracy which we observed earlier: for each individual separately it appears to have advantages, but for all collectively it may have major disadvantages. The challenge, as usual, is to avoid the pitfall without losing the core quality and without provoking the allergy too much. For voter democracy, this means it must learn to control itself at the collective level in a way that is non-collectivist in itself but ties in with the idea of enlightened self-interest and the tendency for broadly defined self-protection that is common to voter democracy.

Conclusion

The strengths and weaknesses inherent in voter democracy – related to its core qualities and its greatest pitfalls, discussed in this chapter – are listed in Figure 5.2.

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Private initiative	Public recklessness
Voluntary association	Tragedy of the commons
Client-oriented government	Weathervane politics
Result-oriented government	Expectation management
Vibrant civic culture	Tending towards consumerism
Trust in the individual	Distrust of the collective
Scope for multiformity	Danger of anomie, disengagement
Equality in liberty	Survival of the strongest
Business-like efficiency	Instrumental coldness

Figure 5.2 Voter democracy: strengths and weaknesses

6

Participatory Democracy

All Together Now

Largely under the influence of Jürgen Habermas, the idea that democracy revolves around the transformation rather than simply the aggregation of preferences has become one of the major positions in democratic theory.

Jon Elster, political philosopher[1]

Introduction

It is distinctive of participatory democracy that, ideally, democracy is shaped interactively from the bottom up. The democratic process is driven by participants in the public domain rather than by guardians in the political or professional domains. The democratic process is an interactive one, both in the consideration and in the implementation of plans. Democracy is not only decision-making, it is also doing. Ideally, joint will formation and harmonious cooperation go hand in hand. Participatory democracy is 'self-government by citizens rather than representative government in the name of citizens', Barber writes, stressing that this involves more than the expression and aggregation of preferences: 'Self-government is carried on through institutions designed to facilitate ongoing civic participation in agenda-setting, deliberation, legislation, and policy implementation.'[2]

The rhetoric of participatory democracy resembles that of voter democracy in some respects. Supporters of participatory democracy and of voter democracy readily agree that real democracy goes from the bottom up. However, there are also some major differences, relating to the distinction

between the aggregation and the transformation of preferences. In participatory democracy, preferences are not aggregated quasi-mechanically, as in voter democracy, but they are transformed, through a process of social interaction, into something that is 'more than the sum of its parts' according to the holistic logic of participatory democracy (see Figure 6.1).

The idea of participatory democracy has an established tradition going back to antiquity, especially to the Greek type of 'developmental republicanism' with its emphasis on the intrinsic – more than instrumental – value of political participation.[3] In more recent times, roughly since the 1960s, discourse about participatory democracy has acquired new expressions, such as recent theorizing on 'communicative' and 'deliberative' democracy; both concepts are strongly influenced by the work of the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas.[4] Here I have opted for the term 'participatory democracy' because it is more comprehensive, less confined to a particular place and time, and less restricted to a select citation circle. Habermas may have reinvented participatory democracy in an authoritative way – focusing on late-modern society – but he has no patent pending: the combination of direct and aggregative democracy has been tried

Voter democracy	Participatory democracy
- Public opinion-making is the result of aggregating individual preference indicators.	- Public opinion-making is more than a mere addition of individual preferences.
- Preference-indicating populations must be broadly based and lend themselves to statistical aggregation; small is not necessarily beautiful.	- The quality of the involvement is more important than the quantity of the collected preference indicators; the bigger is not the better.
- A democratic policy arena operates like a competitive market of ideas.	- Democratic policy emerges from integration and exchange, not from an ideas race.
- Most effective are matches between the consumers and suppliers of public goods.	- Most effective are deliberations among citizens (rather than consumers vis-à-vis producers).
- What makes democracy tick is the free speech of free agents.	- What makes democracy tick is committed dialogue, not disengaged monologue.
- Self-government requires fast data-collection and -processing technology.	- Self-government is based on intense human contact.
- The speed of modern technology promotes the democratic process.	- Haste makes waste for communal will formation.

Figure 6.1 Participatory democracy opposed to voter democracy

and tested elsewhere, before, and differently. Participatory democracy has not only a cerebral side ('considering problems together', 'discussing solutions together') but also a physical, action-oriented side ('tackling problems together', 'operationalizing solutions together'), as will be shown below.

Participatory democracy, for instance

Participatory democracy figures less prominently in descriptive than in prescriptive democratic theory. In practice, this type of democracy runs up against difficulties, such as the difficulty of operating in direct-democratic and integrative ways on a large scale and at a macro-level. This makes it a dispersed, shredded, and fluid phenomenon in empirical practice. It is actually there, in many expresssions, but you need to take a close look to see it.

Movements in the sub-political sphere

In Dryzek's view, types of participatory democracy are mainly to be found in the networks of New Social Movements (NSMs), which aim to influence government in 'sub-political' and 'post-parliamentary' ways: from the bottom up and from the outside in. One way of doing this is by setting a good example to others.[5] Well-known NSMs are the anti-globalization movement, the anti-apartheid movement, the anti-nuclear-power movement, the green movement, the squatters' movement, the peace movement, and movements for gay rights, women's rights, and human rights in general.

Taking Amsterdam as her subject, Virginie Mamadouh sketched a vivid picture of NSMs manifesting themselves in urban space in the 1965–1985 period: Provos, Kabouters, and squatters.[6] Despite their mutual differences, these movements were very participatory-democracy-minded. In the Provo movement, participation meant concrete action ('happenings'), convocations ('provocations'), and playful plans (such as the famous white bicycle plan). The Provo movement fought for greater participation and decentralization, away from government by regents. Such ideas were taken one level up in the 'Orange Free State', the free state of the Amsterdam Kabouters,[7] driven by autonomous 'people's departments' (clusters of

action groups working in a specific domain) and people's assemblies (weekly public meetings). The Orange Free State was presented as an 'anti-authoritarian councils-democracy', putting direct participation above indirect representation.

In the squatters' movement, participatory democracy was implemented right down to the most concrete level: that of communes and their house meetings: 'All those involved had to decide rather than just a small group of representatives. Reaching consensus, with everyone supporting a decision, was preferred to having majority points of view,'[8] Mamadouh writes, proceeding to point out the weak spot: 'In every group, there are people who do not support a decision, an action, or a point of view. In squatters' groups, this often meant blazing rows and, eventually, secessions.'[9] Similar experiments with participatory and communal living appeared in some other European cities at the same time; a famous example is the 'free state' Christiana in Copenhagen.

To support the complex and time-consuming process of reaching consensus, some NSMs follow special procedures. In an Internet manual, with the revealing motto 'From bossy democracy to basic democracy', the US Food Not Bombs action group propagates a 'formal consensus decision-making' method.[10] This method distinguishes three levels of decision-making, each ending in a call for consensus, and has several formulas for coping with dissent: a proposal is shelved; a proposal is reconsidered by a committee; or a proposal is carried forward because the objector 'stands aside'. Special circumstances may require a proposal being put to the vote, which is subject to the rule that it takes 'an overwhelming majority, of more than 75%, for example' to accept it. Consensus remains the ideal.

New Social Movements that aim to mobilize many people simultaneously, such as the anti-globalization movement, cannot escape division of labour. This commonly involves the development of federative constructions with decentralized collectives, combining into a central collective, and 'affinity groups' that support and supplement each other and operate semi-autonomously. All this works well as long as there is a shared ideology that serves to synchronize points of view and ward off ceaseless stalemates. Inexorable disagreement – between the moderates and the strictly orthodox, for instance – may cause discussions to get bogged down in endless hair-splitting. A notorious example here would be the interminable party conferences of the German Grünen, a green political party, built on a foundation of New Social Movements.[11]

Communal self-government

An interesting example of communal self-government is the Israeli kibbutz, 300 of which have stood the test of time after a century of experimentation.[12] A kibbutz is a communal settlement consisting of several family groups. Within the kibbutz, everyone is equal. Jobs and possessions are equally distributed in line with the principle of 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need'. Private possessions and hierarchical relations are taboo.

The kibbutz movement has grown over nearly a hundred years. Several undercurrents, such as anarchism, communism, and feminism, have left their traces. In its early days, when kibbutzim were still small, a kibbutz most resembled the egalitarian ideal of the extended family, as described by John Fidler.[13] 'Social life revolved around the dining room, where people would meet, eat and talk. Decisions were made by direct democracy. In discussions, which often continued late into the night, members would decide how to allocate the following day's work, guard duties, kitchen chores and other tasks.'

In a later period, we see the rise of bigger kibbutzim with inevitably more division of labour and coordination. In the bigger kibbutzim, decisions are often prepared by specialized committees, invariably pursuing broad-based support and, preferably, consensus. This is not only predicated on an egalitarian ideology that likes to keep everybody on board but is also rooted in the fact that each decision, even the tiniest one, can be appealed in the kibbutz General Meeting. Committees, therefore, must proceed in an inclusive and integrative fashion.

Alternative communities and communes outside Israel may recognize a lot in the kibbutz model.[14] This is also the other way around, wrote Michael Livni, after he had explored commune life outside the confines of the Israeli kibbutz, which he knew so well: 'Most communes try to make decisions on the basis of consensus, some on consensus minus-one (. . .) If no consensus is reached, there comes another round of preparation.' He also notices a strong tendency to improve the world by transforming one's lifestyle ('think globally, act locally'), and matriarchal, feminine leadership. In some exclusively female communes, this is translated into a special conception of democracy – femocracy – in which soft power is supposed to rule.[15]

Some expressions of communal self-government are inspired by a particular type of anarchism, associated with Bakunin, who in turn took his cue from Proudhon. The latter envisioned a (con)federal society, consisting of small, nearly autonomous, sub-societies, cooperating with little or no

central direction. Finer summarizes the political philosophy, a clearly egalitarian one, as follows: 'Abolish property and also dismantle the state-apparatus and man would be liberated so that his better nature would at last have full scope.'[16]

Mythical cases of popular government

Then there are the mythical popular governments of yesteryear that, rightly or wrongly, have grown to be the recurrent reference points in thinking about participatory democracy. One might think of highly fleeting experiments with proletarian self-government, the most famous and renowned example of all being the Paris Commune. After France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and the fall of Napoleon III, the autonomous Paris Commune had its short-lived and turbulent heyday from 18 March until 28 May 1871. After the mutinous Paris military, supported by groups of labourers, had first seized power using brute force, they then tried to define the central tenets of proletarian self-government: collectivizing the means of production, levelling socio-political relations, making the Commune independent, and identifying the Commune with the working classes, which were assumed to be a holistic unity.

Karl Marx called the Paris Commune 'the Paris working classes organized as state power'.[17] Elections were staged for this 'state power' on 26 March 1871, but, in contrast with pendulum democracy or consensus democracy, these did not result in a voter mandate but in a permanent accountability imperative. Each individual that was elected, was removable and replaceable at any given moment. Those elected served as the executive 'hands' to the Commune's 'body'. They were supposed to do the hands-on jobs that served the communal interest. Playing a part in self-government was considered just labour and was carried out for average labourer's wages. The Commune's day-to-day practice was exceedingly turbulent, as was the context in which it was developed, with internal tensions between moderates and (neo-)Jacobins being added to external threats, resulting in perpetual mutual violence. On 28 May, the insurrection of the Paris Commune was quashed and the experiment was over.[18]

Ancient Athens

One might also think of bottom-up self-government in the classical city-states, with Athens being the most mythical example.[19] The Athens city-state differed from the Paris Commune in several respects, but there is one

important parallel: the *polis* was represented as a holistic unity that was expressed by its base, with this base being indistinguishable from the *demos*. When an Athenian filled a position, he did so as an agent of the unity, not as an authorized representative set apart from the unity by his own mandate. In Athenian mythology, therefore, there was no such thing as a difference or a divide between citizens and government. The myth held that sovereignty lay with the *demos* and that this coalesced with government or *kratia*.

With the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes, round about 500 BC, the Athenian *demos* had at least four ways of expressing itself: in the People's Assembly (the *ekklesia*), the Council of 500 (the *Boulé*), the Law Courts (the *dikasteria*), and the Magistracies (the *archai*).[20] The People's Assembly was the most important one of these in a symbolic sense. It convened in the open once every nine days on average. All 30,000 free men of Athens had equality in freedom of speech (*isègoria*) and between 4,000 and 6,000 men attended the Assembly in practice.[21]

These were usually followed by meetings of the Council of 500. Attica was divided into ten tribes, each composed of three kinds of areas of residence: one city region, one coastal region, and one inland region. The ten tribes each delegated fifty members to the Council of 500. The Council of 500 served as the preparatory organ to the People's Assembly and was prevented in many ways from growing into an independent mandate holder. The political year was divided into ten periods, so the presidium could be allocated to the next tribe every 35 or 36 days. Chairmanship of the day was decided by drawing lots. An individual was barred from serving for more than two non-consecutive years. Because many different *demes* were herded together and because those *demes* that might be affected by a decision were excluded from voting procedures on that decision, policy-making along factional or district-based lines was mostly discouraged. The Council of 500 was meant to serve the whole, not the parts.

At the start of each People's Assembly, bills and recommendations (*proboulemia*) of the Council of 500 were put to the vote one by one. If there was a single dissenting vote, the bill remained on the agenda for further amendment. This was followed by elaborate debate, not only in the foremost ranks of the People's Assembly but also on the marketplace, the *agora*, and in other places in the public domain. When an amended bill was once again put to the vote, the object was to reach unanimity by show of hands: first the ayes, then the nays. To publicly reject a bill that many had just passed required one to be very sure-footed. The rule barring interested parties from voting also served to curb protectionist voting behaviour

driven by sectional self-interest. Bills were meant to be legitimized in terms of the general interest. Strategic behaviour was condemned and was liable to punishment by the Popular Courts or by so-called ostracism, expelling a citizen in a procedure using potsherds as voting tokens.[22]

The Law Courts were meant to counterbalance overconfidence and inflated rhetoric, much needed in the Athenian culture of combat and debate. They were populated by Athenians chosen by lot. Drawing lots was also the common means of selection for the magistracies, with 700 rotating citizens being chosen by lot. By way of exception, generals and financial experts were the only categories to be selected in elections. In Athens, elections were not considered an expression of democracy but rather of its opposite, aristocracy: government by the 'most excellent'.[23]

As a functional, sustainable system – it was in operation for the better part of two centuries – Athenian democracy came remarkably close to the logic of participatory democracy. Though not every citizen participated in government to the same degree, the logic of direct democracy clearly prevailed over that of indirect democracy. Though decisions were taken not only on a consensus basis but also on the basis of large majorities, the logic of abundant deliberation and integration at the collective level took precedence over the logic of rapid aggregation of preferences and interest-based politics at the individual level.[24] Voting rounds were not aiming to find the most widely supported partial interest but to discover the all-transcending city interest, which Rousseau was later to call the *volonté générale*.[25]

Participatory democracy = all together now

The now commonly accepted, favourable assessment of Athenian democracy is of relatively recent date. At least up until the eighteenth century, the conjunction of 'Athens' and 'democracy' in a single phrase would call forth negative associations in the minds of those who studied government. As it did for Plato, it called up erratic movements among the people and sly rabble-rousing rhetoricians. In the revaluation of Athenian democracy, two wave-like motions are striking:

- the rise of eighteenth-century neo-classical participation thinking, which continued to have an effect well into the nineteenth century;
- the rise of radical participation thinking in the twentieth century, particularly since the 1960s.

In *Participation and Democratic Theory*, the protest generation's much-thumbed handbook, Carole Pateman distinguishes between neo-classical

participation thinkers who are rightly seen as the inheritors of Athens, with Rousseau at the head, and thinkers who are erroneously associated with Athens, in particular Bentham and James Mill, who are conceived as narrowing down participation to a 'protective device' for individual interests.[26] They contrast rather greatly with Rousseau and his idea of the *volonté générale*: the general will represented as a collective possession transcending and subordinating partial interests.

Bentham and James Mill contemplated the selection of representatives who should be able to legitimately exercise state functions; Rousseau opposed this with his idea of the people's indivisible sovereignty:

> Sovereignty cannot be represented for the same reason it cannot be alienated. Essentially, it consists of the general will, and a will cannot be represented. Either we have it itself, or it is something else (. . .) The people's deputies are not, and could not be, its representatives; they are merely its agents; and they cannot decide anything finally (. . .) The English people believes itself to be free; it is gravely mistaken; it is free only during the election of Members of Parliament; as soon as the members are elected, the people is enslaved.[27]

Ideally, each member of the political community should participate in collective will formation, as in the myth of the Greek city-state, Rousseau wrote. However, he also recognized that the desired model of direct democracy needed to be adjusted if the political community grew too large. In that case, delegates would have a role to play, albeit a minor one, as indicated in the quotation above. Delegates could never be more than the hands of the indivisible body of citizens, united as one people by the social contract, acting like a single sovereign unity. The great body of citizens needed practical 'hands' to organize its public meeting, which should preferably lead to consensus and unanimity on public issues. In Rousseau's mind this would not give an ultimate veto to minorities. One finger could and should not stop the whole body from moving in a certain direction.

A particular way of assembling the community on a relatively broad base was through the open town assembly, the *Volkssammlung*, the *grosse Rat*, or great council: institutions that had developed in the later Middle Ages in a range of city republics and towns in Italy and Europe at large – including Rousseau's native 'Republic of Geneva', as well Marsilius of Padua's native city-state of Padua. In practice, these city republics exhibited oligarchical elements as well as republican elements – inner circles of the elites in relatively small numbers, besides great councils assembling the *popolo* in relatively great numbers – and 'developmental-republican' tendencies as well as 'protective-republican' tendencies. In Marsilius of Padua's

normative theory of the city republic, however, notions of civic self-governance and developmental republicanism clearly dominate, which makes him one of the most important predecessors of Rousseau.[28]

Later on, Rousseau's conception of democracy influenced that of Pateman, who, in her turn, influenced ideas on 'maximum attainable participation', which spread like wildfire in schools and universities, welfare institutions, and even some companies in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. An early expression of these ideas is the 1962 manifesto *Students for a Democratic Society*, which listed some fundamentals of participatory democracy:

> ... that decision making of basic social consequence be carried on by public groups; that politics be seen positively, as the art of collectively creating an acceptable pattern of social relations; that politics has the function of bringing people out of isolation and into community; that the political order should ... provide outlets for the expression of personal grievance and aspiration ... so that private problems ... are formulated as general issues.[29]

In other words: the personal is political, and the political must be open and inclusive, aiming to resocialize the individual and to transform and reform society.[30]

Communicative/deliberative democracy

Communicative or deliberative democracy is a superior type of participatory democracy, or so its adherents would have it. The crux here is not only the broad-based participation of all involved but particularly the sensible interaction between all those involved. The idea is that if you open up to 'the other' and intensify dialogue between a variety of participants in debates, this produces richer decisions. The most influential theory in this respect is Habermas' theory of communicative action. Such action is:

- *Inclusive*, based on many-sidedness, rather than on one-sidedness or party politics; open to anything and anyone; fundamentally non-closed;
- *Open*, in the sense of genuinely communicative, speaking openly and above board; non-strategic, non-manipulative communication;
- *Powerfree*, based on knowledge and conviction, not on social distinction or powerplay;
- *Argumentative*, based on extensive and systematic exchange of arguments – on the 'unforced force of the better argument' – rather than on aggregation or negotiation;

- *Transformative*, meaning that interests are not exchanged but enriched while working towards broad-based consensus.

The ideal, communicative 'speech situation', in Habermas' view, is characterized by power equality, safeguards against manipulation, preconditions for veracity, equal opportunities in taking initiative, and equal opportunities for criticism for all around. Elaborating on Habermas, Benhabib then added another element: everyone may put up for discussion the meeting's rules and regulations; the structure is never more important than the process of common deliberation.[31]

There are variations on this theme as well as alternative concepts, such as Dryzek's 'discursive democracy' and Cohen and Sabel's 'directly-deliberative polyarchy',[32] but essentially what is at stake here is an egalitarian concept as outlined above. Dryzek puts it as follows: no exchange, no force, no hierarchy, no irreversible rules, and no limits to participation. Though Habermas' ideal communicative situation is open to anyone, it is virtually impossible to meet the conditions for communicative action for anyone who does not endorse egalitarian rules and relations.[33]

State, place, and society

Nowhere in the world is participatory democracy the encompassing model of national or local democracy. If participatory democracy is doing well anywhere, it is doing so in the way algae grow in a river: below the surface, without a clear centre, and without an exclusive location.[34] In order to render it visible, therefore, great perceptivity is required; this requires an attention-focusing framework like the one below. This framework sketches the ideal-typical characteristics of participatory democracy along two axes: the politics-executives dimension (a variation on Lijphart's politics-executives dimension) and the parts-whole dimension (a variation on his federal-unitary dimension). Expressions of participatory democracy all tend, to a greater or lesser extent, towards the following ideal-typical characteristics:

On the politics-executives dimension:

- *Small-scale governance* – the self-governing *polis* is small, and small is beautiful in politics and policies;
- *Collective practical action* – governance is collective and hands-on; all politics is local;

- *Collective critical control* – as 'big brother', the participating collective is always watching; it incessantly calls for accountability;
- *Ideational convergence* – shared ideals and ideas on the general interest make for concerted action.

On the parts-whole dimension:

- *Voluntary bottom-up confluence* – autonomous parts are voluntarily involved in the whole;
- *Holistic consensus* – the whole is more than the sum of its parts; the whole is the sense-making framework;
- *Radical loyalty* – voice and loyalty as preferential options; exit and secession as fall-back options;
- *Collectivistic self-defence* – guarding of interests at group level; united we stand, divided we fall.

Variations on a theme

Participatory democracy does not occur as a single unadulterated type in practice. There are variations on this theme, ranging in their ways and degrees of approaching the ideal type mentioned above.

Strong democracy

An example of an author who puts participatory democracy centre stage, enriched by notions from other models of democracy, is Benjamin Barber.[35] He propagates 'strong democracy', which is democracy that amounts to more than periodical elections, which would be 'weak democracy'. Barber's strong democracy is a deliberative democracy, open and accessible to citizens from all walks of life, but, in addition, a democracy that has institutionalized consultation with civil society organizations. This is how Barber, starting with participatory democracy, reaches out to consensus democracy. He also links up with voter democracy by arguing in favour of national referendums and electronic town meetings. Such aggregative arrangements, he argues, are useful, provided that they are curbed by forceful, integrative institutions: national forums for discussion and real-life neighbourhood assemblies. Barber does not opt for an unadulterated deliberative model, as the type of democracy he contemplates must be able to function in real life.

Deliberative opinion polling

'Democracy without deliberation leads to plebiscitary excesses like the California recall, deliberation without democracy leads to frustration and disempowerment', says Barber in his recommendation of the book *Deliberation Day* by Ackerman and Fishkin.[36] Like him, these authors devote themselves to bridging the gap between aggregative voting (measuring preferences) and integrative deliberation (transforming preferences). Deliberative polling is a mixture of these two, with Deliberation Day serving as a hypothetical operationalization.

In Ackerman and Fishkin's conception, Deliberation Day would be a national holiday that precedes presidential elections.[37] Everywhere in the nation, this would be the day for citizens to enter into debate with each other, following the rules of deliberative democracy. The idea is not to reach ultimate decisions, as in unadulterated participatory democracy, but to improve ways of electing a person in authority who eventually has the final say. US presidential elections are of a majoritarian and indirect nature and would remain that way, but Deliberation Day would add some direct and deliberative elements to the pre-election build-up. Deliberation Day would improve the 'key' to American politics – public opinion – so it will open the right door on Election Day.[38]

Deliberation Day is a dream that has not yet come true, but it is based on deliberative polling experiments that have actually been carried out. Fishkin has supervised more than twenty deliberative polls, half of them in the US and half of them elsewhere: in the UK, Denmark, Bulgaria, and Australia. In deliberative polling, a quantitative opinion poll is submitted to a representative sample of citizens both at the beginning and at the end of deliberative discussions. The citizens are given all the information they need to explore an issue. The outcome of the deliberative poll is presented to the eventual decision-makers as informed advice and as an urgent appeal.

Proponents of deliberative polling feel its strength is that it induces learning as it transforms public opinion into a better informed opinion and, subsequently, brings about more consistent preferences and more broad-minded views.[39] Hence, deliberative opinion polling is taken to be a happy marriage of quantitative measurement and qualitative opinion-making: 'a poll with a human face.'[40]

One might wonder what deliberative opinion polling has to add to proportional-representation systems, in which citizens are already elected proportionally to explore public issues as representatives. An important difference is that, in deliberative polling, changing groups of citizens are

given the opportunity to have their say. The conclusions of deliberative opinion polls are submitted as urgent advice to representative bodies. These are often reluctant to take it as they do not like to have their space for autonomous opinion-making reduced. 'Informed public opinion', supporters of deliberative democracy feel, is superior to 'raw public opinion'. Representative councils, however, generally prefer to see the latter rather than the former.

Citizen governance

This very same problem is evident in related initiatives such as planning cells, mini-publics, citizen juries, citizen committees, and empowered participation. Besides these, somewhat weaker variants of such initiatives can be distinguished, such as citizen panels, focus groups, public meetings, consensus conferences, scenario workshops, and visioning exercises. In this latter series, there is a greater degree of acceptance of advisory roles and a non-representative design.[41]

The idea of the *planning cell*, developed in Germany as *Planungszelle*, stands midway between deliberative polling and Deliberation Day. In a variety of places in a certain area, such as different towns in a region or different neighbourhoods in a city, several small, representative groups of citizens – the planning cells – are invited to explore planning issues. The work results of all these cells are aggregated and integrated in a way that is supposed to benefit the overall planning process.[42] In practice, this idea runs up against difficulties relating to the fact that planning notions do not lend themselves well to being both aggregated ánd integrated in one procedure. The same difficulties arise in related experiments with *citizen forums* or *mini-publics*, assembling more or less representative groups of people to deliberate on public issues (possibly, but not necessarily planning issues).[43]

The *planning cell* served as a source of inspiration for Forum Amsterdam, an experiment in participatory democracy in the Dutch capital in the mid-1990s. Forum Amsterdam dealt with Amsterdam's future and, more specifically, with the construction of the city's new north–south underground line. This theme was explored from a variety of perspectives, first in mini-forums, then in clusters of mini-forums, and finally in round-table discussions. Whereas the original planning cells aimed to unite talk and measurement, Forum Amsterdam clearly meant to integrate different kinds of expertise rather than aggregate signals of representative groups of citizens. Its results, consequently, were less 'hard' and 'inevitable' than those of a planning cell should have been, according to their devisers.[44]

Citizen juries operate with small samples of citizens (12 to 24 people) who explore issues as members of the jury. Witnesses are heard and evidence is examined by the jury. Depending on whether their final verdicts are the outcome of integrative or aggregative processes, citizen juries range somewhere between participatory democracy and voter democracy on the analytical playing field. If a citizen jury is given little scope for deliberation and is expected to vote rapidly, it truly belongs in the domain of voter democracy.[45]

Citizen committees are functional committees of citizens who are involved not as consumers but as makers of specific policies. 'Citizens become governors instead of customers,' said Richard Box as a proponent of this model.[46] Professionals become supporters instead of initiators. The local council is present in the background as a coordinating unit, which means there is plenty of scope for the previously mentioned tension. Despite all the participatory rhetoric, the local council has the final say.

Empowered participation is a variety of participatory democracy that has been tested in two major public services – the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) – in the city of Chicago. In both cases, the organizations have been decentralized to neighbourhood level and have been made responsive to citizens' participation. What makes such participation 'empowered' is that citizens can actually influence decisions that have been prepared deliberatively, that is, in structured discussions between citizens involved and professionals operating at neighbourhood level. According to Archon Fung, the Chicago case goes to show that participatory democracy can actually work in a complex metropolitan setting.[47] However, what we are dealing with here is a limited mandate of a limited part of the urban decision-making machinery. The Chicago case, therefore, is no match for the Porto Alegre case.

Porto Alegre

In the discourse on participatory democracy, the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre has a special status as 'the world's capital of participatory democracy' or the capital of 'participatory deliberation'.[48] With an urban population of 1.3 million in an urban region of 3.3 million, it is 'an experiment in direct democracy unlike any other anywhere in the world'.[49]

This needs to be qualified. Porto Alegre's participatory model shows traces of direct democracy, but indirect democracy remains dominant in the urban system. Final decisions are taken in the playing field between the executive branch, headed by the mayor, and the representative branch, the Porto Alegre local council. The idea that Porto Alegre is governed by

participatory deliberation is not entirely correct. What is interesting about this Brazilian city is the combination of deliberation, negotiation, and aggregation.[50] Porto Alegre does not exemplify pure participatory democracy but a mixed model of democracy in which inclinations towards participatory democracy are combined with inclinations towards competing models of democracy.

Porto Alegre's fame is founded on its participatory budgeting process (*Orcamento Participativo*), which has been expanded step by step ever since the Labour Party, Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), came to power in 1988. The participatory process runs parallel to the official budgeting process in any particular financial year. Not the entire budget is developed in a participatory way, only that part of it that pertains to investment decisions that are relevant to neighbourhoods, about 20% of the total Porto Alegre budget. The process is managed by civil service agencies working for the mayor. The executive branch does not have the participatory process on a string, but, by legitimizing its budget in participatory ways, the executive does gain the upper hand on the local council, whose opportunities for opposing elaborated budgeting plans actually diminish.

To conduct the participatory budgeting process, Porto Alegre has been divided into 16 regions, each with its own participatory budgeting forum. These forums evaluate the previous and explore the next financial year before the mayor and his staff. Out of a list of thirteen public task areas, ranging from sewerage to recreation, each region may select four priorities, with the first priority getting four points and the fourth priority one point. Additional points are awarded on the basis of two 'objective' criteria: the real size of the population and the objective need for the services selected.[51] The executive branch aggregates all scores and uses these to pick three city-wide investment priorities.

In the next round, the city-wide 'Participatory Budgeting Council' (COP) is composed. This is the central institution in the participatory budgeting process. The COP has 44 members. All 16 regions delegate two civil representatives, which adds up to 32; in addition, the 5 citizen forums dealing with trans-regional urban themes[52] each elect 2 representatives, 10 in all. The remaining 2 representatives are delegated by the civil servants trade union and the umbrella organization of neighbourhood institutions. The COP closely monitors the development of the budget by the executive branch in weekly meetings, coordinated by the mayor's staff. The staffers put together information packages, invite municipal services officials, and take care of the development of 'objective', measurable criteria in addition to 'subjective' citizens' preferences. Thus, the participatory budget that is

finally submitted to Porto Alegre council is based on both popular and technical input.

Though some complain that an unpaid, less representative group of citizens is exploited to bypass a paid, more representative council of representatives, this does not seem to bother the Porto Alegre citizens: no less than 85% of the population is familiar with the participatory budgeting process and more than 80% endorses it. In the 2001 financial year, the total number of participating citizens was estimated at 20,000; the participation of disadvantaged neighbourhoods was above average, whereas, as a rule, this tends to be below average anywhere else. Since the participatory budgeting process was introduced in 1988, citizen satisfaction with the organization and the results of public services has increased. In the same period, voter turnout in general elections has risen steadily; the mayoral candidate from PT, the party that closely identifies itself with the participatory budgeting process, obtained virtually 65% of the votes in 2001.[53]

Leadership in participatory democracy

One of Schumpeter's most powerful reproaches made to radical participation thinkers like Rousseau is that they lack a proper understanding of the leadership function in democracy.[54] In participatory democracy, authority does not descend from the top down, from competing leadership, but rises from the bottom up, from an undivided base. Leadership, both representative and executive, is the odd one out in participatory democracy.

In the practice of participatory democracy, less strict than the theory, leadership roles appear to be feasible but tend to be modelled on the role of the inspirational coach or guide rather than on the role of the decisive leader who takes decisions on behalf of others. In participatory democracy, the 'willing' must not manifest themselves at the apex but at the base, with an intrinsic motivation for a collectively chosen path. If anyone takes the lead, it will often be as an inspirational coach: someone who inspires others but is also aware that these others – the ones at the base – are the true players in the game.

This coaching approach is sometimes associated with 'femocracy', involving more feminine or matriarchal forms of leadership in which the soft powers of mutual consultation and collaboration beat tough negotiation and struggle for power; this is contrasted with the type of 'macho leadership' that is supposed to be dominant in alternative models of democracy.

A notable exception to this cherished pattern of relations can be made for a single, extraordinary person; this single person is set apart as the shining example; the personification of the lesson that is yet to be learned by all other pupils progressing on the road towards advanced understanding; the one radiant sun shining its light on a cloud of equal stars orbiting around it. This pattern is manifest in some radically egalitarian sects, in which submission to a common lore and a charismatic leader go hand in hand. An extreme example would be the radically egalitarian China of Mao Zedong, the great helmsman driving the cultural revolution, which fanned out over the immense nation from the bottom up by revolutionaries, uniformed in Mao suits modelled after their hero and example.[55]

Precisely because leadership cannot be taken for granted in participatory democracy, real-life experience is often rather unsatisfactory. Michels showed that oligarchization, or the concentration of power into the hands of the few, is well-nigh inevitable in big organizations and movements, even in those that are averse to it on grounds of an egalitarian ideology. Trade unions and (radical) left-wing political movements are also exposed to it. Much to their own discomfort.[56] Compensation is often sought in hyper-accountability: a permanent demand of accountability to those at the bottom who insist on joining in.[57]

Participatory democracy is averse to leaders who get disengaged from the base. All sorts of constructions have been devised to prevent this from happening in organizations and movements that are sympathetic to participatory democracy. The German Grünen, for example, have instituted revolving chairmanship. The Green Party in the Netherlands (GroenLinks) ushered in a shared leadership system because the different constituents that went into the making of this party in its early days could not accept a single party leader and give him/her general trust and room for manoeuvre.

Citizenship in participatory democracy

Low expectations of decisive leadership in participatory democracy are counterbalanced by high expectations – too high, according to critics – of active citizenship. Citizens are neither just voters in periodical elections, as in pendulum democracy, nor voter-speakers, as in consensus democracy. In participatory democracy, citizens are fully-fledged player-speakers, on an equal footing with anyone or anything. Participatory democracy does not stop at involvement and consultation but it holds out dialogue and participation to all. Examining problems together, finding solutions together,

taking decisions together, following up on decisions together: this is not only instrumental but also symbolic; it is a value in itself, separate from instrumental advantages.

In voter democracy, citizens are involved more than in consensus democracy or pendulum democracy, but this does not satisfy proponents of participatory democracy by a long shot. In voter democracy, citizens operate 'merely' as feeders of decisions. In participatory democracy, they are feeders and goal-getters at the same time, both in the bigger picture and down to the smallest detail. To have citizens just indicate their preference for option A or B in a town meeting or local referendum simply is not enough. Anything that precedes it (exploration, preparation, definition) and anything that follows it (elaboration, reception, institutionalization) should be available for citizens to leave their mark.

Citizens must be able to join in debates on everything, and citizens must be able to participate in everything: this is the adage of participatory democracy. This model of democracy is averse to the functional differentiation into policy preparers, makers, implementers, and recipients that is inherent in other models of democracy.

In the everyday practice of government, the ideal of active, broad-based, and comprehensive citizen participation is inevitably up against certain limits. Certainly in large-scale, complex systems, government without task and role differentiation, without delegation and mandates, is an illusion. As a second-best option, the idea of maximum feasible participation – as much citizen participation as realistically viable – was developed in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.[58] This meant choices had to be made and constraints had to be recognized.[59] This is hard to stomach for aficionados of participatory democracy: constraints may be inevitable but they do not feel *right*. Against this backdrop, we can understand very well why advocates of participatory democracy are never or hardly ever content with the practice of democracy. Citizens' involvement always remains below what you would wish it to be, even if participatory democracy has been introduced into the system. There is an inevitable divide between ideal and actual citizen involvement, between norm and practice.

Those who favour Habermassian norms of communicative action will stress that broad-based citizen participation is only the beginning of true democracy. True democracy à la Habermas is open and accessible, inclusive and comprehensive, and meets stringent quality requirements at the same time. Powerplay and political scheming are fundamentally wrong, as are interest protection or quantitative aggregation. Habermassians believe this structure does not constrain participation but, on the

contrary, expands and enriches it. The logic of the 'lifeworld' would be given much greater scope if the perverse rationalities of the market and the state – the 'system' – were curbed. Citizen participation would flourish; that is, the participation of those citizens who communicate correctly and argue sensibly in a shared process of defining positions, not unlike a textbook prescription for academics to operate in academic forums.[60]

Discussion: criticism and commendation

In *Aesthetic Politics*, Frank Ankersmit heaped scathing criticism on the Habermassian approach to democracy for a lack of realism and a surfeit of idealism and naivety.[61] Democratic politics is not pure science, nor pure, argumentative truth-finding, and any approach that denies this fact is doomed to fail, in Ankersmit's view. He opposes Habermas' normative idealism with Foucault's empirical realism – 'power is knowledge'[62] – and Machiavelli's *Realpolitik* – 'the end justifies the means'.[63] A government that chooses not to deploy means of power and negotiation and communication strategies, a government that opens up anything to anyone and involves everyone in full transparency disadvantages itself and does a disservice to both the *demos* and the *polis*. To further *demos* and *polis* alike, government must be able to shape destiny (*fortuna*), which requires craftsmanship, pragmatic and situational wisdom (*virtú*) much more than argumentative purity.

Ankersmit's criticism touches a nerve: in participatory democracy, a poor opinion of decisive leadership is linked to great expectations for active citizenship. Such expectations are naive and excessively idealistic, in the view of liberal politician Bolkestein, who wonders how high up in the pyramid of human needs democratic self-fulfilment really is. Bolkestein feels the average citizens have better things to do. They are happy to leave policy-making to the professionals, just as they like to leave bread-making to the baker.[64] Not counting exceptions, the average citizen has no need for endless nights of democratic participation and deliberation, most certainly not if the decision-making process is as protracted and time-consuming as it is in participatory democracy.

This boundlessness of participatory democracy is another sore point. 'Participatory democracy is not for the impatient (. . .) grassroots democracy easily degenerates into endless discussions,' as Goodin writes.[65] In the world of green political parties and new social movements, examples of well-nigh endless and boundless debates are legendary. The Grünen in the

German federal state of Hessen convened for no fewer than six successive weekends in order to agree on the party programme. Freeman condemns the 'tyranny of structurelessness'.[66] As structure is experienced as top-down steering, participatory forms of democracy tend to work with open structures. In most cases, this takes heaps of time and energy. In some cases, as in the American women's movement, says Freeman, it engenders a hidden oligarchy: an inner circle that unofficially rules the roost against the official regulations. A comparison with *Animal Farm* thrusts itself upon us: 'All pigs are equal, but some pigs are more equal than others.'[67]

The most profound criticism of participatory democracy concerns the uniforming, or, in the worst case, even totalizing tendencies that lie deeply buried within its core. The step from popular sovereignty to popular tyranny is but a small one; witness the Jacobinian totalitarianism that made itself felt after the French Revolution. Robespierre was a fanatic disciple of Rousseau. The motto of the French Revolution was 'liberty, equality, fraternity', but in reality the liberty of the individual was subordinated to the assumed indivisibility of the collective. After the Revolution, the king's absolute power was entirely handed over to the citizenry, embodied by the new National People's Assembly, which proceeded to detain and execute thousands of people, confiscate their possessions, and punish them for their religious convictions.[68]

We can take another look at classical Athenian democracy, in which republican virtues clearly ranked above individual liberties. Citizens were allowed to participate but always remained subordinate to the collective, which was presented as a holistic unity. Plato's fear of popular tyranny was not unfounded. There is another parallel here with 'people's democracy' in China in the days of Mao's cultural revolution: extreme equality, extreme fraternity, but also extreme totalization and suppression of individual freedoms.[69]

The tendency towards uniformization in participatory democracy may go to horrid extremes, as in Mao's cultural revolution, but uniformization with a friendlier face is perfectly possible as well. Take deliberative or communicative democracy along the lines of Habermas. Anyone can join in. But discrepancies in status or power are taboo. All must adopt a powerfree, open, communicative, and argumentative attitude. Individual interests and strategic weapons must be surrendered at the conference-room entrance. This kind of uniformization is quite soft, but it is uniformization no less.

Just like the models of democracy we discussed earlier, participatory democracy received not only criticism but also commendation. What is particularly appreciated is its ability to supplement and, if necessary, correct other models of democracy. The participatory model of democracy can help

to improve the performance of other models. Participatory democracy is like a film actor who performs a great deal better in a galvanizing supporting role, as a co-star, rather than in a leading role:

- participatory democracy galvanizes consensus democracy with the idea that representatives of political parties and social organizations are not the exclusive owners of all relevant knowledge, but that communication with society's grassroots is functional and essential in developing a sound information position;
- participatory democracy galvanizes pendulum democracy with the idea that occasional voting for one of two parties with long intervals of non-involvement in between cannot make for responsive policy and creative combinations, but that regular interim communication with society's grassroots is essential for sound government;
- participatory democracy galvanizes voter democracy with the idea that citizens' preferences cannot be properly understood by voting and counting alone, but that dialogue and deliberation are essential to find out what the mood is behind the vote.

Participatory democracy can actually provide such stimuli to other models if it has not isolated itself by taking a position that is too extreme or unrealistic. This would call for moderate and pragmatic forms of participatory democracy that are capable of bridging the gap between itself and alternative models of democracy.[70]

Jon Elster inclines that way when he distances himself from deliberative democracy as a pure science: 'A better analogy might be engineering rather than science: the aim is to find an approximation that works rather than the truth.'[71] In other words: pragmatic detours and constructive connections are more important than the pursuit of pure truth. If the expectations of deliberative democracy could thus be toned down to realistic levels, there is little to object to it. As Elster suggests, this would turn deliberation into a positive value because deliberation:

- widens knowledge and reinforces the information position;
- calls for claims and wishes to be properly underpinned;
- produces broader support, greater consent, and possibly even consensus;
- fosters win-win situations;
- produces more honest decisions in terms of distribution justice;
- appeals to and promotes participants' moral and intellectual competences;
- represents a positive value in itself.

It is precisely arguments like these that help to popularize moderate forms of participation and interaction in present-day public administration, going by names like co-production and interactive policy-making.[72] The high-flown participation ideals of the 1960s and 1970s are only muted remnants here, just like the high-flown communication standards of the Habermassians. Citizens' participation is upgraded without doing away with administrative expertise. This means the office of governor is rated at its true value, with the one proviso that he or she must be able to handle generous contributions from society to government.

The more participatory democracy is removed from its remote corner in the typology of democracy and the more it is interrelated with other models of democracy, the more participatory democracy comes into its own and acquires a positive value.

Lessons: strengths and weaknesses

In none of the other models of democracy have the values of concord and communality been institutionalized to such an extent as in the model of participatory democracy. In none of the other models of democracy are uniformization and boundlessness such imminent dangers and are distinction and exception such taboos as in the model that has been discussed in this chapter.

Nowhere in the world has participatory democracy been the encompassing model on a large scale for any length of time. There are some cities, though, where participatory democracy was granted a relatively prominent position at a particular point in time, within the framework of another, more encompassing model of democracy.[73]

In the city of Amsterdam, for example, itself embedded in the umbrella framework of consensus democracy as the dominant model on local and national levels, there flourished a type of participatory democracy that, for some time became a 'state within the *stad*'. It was actually called Orange Free State at the time. Urban social movements like Provos, Kabouters, and squatters ruled the roost in the 1965–1985 period, as described by Mamadouh in her study on urban social movements.[74] The fluid character of such

Quality: concord, communality	Pitfall: uniformization, boundlessness
Allergy: distinction, exception	Challenge: selectiveness, realism

Figure 6.2 Participatory democracy: qualities and drawbacks

movements offers a practical illustration not only of participatory democracy but also of its qualities and drawbacks.

Acting in communality – united, assertive, standing strong together – was undeniably one of the core qualities of these movements. Provo actions became happenings as many sympathizers actively joined in. Kabouter ideas turned into battle cries as ideologically cognate social movements worked together. Squatting became a way of life as many like-minded joined forces. Sympathizers were convinced that it was not only the movements themselves that benefited from these qualities but also the urban community as a whole. The dominant large-scale and functionalist urban growth strategy met with political thrust and parry from alternative small-scale and romantic visions of the city, aiming to make sure that Amsterdam remained a manageable, comfortable, and affordable city. Many issues were denounced: the displacement of environment-friendly modes of transport by polluting motor traffic; property speculation and lack of occupancy in times of housing shortages. All of this greatly boosted the image of Amsterdam as a young and creative city, open to alternative and surprising ideas.

But it had its downsides, the critics say.[75] At a time of economic slumps, the city came to a grinding halt. Every initiative met with fierce, prolonged resistance, except efforts to preserve and downsize into smaller units. Anything involving big gestures, grandeur, prosperousness, or exclusiveness lost out. 'It's not palaces they create but rabbit hutches. No boulevards but goat tracks (...) Triumph to the Kabouters,' was Komrij's charge. 'They fuss, regulate, tyrannize, and force everyone into their own antiseptic, consummate narrow-mindedness.'[76] The more they took the city into their own hands, and the more their Kabouterspeak and squatters' uniform prevailed, the more criticism snowballed. Where did they get the right to take the city into their own hands? What about the rule of law, property rights, and the rightful interests of other groups and individuals?

Such questions were also asked by individuals within the above-mentioned urban movements themselves, but they never received an effective and authoritative answer. This was partly because the questions involved staggering complexities: what to do if much-needed youth housing clashed with social housing for the elderly, also much-needed? For another part, decision-making in these movements inherently proved to be a hard nut to crack. Squatters' house meetings had the same shortcomings as Kabouters' meetings: intractability, boundlessness, and indecision. There were but few who were willing or able to exercise authority and cut the knot and take action. This was an internal problem and, even more, an external one, in relations with the outside world.[77]

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Concord, communality	Uniformization, boundlessness
Trusting the collective	Distrusting individualists
Residents' participation	Residents' overburdening
Control of governors	Hyper-accountability
Reform-mindedness	Other-worldliness
Soft power	Vulnerability
Positive freedom	Negative freedom
Warm embrace	Suffocating blanket

Figure 6.3 Participatory democracy: strengths and weaknesses

Cutting the knot, compromising, negotiating, making concessions, closing pragmatic deals, accepting pros and cons: these are not among the key competences of movements that feel very strongly about participatory democracy. So this is a major challenge for such movements and also for cities and nations where such movements are a substantial part of the public domain at any given time.

Conclusion

The strengths and weaknesses inherent in participatory democracy – its basic and additional strengths and weaknesses as discussed above – are listed in Figure 6.3.

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Part III

Lessons

Vital Democracy

This part draws general lessons with regard to democratic form (Chapter 7) and democratic reform (Chapter 8). A vital democracy is described here as a productive mixture of substantially different, and in essence competing, democratic models. Vital democracy combines models of democracy in a way that is both creative and contingent and, thus, manages to unite effectiveness with legitimacy.

A combination of models of democracy is *creative* if it succeeds in making the most of the advantages of the combined models and in compensating their disadvantages as much as possible. Such a constellation is *contingent* if it is sensitive to the particularities of the situational setting and the cultural context in which democracy must gain effectiveness and legitimacy. In Chapter 7, on mixing democracy, these three elements – democratic constellation, situational setting, and cultural context – are combined in one conceptual framework. In Chapter 8, on reforming democracy, the framework is applied to the case of the Netherlands, a telling and instructive case for would-be reformers.

In the Netherlands, democracy has been under pressure to change for quite some time, and many sweeping plans for democratic reform have been proposed over the years. Few of these sweeping reform plans have been successful: they often just foundered or failed to introduce positive change. Promoting both creative and contingent combinations, essential in developing vital democracy, has not been given sufficient attention.

Each other country – each separate case – requires a distinct diagnosis and an individual approach. Reform models that are not case- or country-specific – that offer one-size-fits-all garments or sell coats for all seasons – should be treated with the utmost suspicion, along with models that vow to bring purity and uniformity to democracy. It is not uniform, pure models but multiform, mixed models that have the best credentials in practice, as the following will show.

7

Mixing Democracy

Lessons from around the World

Power can only be controlled by power.

Baron de Montesquieu, French statesman and political thinker[1]

The essence of liberal democratic politics is the construction of a rich, complex social order, not one dominated by a single idea ...

Fareed Zakaria, expert on democracy[2]

Introduction

In the previous chapters, we explored four basic models of democracy: pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, voter democracy, and participatory democracy. We saw that these models have been realized in different ways in different places and at different times: there is not one single expression of participatory democracy, for example, but there are many different expressions. We also observed that, in practice, models of democracy always stray from their pure ideal types. In certain countries and certain cities, for instance, we observed 'relatively strong tendencies towards' consensus democracy, or towards pendulum democracy, but we never saw unadulterated consensus democracy or pendulum democracy.

In other words: practice abounds not with uniform, pure models, but with multiform, mixed models of democracy. In this chapter, we will be taking a look at the backgrounds and implications of this observation. We will be looking at the mechanisms that cause democracies to be mixed in different ways and to varying degrees, and we will explore its consequences for democracy's effectiveness and legitimacy, both of which are crucial preconditions for good governance. Whether the need for good governance is fulfilled or not

depends not only on the constellation of democratic models – the inherent mix of strengths and weaknesses – but also on the situational and cultural context, that is, the environment in which the system is to acquire effectiveness and legitimacy, as we will see in this chapter.

Majors and minors

The reality of democracy is that it is blended rather than pure, even if some, usually the fervent supporters of a particular model of democracy, would prefer the unmixed, pure thing. It is often possible to make out a major current in the blend. We saw, for instance, that pendulum democracy has a crucial share in the British case (see Chapter 3), that consensus democracy has a dominant effect on the Belgian system (Chapter 4), that voter democracy is heavily emphasized in a city like Los Angeles (Chapter 5), and that participatory democracy has a relatively strong presence in a city like Porto Alegre (Chapter 6). In addition, we observed that a strong emphasis on a particular model of democracy may go together with another, greater or lesser, emphasis on another model of democracy. This is how we get variations on a theme, with a range of 'majors' and 'minors' within the package.

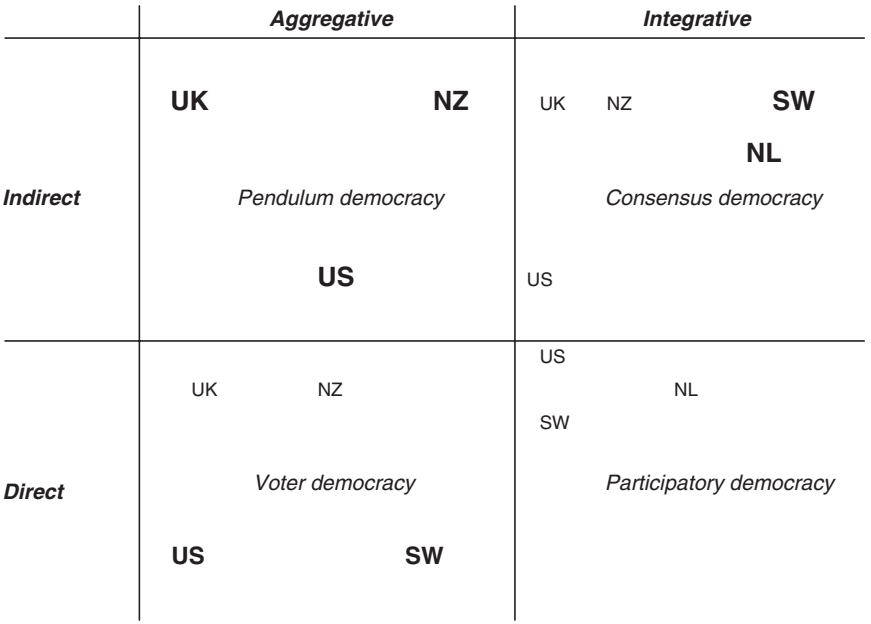
Variations on a theme

Let us recapitulate here some examples from the previous chapters (see Figure 7.1 for a visual representation of these examples):

- The United Kingdom has long since been the paragon of indirect majoritarian Westminster democracy, which we have here called pendulum democracy in more general terms. Over the last few decades, the UK has grown into a more nuanced example of pendulum democracy owing to decentralization, regionalization, and Europeanization, and owing to the arrival of several smaller parties outside the two traditional centres of power. Some elements from consensus democracy were cautiously added into the mix. Some elements from voter democracy had already been added before, with the rise of market-analogous administrative arrangements under Mrs Thatcher and her political sympathizers. Westminster democracy has remained in force, but it has also increasingly deviated from the pure ideal type.[3]
- For some time, New Zealand was reputed to have out-Westminstered Westminster, until it introduced a system of proportional representation in 1996,

which added a major ingredient from consensus democracy into the system. In addition, New Zealand became a New Public Management trendsetter in the late 1980s, turning its public sector into a less supply-driven and more demand-driven, less bureaucratic and more business-like system, with price incentives, contract relations, and other market-analogous ingredients. Elements from voter democracy received a lot of attention.[4]

- US democracy is a highly blended variation on the theme of pendulum democracy. If we look at the executives-parties dimension, pendulum democracy is clearly pre-eminent in the US system, with political power being concentrated in one party and in one person: the top dog, who secures a powerful voter mandate by winning the electoral competition between two dominant camps. If we look at the federal-unitary dimension, then we also see elements of consensus democracy, such as checks and balances, serving as counter-forces that cannot be ignored. Zooming in on the US system, we see elements of voter democracy (New England, California), but also participatory democracy (local experiments with deliberative democracy, participatory planning, neighbourhood governance and the like).
- In Switzerland, voter democracy has a strong presence in citizens' assemblies, initiatives, and referendums. At the same time, however, consensus democracy has a large share in the system, virtually like a second 'major', one might say. It is this mutually reinforcing combination of two seemingly opposed models of democracy that gives Swiss democracy its special profile. Participatory democracy (direct democracy involving consultation instead of counting) is present, albeit a little less prominently, in co-production and participation procedures at the subnational level.
- Dutch democracy resembles Swiss democracy if we confine ourselves to the right-hand side of the typology of democracy: the side of consensus democracy (as a major) and participatory democracy (as a minor). It differs, however, on the left-hand side of the typology: voter democracy is much less prominent in the Netherlands than in Switzerland, even if it has been on the up lately. Pendulum democracy in the Netherlands, much more so than in Switzerland, is a preoccupation of democratic reformers who continue to call for competitive, district-based elections and decisive, directly elected governors in order to counteract what they consider a dominant consensus democracy.



Explanation. UK = United Kingdom, NZ = New Zealand, US = United States, SW = Switzerland, NL = Netherlands. Typeface size symbolically denotes prominence in the political system, and position in the diagram indicates the tendency towards direct or indirect, aggregative or integrative democracy. Because our examples are countries, the top of the diagram is rather overemphasized. If we were to present such a diagram for cities like Munich, Los Angeles, Amsterdam, and Porto Alegre, the emphasis would shift downwards while preserving the distribution over the diagram with majors and minors.

Figure 7.1 Variations on a theme

Polishing up and rubbing out

The combination of models of democracy found in a political system at any given time is the net result of two counteractive mechanisms: the positive and the negative feedback mechanisms (see Figure 7.2). In the cultural theory developed in the wake of Douglas, the positive feedback mechanism is described as the institutionalized tendency to affirm and reinforce what is considered appropriate or 'in place'; the negative feedback mechanism refers to the institutionalized tendency to disorder and emasculate what is alien or 'out of place'.[5] If we put this in terms of the four models of democracy, one might say that each model has the institutionalized tendency to provide

positive feedback to congruent elements and negative feedback to incongruent elements. Douglas interprets the underlying pattern as ritualized cleansing behaviour or 'pollution reduction': a combination of polishing up the acquainted (the proper) and rubbing out the alien (the deviant).[6] Whitewashing and removing foreign stains are two sides of the same coin. To repeat Douglas's famous quotation: 'Dirt is matter out of place', meaning that whatever does not fit the cherished and righteous picture is out of place and impure, and must be cleaned to keep up appearances.[7]

In debates on democratic reform, the logic of spring-cleaning resurfaces over and over again,[8] with reformers referring to cleansing, clearing, purging, putting the house in order, or – pitching it a little stronger – making a clean sweep. Where one particular model of democracy is 'rubbed up', rival models of democracy are 'rubbed out', usually at the same time. Proponents of participatory democracy, for example, often condemn traces of indirect or aggregative democracy, which, in their view, amount to 'ugly smudges' that are 'improper' in a democracy. 'Pure democracy', in their view, is both direct and integrative, and anything tending that way may bank on their support. Similar feedback loops – negative and positive ones – can be observed among fervent proponents of voter democracy, pendulum

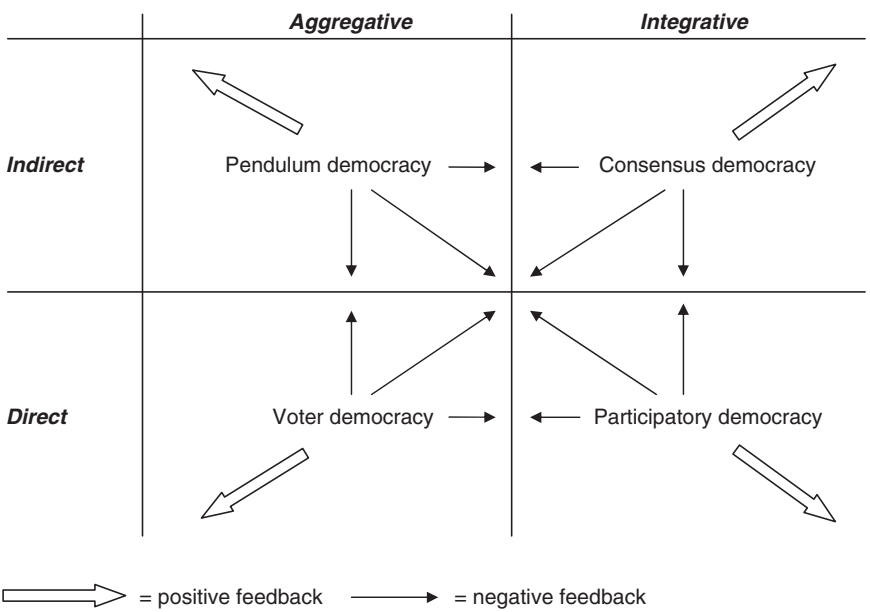


Figure 7.2 Positive and negative feedback mechanisms

	Pure democracy	*Impure democracy*
Participatory democracy	direct and integrative	indirect (representative) aggregative (majoritarian)
Voter democracy	direct and aggregative	indirect (representative) integrative (non-majoritarian)
Pendulum democracy	indirect and aggregative	direct (self-governing) integrative (non-majoritarian)
Consensus democracy	indirect and integrative	direct (self-governing) aggregative (majoritarian)

Figure 7.3 Pure versus impure democracy

democracy, and consensus democracy. What differs is their view of pure and impure democracy (see Figure 7.3).

Democracy as mutual constraint

Within certain bounds, the positive feedback mechanism (the tendency to reaffirm the acquainted, the congruent) and the negative feedback mechanism (the tendency to resist the deviant, the incongruent) are crucial for a vital democracy. In principle, a model of democracy that is geared to keeping both itself and its rivals on their toes is a blessing for democracy. Unbridled kinds of positive and negative feedback, however, can be destructive.

A model of democracy that produces an excess of positive feedback – too much circular self-affirmation – is well on its way to skidding and veering off course. The good thing about the model may become too much of a good thing without the necessary checks. The circle of self-affirmation may become a vicious circle without bounds. The model's fundamental pitfall and its inherent weaknesses would not be kept in check any more. And, as we know, all four models of democracy have their inherent weaknesses and pitfalls that need to be detected and corrected.

A model of democracy that produces an excess of negative feedback – too much disordering of the alien, too much sweeping away of the different, of what is assumed to be unfit or impure – is well on its way towards getting bogged down and turning sour. An abundance of negative feedback may

lead to a system resembling still water. The inside gets bogged down. The outside is not given an opportunity to enrich, shake up, or compensate the well-known with 'out of the box' ingredients. Positive external influences, which might engender creative combinations, are nipped in the bud.

A democratic system that is more dappled and checkered in its design offers scope for both the positive and the negative feedback mechanisms of competing models of democracy. This produces a mutually constraining constellation of forces that impact and correct each other and keep one another on their toes: a system of checks and balances which benefits the vitality and sustainable efficacy of democracy.[9]

Blending and connecting

Philosophers of democratic reform who operate at levels far removed from democratic praxis generally do not worry about the dangers of unbridled positive and negative feedback mechanisms. They can afford to lose themselves in high ideals and abstract ideas on clean and pure democracy. In the praxis of complex democracies, however, this is unattainable except for the briefest of moments; sustainable, viable democracies cannot afford to indulge in intellectual or ideological purity. Such democracies inevitably encompass a certain impurity, a certain dilution, a certain blend of models.

A pure democracy, a democracy that rubs out the alien without restraint and polishes up the domestic to its maximum shine, is always a vulnerable democracy. It is not without good cause that examples of sustainable, efficacious systems of democracy in this study are invariably hybrid and 'impure' systems. At the start of this chapter, we recapitulated some examples of countries. Below, I will abstract from individual countries, taking a look at six fundamental combinations or connections: (a) the post-materialistic connection; (b) the third way of the associations; (c) the moderate civic culture; (d) the Alpine model; (e) the Latin alternative; (f) the representative hybrid (see Figure 7.4).

Mixed models

The lines in Figure 7.4 draw our attention to empirically perceptible coexistences of models of democracy and the cultural patterns inherent in them.[10] In each case, this is a more or less sustainable alliance, or 'settlement', of different approaches.[11]

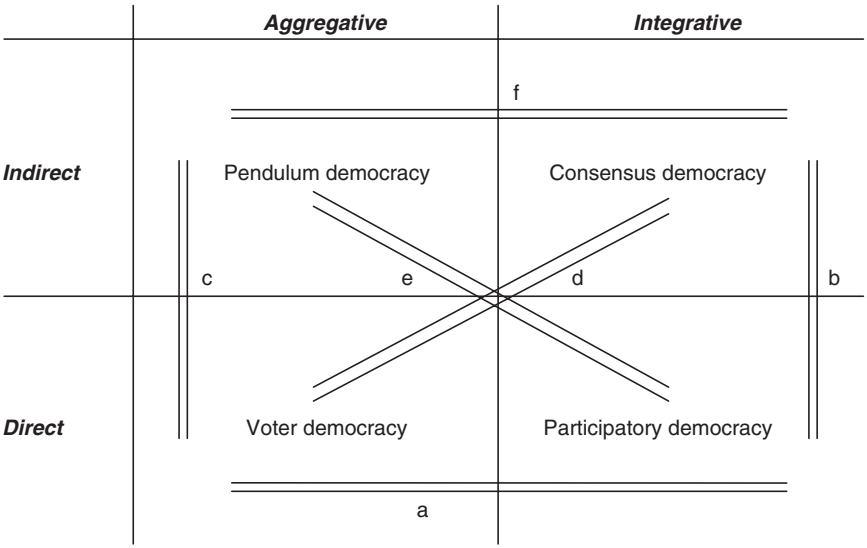


Figure 7.4 Six hybrids

(a) *The post-materialistic connection*. The post-materialist political culture, which, according to Inglehart, has been on the rise in Western Europe and the USA since the 1960s, pursues a wide-ranging democratic innovation agenda, endorsing, at a concrete level, elements of participatory democracy besides elements of voter democracy, and, at an abstract level, traces of egalitarianism and individualism.[12] This is a broad movement that embraces highly diverse expressions, which, however, do share some common features: (i) they share an interest in customization, small-scale provisions, and quality of life, as a reaction against the logic of mass production, large-scale provisions, and one-size-fits-all; (ii) they share an interest in 'new politics' (self-governing, bottom-up, concrete) as a reaction against 'old politics' (elite-driven, top-down, abstract). On these points, in any case, there is agreement between those who support participatory democracy and those who support voter democracy.[13]

(b) *The third way of associationalism*. In associative democracy, civil society associations operating in the midfield between the citizen and the state, also called the third sector or the third way between communalism and statism, play a major role. Generally, what we have here is a compromise between participatory democracy and consensus democracy, or, in

a more general sense, between a relatively egalitarian and a relatively hierarchical approach to politics and public administration.[14] Originally, associations are citizens' initiatives undertaking to integrate their concerns and interests through collaboration and deliberation. However, in the development of civil society associations, professional caretakers often get to play increasingly dominant roles.[15] In part this is due to autonomous processes of scale-enlargement, professionalization, and statism, and in part to an ambiguity inherent in civil society, in which self-organization and paternalism tend to intermingle. In communitarism, which is the political philosophy of the third way, egalitarian and hierarchical elements exist side by side.[16]

(c) *The moderate civic culture*. The moderate 'civic culture', which, according to Almond and Verba, is crucial for balanced and sustainable democracy, is in essence a compromise between the citizenship style that suits pendulum democracy (citizens as spectators/voters) and the style that suits voter democracy (citizens as players/voters). The moderate civic culture, in which passive and active orientations supplement each other and balance one another out, is, in Almond and Verba's view, the key to the success of the British and American democracies in the early post-war period, with the British culture inclining more towards the acquiescence inherent in pendulum democracy and the American culture tending more towards the activism inherent in voter democracy.[17]

(d) *The Alpine model*. Though voter democracy and consensus democracy are contradictory models in the sense that they differ on both dimensions of the typology, they prove to be doing well together, as they do, for example, in Switzerland.[18] In Austria and Southern Germany, we see similar, though less prominent, constellations of a dominant consensus model, supplemented with referendums, civic petitions, initiatives, and other elements from voter democracy. Because of its geographical clustering, this is commonly called the Alpine model, but its specific combination is not endemic to high mountainous regions.[19] Over the last few decades, interest in voter democracy has also been on the rise in other parts of the European Rhineland, including the Low Countries. In Belgium and the Netherlands, *in*formal voter and consumer polls are particularly on the rise, whereas formal referendums have made more hesitant progress. In the 1990s, citizens initiatives and referendums have been institutionalized in those German *Länder*, in the North and the East, which had not regulated this type of direct democracy in

earlier decades. At present, all German *Länder* facilitate this expression of voter democracy, both at the meso- and at the local level of governance. In addition, in various towns and regions a German version of the New Public Management has got off the ground.[20]

(e) *The Latin alternative*. Sometimes referendums are used *ad hoc* and strategically as a means of consolidating or reinforcing power in the hands of the administrative leadership. In the recent past, this was common in Latin American and Latin European countries with a presidential or semi-presidential system, or, at least, a highly institutionalized leadership model. The 'Latin' use of referendums cannot simply be equated with voter democracy. Instead, it should be taken as a rather radical instance of pendulum democracy of an indirect and aggregative kind.[21] It is interesting to observe that a radically opposite model of democracy – participatory and egalitarian – can strike root simultaneously.[22] In Latin America in particular it is Catholic liberation theology and corporatist organicism that have proved to be incentives to such developments. Some of the most striking examples of participatory democracy have proved to prosper in South America.[23]

(f) *The representative hybrid*. In some cases, direct democracy plays a minor role while the hybrid chiefly tends towards representative democracy.[24] An example here is the movement for democratic reform that shook the United Kingdom under New Labour. The British Westminster model became less pure and more hybrid by adding elements that were actually more suited to consensus democracy.[25] Another example is the movement for democratic reform that means to make Dutch democracy less consensual and more majoritarian. If the flood of reform plans were actually implemented, non-majoritarian Dutch consensus democracy would be mixed with elements that are more suited to majoritarian pendulum democracy: elements that should produce more 'exciting' elections in constituencies, more sharp-edged electoral competition between a small number of political camps, and a winner that will be rewarded with greater political and administrative power than has been customary in the consensus democracy of old.[26]

The closer you look at real-existing systems of democracy, the more specific expressions of coexistence and hybridity you will notice. Inspired by Perri 6, four modalities of coexistence or 'settlement' can be distinguished:[27]

- *Demarcation* – different models have a relatively strong effect in separate domains: a lot of consensus democracy, for instance, in economic

policies at the national level, and some participatory democracy in neighbourhood management (as in the Netherlands);

- *Switching* – different models are accentuated in different periods: a stronger emphasis on voter democracy, for example, in times of fiscal austerity, and a stronger emphasis on participatory democracy in times of relative plenty (see the American West Coast);
- *Exchange* – different models come to a settlement in a mutually reinforcing way: the existence of a forceful referendum may stimulate the quest for consensus, which in turn may support the need for this expression of voter democracy (Switzerland is the case in point);
- *Confluence* – different models interpenetrate: elements of consensus democracy and pendulum democracy, for instance, may merge in a more or less mixed voting system (as in Germany).

In any of its many expressions, the praxis of democracy is always more capricious than doctrinal orthodoxy. The latter insists on purity and on pollution reduction; the former tends towards impurity and hybridity. Not all hybrids, however, are fortunate ones.

Fortunate and not-so-fortunate combinations

There are fortunate and not-so-fortunate hybrids. This is true for combinations of models of democracy as much as it is true for combinations of organizational models. In his study on public organizations, Hood distinguished good hybrids from bad hybrids.[28] In doing so, he followed a pragmatic line of reasoning: what is good is what works properly in a given context, and what actually works is largely conditional on its context. One context requires a different combination of modalities from another context. Hood distinguished four modalities of public organization, which are cognate with the four basic types of democracy distinguished in the present study, as Douglassian cultural theory serves as the sensitizing framework in both of these. In line with this theory, Hood argued that mono-cultural constellations are always more vulnerable than poly-cultural constellations.[29] In order to uphold the quality of public management in changing circumstances, Hood made out a case for context-sensitive combinations of modalities that compensate each other and, thus, balance one another out. He compared this to step-dancing: essentially, moving to and fro and shifting balance to keep on moving.

What seems an appropriate analogy here is the parable of the cat and the baby in the cradle. This parable takes us back to the St Elisabeth flood, which struck the Dutch coast in 1421, when a cradle containing a helpless baby and a smart cat fell into the surging waves. The weather was tempestuous, the currents were treacherous, and the child was restless. However, this cat was a smart one. He put his paws on the cradle's edge to keep his balance and constantly shifted his weight from front to back and from left to right, steadying himself against the agitation going on inside and outside the cradle. Cleverly going with or against the flow, he managed to steer the cradle to the shore, saving both himself and the baby, much to the obvious relief and delight of the baby's parents.[30]

Democracy as dynamic balancing

Our comparison between the cat's balancing act on the cradle and the balancing act required in democracy only holds true up to a certain point. Democracy also requires a dynamic balance, an intelligent collaboration of feedback mechanisms. But then there are differences. In the parable of the cat and the baby in the cradle, it is obvious what must be done to keep the cradle in balance: when it tilts backwards, the cat must shift its weight forwards, etc. It is also clear when the balance is right: the cradle must not take in water and must make it safely to the shore. In a metaphorical sense, this is still roughly true of a democratic system: democracy must not go under, it should move in the right direction, and it must keep out of the danger zone. But how are we to define the critical point or the right direction? Views may differ greatly on such matters, as I will discuss below.

Before that, we must observe that a democratic system has no direct equivalent of the smart cat balancing the precious cradle. There is not one single 'equalizer' that can perform the balancing act in such a directly effective way. The balance in a democratic system may be influenced by playing up certain institutions, such as the elected mayor, the constituency voting system, the corrective referendum, or by playing down other institutions, such as the monistic local council, the electoral threshold, or the closed-door meeting-room culture. However, there is not one authority that steers this playing up and playing down in the way the cat could with the cradle.[31] In democratic systems, the balancing must come from many interacting authorities, and it can never be instantaneous or complete.

In public organizations, the object of Hood's analysis, things are slightly different as there occasionally is one strong authority which may drop an

organizational principle practically overnight or add it to its repertoire without elaborate interaction. It may decide, for instance, to introduce the Tilburg model of the business-like municipality and, in so doing, tilt the bureaucratic organization. To be sure, the creative or re-creative scope for management in public organizations is subject to certain restrictions. In democratic systems, however, whose management is under discussion by definition, this is even more the case.

Democratic systems never have one single creative or re-creative authority. There are always many actors that impact the balance and the blend of models of democracy through positive and negative feedback loops. The constellation that remains as the net result of all mutually impacting feedback actions is not by definition the optimum or most functional one. There is no room here for naive structural functionalism ('democratic structures found in practice must be functional or they would not have been there'). There are many circumstances that may cause an unfortunate combination of modalities to be sustained for a considerable length of time.[32]

Democratic systems that survive a good length of time, therefore, are not by definition good hybrids. Unfortunate combinations are not automatically bound to become extinct as if in a process of natural selection. In theory, however, fortunate combinations of models do stand a better chance of survival and success: such combinations are more robust and less risky than unfortunate combinations. Even if such probability offers no guarantees, it would seem commonsensical to prefer fortunate combinations that advance good governance to unfortunate ones that do not. What, however, defines good governance?

Good governance and not-so-good governance

There is widespread consensus in the literature on the idea that the quality of democracy is determined by two factors: (1) *effectiveness*: its ability to get things done, to make a difference, to produce added value; and (2) *legitimacy*: its ability to do so with wide approval, to exert responsibility with authority, to operate in a way that is held to be fair, fitting, and solid.[33] In other words, it is about: (1) governability and organizational capacity, 'not only being there but also achieving'; (2) responsiveness and accountability, 'doing the right things and doing them responsibly'. To put it plainly: democracy must be efficacious and recognized as such.[34]

	Non-democracy	Democracy
Not-so-good governance	I	III Deficient democracy
Good governance	II	IV Vital democracy

Figure 7.5 Democracy and good governance

If a democratic system does well on these two dimensions, democracy and good governance coincide (category IV in Figure 7.5). Some proponents of democracy expect this to happen automatically. They also expect that non-democracy (which does not meet the requirements that can be made upon democracy[35]) coincides with not-so-good governance as a matter of fact (category I). Others point out that democracy and good governance do not always coincide. There are systems that are democratic and yet fail to live up to criteria of legitimacy and/or effectiveness: deficient democracies (category III), the Weimar Republic being a classic example. Conversely, there are also systems that do not meet the preconditions of democracy and yet put in a fine performance (category II), Singapore with its rather limited democracy being a topical case in point.

Thus, democracy and good governance do not always coincide. They can do so but this does not happen as a matter of course. Vital democracy, that is, high-performance democracy, requires a lot of effort from mutually corrective forces that keep each other on their toes.

As our concern is democracy in this study, we will focus on the right-hand side of Figure 7.5 (without being blind to the left-hand side). How do the four basic models of democracy relate to the two dimensions that distinguish good governance from not-so-good governance? In each model of democracy, there are pluses and minuses with regard to (1) *effectiveness*, governability and organizing capacity and (2) *legitimacy*, responsiveness and accountability:[36]

- *Pendulum democracy* has the potential to be decisive, focused, and unequivocal (ad 1: +). However, this potential may veer off into overcommitment, fixation, blindness, and one-sidedness (ad 1: –). Pendulum democracy is inclined to being responsive to main electoral currents and majorities, changes of the guard, and to political market research (ad 2: +). However, it has not institutionalized a similar responsiveness to

undercurrents below the main currents, to minorities, and to losers within and without the competitive system (ad 2: –).

- *Consensus democracy* promises to furnish collaboration, synthesis, integration, and pragmatic expertise (ad 1: +). However, this may get bogged down in viscosity, administrative overload, and expertocracy (ad 1: –). Gaining broad-based support, fitting everyone in, and keeping things together are highly institutionalized values (ad 2: +). However, dissipation of election results and fragmentation of responsibility and accountability may pressurize legitimacy (ad 2: –).
- *Voter democracy* stimulates private initiative, customer-orientation, and efficiency and introduces the rigours of the free market into the public sector (ad 1: +). However, this introduces not only its virtues but also its vices into the government domain: its susceptibility to hypes, its collective recklessness, and its marketing flops (ad 1: –). Voter democracy values the many faces of the individual and cherishes social multiformity (ad 2: +). However, voter democracy also cultivates consumer dissatisfaction, political distrust, and suspicion of collective action (ad 2: –).
- *Participatory democracy* cherishes unified collaboration and ambitious reforms, confidence in collective action, and making an all-round difference (ad 1: +). However, it may overstate its allergy towards the exceptional, the individual, to division of tasks, and guidance (ad 1: –). Participatory democracy greatly values accountability and control of power (ad 2: +). However, the risk of hyper-accountability – inflated pressure to be answerable to each and everyone – is always lying in wait (ad 2: –).

The importance of the situational setting

It will be clear by now that there is no such thing as a trouble-free model, a model with only advantages and no disadvantages, a coat for all seasons. If we pursue this metaphor, there are several 'decent raincoats' with their advantages *and* disadvantages which may serve their purpose in better or worse ways depending on the weather conditions. To return to the world of democracy: situational circumstances, differing in place and time, largely determine how favourable or unfavourable models of democracy prove to be in practice. Some settings demand different requirements compared with others.[37] Some examples:

- A modern industrial city that needs to survive in a highly competitive, international context will probably benefit more from the potential of market-analogous voter democracy than a historical town that wishes to preserve its medieval heritage and townscape. A combination of voter democracy and pendulum democracy might be more opportune in the first case, whereas a combination of participatory democracy and consensus democracy might be more advantageous in the second.
- An externally neutral, internally divided nation is likely to benefit more from the capacity for pacification and accommodation in consensus democracy than an internally homogeneous nation that, under threat of war, must rapidly organize a defence system and a war economy. In the latter case, pendulum democracy has comparative advantages; the advantages inherent in this model of democracy outweigh the disadvantages in an emergency situation requiring immediate action.

Ideally, the accentuation of models of democracy matches contextual requirements. The idea that this is the case by definition must be rejected as a naively structural-functionalist one. Contextual requirements, first of all, are often multiple and changeable and, hence, hard to accommodate. Models of democracy, secondly, are always incorporated into institutions, which adjust to circumstances neither rapidly nor easily. Institutional change is laborious by definition in both formal and informal institutions.

If, as in the above example, a nation is forced into decisive action under threat of war, it cannot adjust the democratic system overnight. It must simply make the most of what is has: if it has a pendulum type of democracy, this has advantages in this given situation. In post-war reconstruction efforts, by contrast, entirely different requirements may be forced upon the system, causing the disadvantages of pendulum democracy to outweigh the advantages.[38]

In a context of multiple and changeable environments, it is advantageous to have built into the democratic system sufficient variety and hybridity, as this makes the democratic system more robust and less vulnerable. Perfectly adapted the system will never be, but it will be more prepared for tasks that will vary in time and place. It would be quite convenient if there were a one-size-fits-all combination, but that is not the way it is. On the contrary, what works well in one case may not do well in another and vice versa. What works well and what does not work well is affected, on the one hand, by exogenous factors that go to make up

the situational setting (see above), and, on the other, by cultural factors that interfere with these in subtle ways (see below).

Strengths and weaknesses revisited

Each of our four models of democracy has its upside and its downside that can be compared to the heads and tails of a coin. This serves to caution us against ill-considered democratic universalism, that is, the conviction that one particular model of democracy is superior anywhere, any time. Nor should it impel us to rush to the other extreme: ill-considered democratic relativism. A particular model of democracy can certainly be more favourable than a rival one in a specific domain and in a specific setting.[39]

The importance of the cultural factor

Another caution against ill-considered democratic universalism should now be added: the qualities of models of democracy are valued differently from different cultural perspectives. Each model of democracy may have its inherent pros and cons, but the relative weight, the values attached to the pros and cons, varies with each cultural perspective. For example, the ability to take strong action is commonly considered a strength of the pendulum model, but this may fail to impress the proponents of a cautious, dialogical, or deliberative culture.

In the four tables (Figure 7.6), not a single line item is provided with an advance rating. Inherent strengths and weaknesses have been presented without added marks. In the next table (Figure 7.7), in the final analysis, we have differentiated models of democracy according to cultural perspective.[40]

The four models of democracy are regarded differently from various cultural perspectives. Let's take voter democracy as an example. Just like other models of democracy, voter democracy has a plus side and a minus side. An individualistic culture tends to focus its attention mainly on the plus side and less so on the minus side: 'accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative.' Egalitarian, hierarchical, and atomistic cultures show exactly the reverse tendency in the case of voter democracy – accentuate the negative, eliminate the positive – with different things being accentuated in different cultures.[41]

The cultural factor has a major impact on the likelihood of democratic arrangements and reforms to succeed. People's cultural perspective on

Pendulum democracy

Quality: decisiveness, swiftness	Pitfall: over-commitment, fixation
Allergy: indecision, inertia, vagueness	Challenge: reflection, counterweight

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Decisiveness, swiftness	Over-commitment, fixation
Clarity, lean and mean	Oversimplification
Unambiguous government	One-sided government
Sensitive to the majority	Insensitive to the minority
Electoral effect	Electoral bias, misrepresentation
Changing of the guard	Zigzagging government
Clear-cut accountability	'Throwing out the baby with the bath water'
System of winners	System of losers

Consensus democracy

Quality: controlled integration, collaboration	Pitfall: viscosity, coagulation
Allergy: populism, unilateralism	Challenge: transparent decision-making

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Controlled integration, collaboration	Viscosity, coagulation
Proportional representation	Effect of elections
Broad-based support in policy networks	Accountability in political institutions
Channelled multiformity	Cartel and backroom politics
Administrative expertise	Technocracy, expertocracy
Pacification and accommodation	Avoidance and ostrich behaviour
Integrated policy programmes	Compromise politics
Caring, 'kind and gentle'	Paternalism, 'suffocating'

Participatory democracy

Quality: concord, communality	Pitfall: uniformization, boundlessness
Allergy: distinction, exception	Challenge: selectiveness, realism

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Concord, communality	Uniformization, boundlessness
Trusting the collective	Distrusting individualists
Residents' participation	Residents' overburdening
Control of governors	Hyper-accountability
Reform-mindedness	Other-worldliness
Soft power	Vulnerability
Positive freedom	Negative freedom
Warm embrace	Suffocating blanket

Voter democracy	
Quality: private initiative, voluntary association	Pitfall: public recklessness, tragedy of the commons
Allergy: collective viscosity	Challenge: collective self-control

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Private initiative	Public recklessness
Voluntary association	Tragedy of the commons
Client-oriented government	Weathervane politics
Result-oriented government	Expectation management
Vibrant civic culture	Tending towards consumerism
Trust in the individual	Distrust of the collective
Scope for multiformity	Danger of anomie, disengagement
Equality in liberty	Survival of the strongest
Business-like efficiency	Instrumental coldness

Figure 7.6 Strengths and weaknesses of models of democracy revisited

democracy is crucial for the faith and confidence they have in particular arrangements and for their readiness to embrace certain reforms. Some examples:

- It will be harder to convince a predominantly egalitarian community of the blessings of voter democracy than it will a predominantly individualistic community. This is true even if the situational context pushes in the direction of the market-analogous institutions of voter democracy. Take the example of the modern industrial city facing increasing competitive pressure. Under such circumstances, advocates of voter democracy may have a relatively strong case, but, in a predominantly egalitarian community, questions will be raised all the same: Is this what we want? Should we not resist the 'economization' of democracy with all its consumerism, its counting and measuring, rather than go along with it?
- It will be harder to convince a highly atomistic community of the advantages of consensus democracy than it will a predominantly hierarchical community. This is true even if, for instance, society is exposed to centrifugal forces. In such a situation, advocates of consensus democracy, experts in 'social peace-keeping', have more to offer than they do in a situation that is virtually tension-free. In an atomistic community, however, it will raise scepticism anyway: What good will it do, all this

	Atomism	*Hierarchy*	*Egalitarianism*	*Individualism*
Pendulum democracy	***Wahlverwandt (+) adversarial, pugnacious, mass-sensitive, directive, 'kick and rush'***	(–) divisive, simplifying, inaccurate, disintegrating, ill-considered, zigzagging.	(–) non-inclusive, one-dimensional, directive, insensitive to all things deviant and small	(–) ignoring individual and partial interests, risk of the overruling majority
	(–) blind to small groups	(+) unity of leadership	(+) 'throw out the rascals'	(+) clarity
Consensus democracy	(–) expertocratic, half-hearted, soft, yielding, fiddling, flannelling, 'weak tea'	***Wahlverwandt (+) guardian, meritocratic, differentiation and coordination, 'keeping things together'***	(–) patronizing, expertocratic, repressive-tolerant, complexity-reducing	(–) paternalistic, viscous, cartel-like, non-transparent, dissipation of choice signals
	(+) an eye for small groups	(–) pluriform leadership	(+) protection of minorities	(+) protection of rights
Participatory democracy	(–) boundless, other-worldly, overanxious, overly demanding, 'killing by kindness'	(–) boundless, insensitive to status, unstructured, undisciplined, unguided, uncontrollable	***Wahlverwandt (+) bottom-up , anti-authority, an eye for the deviant, 'all are equal ..'***	(–) uniformization, collectivization, hostile to the exceptional, underestimation, entrepreneur
	(+) sceptical about authorities	(+) emphasis on collaboration	(–) '... but some are more equal …'	(+) power from the bottom up
Voter democracy	(–) overly demanding in terms of private initiative, 'do it yourself', 'you must choose'	(–) disengaged, gone astray, hype-sensitive, zigzagging, ill-considered, 'do it yourself'	(–) non-deliberative aggregation, consumerist, 'we turn the knobs if they put in the requests'	***Wahlverwandt (+) customer- and demand-oriented governance, linking up with private initiative***
	(+) poking up government	(+) pragmatic, utilitarian	(+) civic self-governance	(–) risk overruling majorities

Explanation. This table should be read from foci to loci: from cultural perspectives to models of democracy. The cultural perspectives – atomism, hierarchy, egalitarianism, and individualism – have been derived from Douglas (see Chapter 2). The cultural perspectives are *Wahlverwandt* (in theWeberian sense) to pendulum democracy, consensus democracy, participatory democracy, and voter democracy, respectively. The affinity is ideal-typical in kind; it is (socio-)logically determined.[42] Wherever cultural perspectives and models of democracy are *Wahlverwandt*, the pluses have been printed in bold before the minuses, in conformity with the cultural logic of parading the pluses of congruent institutions. Wherever cultural perspectives and models of democracy are not *Wahlverwandt*, this order has been reversed.[43]

Figure 7.7 Models of democracy and cultural perspectives

assembling and all this soft talk? All this flannelling will get us nowhere, better to kick ass and talk tough!

Now, one might say, the proponents of voter democracy are right in the first case and the proponents of consensus democracy in the second case. However, what is the right way of looking at these matters? In the domain of normative politics, one can take a position on such matters, but that is precisely what it is: a position. Other positions can be taken. Proponents of a particular model of democracy do not need to reconcile themselves to this, but they do need to face up to it. They may have as many arguments as they like to support a particular model of democracy, but the persuasiveness of their arguments is inevitably influenced by convictions institutionalized in cultural perspectives. These convictions decide what people consider effective and legitimate and what they trust in a practical sense and accept in a normative sense.

In conclusion: lessons from practice

Let's summarize the lessons that can be learned from the above:

- The praxis of democracy has different expressions, which, as a rule, are blends of different models. Praxis is stronger than theory. Theory insists on purity and avoiding pollution; praxis inclines towards impurity and combining different models of democracy.
- Combinations of models of democracy are advantageous because each model of democracy has its inherent bias that needs to be corrected. Each model inevitably has a strong side and a weak side. Contrary to what the advocates of a particular model of democracy may claim, there is not a single model that possesses across-the-board superiority.
- Not all combinations are fortunate ones. Those combinations that promote both the effectiveness and the legitimacy of the democratic system are most advantageous: these are combinations that work and are recognized as such. In those cases, democracy coincides with good governance: a distinguishing mark of vital democracy.
- Whether a combination of models of democracy is advantageous to a greater or lesser extent depends on three matters that should always be considered in conjunction (as in Figure 7.8):

(a) *The democratic system* at hand. Which models are combined in which way? What built-in strengths and weaknesses are assembled in the democratic system?

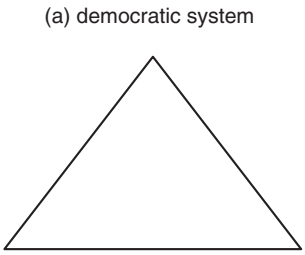


Figure 7.8 System, setting, and culture

(b) *The situational setting* in which democracy is to prove itself. What specific time- and place-bound circumstances must be taken into account? What are the situational challenges and requirements?

(c) *The cultural factor* that acts on all of this. What preferences, beliefs, and convictions must be taken into consideration? What are the culturally biased demands and expectations regarding democracy in action?

Lessons for reformers

System, setting, and culture must be approached in conjunction if one wishes to reform a democratic system with any chance of success. It also needs to be done for each separate case, for each country or place anew. Experiences gained in one system can never be transplanted to another whole and unchanged. However, *if* they are sensitive to the relevant similarities and differences, and that is a crucial and big *IF*, reformers from different systems may be able to learn from each other.

The importance of local knowledge and practical wisdom is underlined in the final chapter of this study, in which the lessons learned from democratic practice are applied to the practice of democratic reform. I will take the Netherlands as my central case here because (1), as I have argued above, thinking about democratic reform must always be case-sensitive; because (2), as a Dutch scholar and citizen, I am most sensitive to the Dutch case; and because (3) in the Netherlands democratic reform has a particularly long and instructive history.

8

Reforming Democracy

Learning from Past Experience

Life in death; animation in immobility; the illusion of vitality and the reality of inertia: all these polarities seemed deliberately made to rebound off each other.

Simon Schama, historian and expert on Dutch culture[1]

Introduction

Dutch culture is characterized by conflicting opposites. Simon Schama sees this symbolically reflected in the still lives in the tradition of Dutch painting: 'the animate and the inanimate world ... in a state of organic flux, forever composing, decomposing and recomposing itself'.[2] A similar organic movement of rise, fall, and recovery can also be observed in the process of democratic formation and reformation in the Netherlands, notwithstanding the system shocks that were often premeditated but rarely executed.

Democratic reform is a precarious thing. To have any chance of success, democratic reform must be contingent – sensitive to local conditions and cultures – and creative in uniting disparate views of democracy, as we saw in the previous chapter. The fact that rationally designed reform need not be superior in this respect to incrementally unfolding reform is demonstrated by the case of the Netherlands, where democratic reform has a long and instructive history. For this reason, and because sound reflection on democratic reform should always be case-specific, the Netherlands is central to this final chapter.

This chapter deals with a tried and tested alternative (reinventing tradition) to the kick and rush remedy (extreme makeover), which democratic reformers in the Netherlands have often prescribed but rarely realized. Like so many of their foreign counterparts, democratic reformers in the

Netherlands tend to start at the end, with the remedy they have in mind. It would make more sense, it is argued here, to start by making a sound diagnosis first: what is actually the problem? This question is at the core of the section below – democracy under reform pressure – in which Dutch democracy is explicitly understood in its situational and cultural context.

Diagnosis: democracy under reform pressure

Democracy in the Netherlands, like democracy in so many other Western countries, is under substantial pressure to change: the democratic system is expected to adapt to a changing context at a pace, to a degree, and in a way that it can hardly keep up with. Because the Dutch case has already been introduced in the chapter on consensus democracy, I will confine myself to the highlights here.[3]

Democratic system

In the Dutch system, the consensus model has long been the dominant model, with deep historical roots going back to the Middle Ages. Joint consultation ('integrative') by regents ('indirect') has been the dominant pattern for centuries. In successive epochs, this tradition has been reinvented time and again: in the Middle Ages (particularly from the fourteenth century onwards, when the cities began to flourish), in the Republic of the Seven United Provinces (late sixteenth to late eighteenth century), the Kingdom of the Netherlands (from the early nineteenth century), in the heyday of pillarization (late nineteenth until well into the twentieth century), and even the era of depillarization (since the 1960s). Officially, the country has only been a consensual *democracy* since 1917, when it introduced general suffrage, but its dominant characteristics – representative and integrative decision-making – had already been in the making for much longer.[4]

The consensus model has been the cornerstone of a functioning system, recognized as such, for quite a long time. This system functioned relatively well in terms of effectiveness, that is, its ability to make a difference, and in terms of legitimacy, that is, its ability to make this difference with the consent of all involved. It enabled the Dutch to keep their feet dry, to cultivate and parcel out the land effectively, and to boost prosperity and well-being to heights that often inspired awe abroad. In a strongly divided society, with the conflict potential of Northern-Irish magnitude, the system managed to keep the vital parts together in a practical sense.

Consensus democracy favours a particular type of citizenship and a certain kind of administrative leadership. Citizenship in consensus democracy is typically of the compliant and trusting kind, with citizens generally acting as spectators and occasionally as speakers (*insprekers* in Dutch). Leadership in consensus democracy is typically of the 'regency' type: not a grand and stirring affair but caring and careful. The politics of pacification and accommodation is driven by caretakers, who owe their positions to a relatively small circle of regents and related associations and who, in their turn, pass their positions on to their own kind. This used to be the time-honoured and accepted pattern of relations.[5]

The inclination towards integrative democracy has been so powerful and persistent that aggregative democracy never got much elbow room in the Dutch system. Establishing broadly based public support, consensus-building by conferring, pacifying, and adjusting points of view: this has been considered more proper than simply counting heads and then letting the winner take all. This latter was regarded as improper, to be wiped out, and distanced.[6]

As of old, there has never been much scope for direct democracy either, except, perhaps, on the lowest tier of the governance system. In the early days of the Dutch Republic, the multi-tiered governance system – from Republic, province, town, ward, down to the matter at hand – was so deeply rooted in society that, in fact, it amounted to a hybrid between a consensus model and a participatory model. In townships, fraternities, guilds, citizens' militias and the like, we see the rise of a precursor of participatory democracy (*avant la lettre*), which, however, was never entirely autonomous but always in some form of co-government embedded in the wider context.[7]

Over time, officials specializing in such co-government developed more and more into a class of 'regents', which caused participatory democracy to lose prominence without ever vanishing altogether. The fire might die down, but, every now and again, it would flare up again, as it did most recently in the 1960s and 1970s.

Voter democracy – direct and aggregative – has never been given much latitude in the Dutch system. Proposals tending in that direction – proposals for decision-making referendums, for example – have always been kept at a distance: for a long time, they were considered 'alien stains', out of place in the Dutch system of home administration.[8] Patterns of indirect-integrative democracy, on the other hand, have been reconfirmed over and over again.

Context of the democratic system

The democratic system should be understood in the situational and cultural context in which it developed. Two historical circumstances are crucial here.

Firstly, there is the ever recurring struggle against the water, which has compelled the Dutch to work together at the various governance levels for many centuries. From as early as the eleventh century onwards, feudal lords in low-lying peat bogs allocated cultivation concessions to free farmers and property developers, who set about draining their lots with such fervour that it caused the land to settle and drop. When water levels rose, this caused flooding problems, which required mutual attuning and bottom-up collaboration, for such problems could not be solved in any single-handed way: all townships, villages, and each and every farmer had to pull their weight and do their bit to protect the land with dykes. Such collaborative enterprises then gradually gelled into water boards and, subsequently, polder boards, united into a multi-tiered system that may be regarded as a main breeding ground for administrative practices in the Netherlands.[9]

Secondly, there is the country's early, widespread, and intensive urbanization. From the early Middle Ages on, we see the rise of a series of urban centres, *within which* – for there was not a single group that dominated all others – and *among which* – for there was not a single town that dominated all others – there developed a structure of mutual dependence and a culture of reciprocal accommodation and collaboration.[10] So it was not a strong nobility or church but a strong civil society that was the distinctive feature of an urban culture that would grow into ever greater prominence over time. The building blocks of the illustrious Republic were the Dutch provinces, but the driving forces below it and behind it were the towns with all their interconnected and collaborating echelons: wards, fraternities, guilds, citizens' militias, and the like. As in water management, there was a multi-tiered system of relations that shaped administrative processes and practices.[11]

The genesis of this landscape of polders and towns boosted a towering urge to be autonomous and to put up a forceful resistance to oppression: be it oppression by 'tyrant water', imperilling town and country, or by 'tyrant Spain', posing a particular threat to regional, local, and sectional privileges.[12] This landscape of polders and towns (note the plurals) put its stamp on the cultural landscape, the physical and moral geography. It gave rise to a political culture that was dominated by a strong sense of interdependence and connectedness, which expressed itself in a special combination of egalitarianism and old-style hierarchy, that is, hierarchy not as a pyramid-shaped command structure but as a 'holarchic' responsibility structure, with strongly differentiated

responsibilities (high-grid) linked to communities that enveloped each other (high-group).[13] Such a structure resembles not so much a pyramid but rather a series of Chinese boxes, with the bigger boxes each encapsulating the smaller ones. In the Dutch Republic, this is how the governing bodies – the localities, the provinces, the States General – were interconnected.

The 'Chinese-boxes' structure is fundamentally ambiguous. On the one hand, it suggests a multi-tiered system of ascending responsibilities, as reflected in ever grander terms of address appropriate for members of a particular tier.[14] On the other hand, all enveloping administrative bodies were highly dependent on the administrative bodies they contained within them. The States General could only make a decision if none of the provinces disagreed;[15] all provinces had to take the towns' interests into account; and all towns, just like the provinces and the country, had a polycentric structure. This structure of mutual dependences engendered Consensus, Compromise, and Consultation, the renowned three Cs of the Dutch conference-room culture, to which we need to add the fourth C of Co-optation: appointment to membership by invitation of the existing regents.[16]

This pattern of interpenetration and interdependence cultivated a relatively high degree of egalitarianism. Responsibility was usually borne collectively by 'mates' (*gezellen* in Dutch) that were equals, not only in boards, councils, and states, but also in wards, fraternities, guilds, and citizens' militias. This is cognate with the classically Dutch virtue of *gezelligheid*, originally referring to a close association or fellowship but to be understood as consociation, the cooperation of different social groups. There would always be a foreman or chairman, but this person was no more than *primus inter pares*: first among equals.[17] The pattern of relations sketched here encourages the spread of an egalitarian culture: low-grid and high-group; a great deal of equality within tight-knit groups.

A truly individualistic culture (low-grid and low-group; equality without tight-knit groups) would not spread among large sections of the population until much later. The spread of such a culture was aided by the fact that an important ingredient of individualism, the sense of equality, had already been around in relations and practices for a long time. Precursors of individualism can be found in such historical figures as the shrewd merchant and the artful dodger, who were quick to grasp the idea of enlightened self-interest.[18] Self-interest was taken to be enlightened if it also served group interests. The individualistic culture of 'be yourself and do your own thing' would not arise until much later.

A large-scale atomistic culture (high-grid and low-group; strongly regulated and, at the same time, strongly thrown back upon itself) is another

phenomenon that would not arise until much later. For a long time, the rise of such a culture was obstructed by the high-group culture in all its manifestations. Singles, widows, orphans, the poor, and the elderly were taken care of in homes and institutions that were usually tightly regulated but also offered protective shelter: '*gezellig*' or consociational in a strongly disciplined connection.

To summarize: hierarchy as holarchy; substantial egalitarianism; controlled individualism; restrained atomism – this is what, in bold brushstrokes, the cultural context was like for a long time. The dominant consensus model has the closest affinity with the holarchic form of hierarchy but also branches out into other cultural patterns, especially into the egalitarian cultural pattern.

System versus context

For quite a long time, this system (a dominant consensus model with an undercurrent of participatory democracy) was reasonably well attuned to the situational and cultural context (a landscape of polders and towns, with an egalitarian and holarchic-hierarchical disposition). The context, however, would change more rapidly than the political-administrative system could keep up with.[19]

One crucial development has already been mentioned: the rise of individualism. This development accelerated when the process of depillarization gained momentum in the 1960s. In essence, depillarization is a process of de-hierarchization: the sharply defined boundaries between social compartments became blurred; the sharply defined division of tasks between a responsible elite at the top of the pillar and a compliant mass at its base lost its legitimacy. Large groups began to break away from the holarchic-hierarchic culture of pillarization and started to explore alternative ways of life.[20] The egalitarian culture, which had flourished before, flourished again, especially in the 1960s and 1970s.

What was relatively new, though, was that the cultures on the low-group side of the cultural spectrum were also moving into favourable wind, aided by significant technological and social change in the 1980s and 1990s. Individualization, informalization, informatization, and internationalization were all increasing, according to the Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands (SCP).[21] This encouraged not only the individualistic low-group/low-grid culture but also the atomistic low-group/high-grid culture. The difference between the two lies in the degree to which the 'depillarized' managed to gain control over their lives. Where this control

was weak – where the social setting, with group ties crumbling, still tended to be controlling rather than controllable – atomism describes this way of life more aptly than individualism.[22]

In any case, the changes in the situational and cultural context put the political-administrative system in place, always less flexible by its very nature, under pressure. The limited institutionalization of voter democracy and pendulum democracy increasingly came to be defined as a problem. The limited influence of citizens as voters was increasingly regarded as a deficiency. Integrative decision-making along group lines, characteristic of consensus democracy and participatory democracy, increasingly came to be considered old-fashioned.[23]

The dominant consensus model in particular had to pay for it. Depillarized, emancipated Dutchmen and women were criticizing it increasingly for being a patronizing model, run by a cartel of conference-room experts. From being a nation with strongly moderated public emotions, which would only serve to stir things up, the Netherlands speedily became a 'champion of emotion'.[24] Emotionality, personalism, and expressionism in politics, kept at arm's length for a long time, have now become much-prized commodities. Consensus democracy does not offer much scope for these items, in contrast to pendulum democracy and voter democracy, fraught as they are with the excitement and suspense of plebiscites and elections 'that really matter'. The Anglo-American instances of these, especially the US ones, flood Dutch living rooms in the splendour of full colour via television and more recently via the Internet.

Democratic innovators who wish to strengthen aggregative democracy in the Netherlands, therefore, have now gained momentum. The processes of change observed by the SCP (individualization, informalization, internationalization, and informatization) make large-scale reform inevitable, in their view. Computerization and mediafication play a special role in this process. Mediafication boosts the development of media democracy: the democracy of political media personalities who use the mass media to get the pendulum to swing. Computerization enables fast voting procedures, without guardians interfering, of the type that suits voter democracy.

Standard recipe: new structures

The problem with the democratic system in the Netherlands, according to those who want to reform it, is that it is out of step with the fast and major changes taking place in Dutch society. In most cases, the champions of

democratic reform in the Netherlands look to comprehensive, large-scale plans for structural reform to address this issue, achieving, however, little success.

Sweeping plans for reform

The solution that is often proposed to address the issues outlined above is the extreme makeover of the consensus model as the foundation of Dutch democracy. The institutional expressions of consensus democracy – appointed governors, coalition politics, compromise policies, cushioned political oppositions, curbed administrative thirst for action – need to be phased out; alternative expressions need to be introduced and supported. This, in a nutshell, is the gist of the critique of Dutch democracy.

Critique of consensus democracy is a tidal phenomenon in the Netherlands, with alternating high and low tides. Sometimes, the critical approach is less pronounced, and a more sympathetic approach to consensus democracy gains the upper hand – witness the appreciation of the polder model in the second half of the 1990s. However, criticism is never drowned out altogether and resurfaces time and again.[25] The American-Dutch historian James Kennedy detects a strong reform ethos among the Dutch elite, building on a long tradition of reformist thinking in religious and secular matters alike.[26] Critics of consensus democracy are not confined to just one political party or movement; they come from all political directions. The most explicit democratic reform party in the Netherlands is the social-liberal party D66, but also other political parties contain vocal actors and subcurrents demanding structural reform.[27] Many reform committees – assembling reform-minded officials and academics – have called for many types of structural reform of the consensual institutions guiding public choice.[28]

In terms of the typology developed here, it should be noted that initiatives and pleas for distancing consensus democracy come from all three rival models of democracy.

From the quarter of voter democracy:

- pleas for an expanding referendum practice, not only consultative and local but also decisive and national; large-scale referendums leading directly, without the intervention of representatives, to an aggregated aye or nay;
- initiatives for permanent voter and user surveys via consumer samples, public opinion polls, and other forms of large-scale research among

citizen populations, searching for tendencies and majorities that are regarded as being directly representative.

From the quarter of pendulum democracy:

- pleas for strong elected governors, backed by a clear voter mandate: elected instead of appointed mayors; a Prime Minister designated by voters rather than by coalition parties;
- initiatives for having 'elections that really matter', that parcel out the political landscape into big and clear lots, and that clearly represent tendencies and majorities among the electorate.

From the quarter of participatory democracy:

- pleas for communicative policy-making, deliberative planning, participative scenario workshops, open brainstorming, and related forms of citizen participation and deliberation;
- initiatives for civil self-government, such as the adoption of neighbourhood budgets that are to be spent by citizens themselves in joint consultation; projects such as 'Can Do' or, before that, 'social renewal' initiatives.

From the quarter of participatory democracy, reforms have been propagated every now and then, but over the last few decades, proposals for reform emanating from the quarters of pendulum democracy and voter democracy have tended to attract the greatest attention. Especially, it is the Anglo-American examples of aggregative democracy that appear to be seductive.

The UK type of Westminster democracy continues to be regarded as a paragon of clear pendulum democracy: this is where they manage to hold elections that are exciting, bring about clarity, and provide a solid voter mandate for the government to go about its business with resolve and decisiveness – or so its proponents feel. Democracy in the US has all the attractions of pendulum democracy – competitive, win-or-lose elections, governors with clear voter mandates – on top of and combined with the attractions of voter democracy. The traditional variety is the New England town meeting; the contemporary 'Californian' variety of voter democracy – driven by civil initiatives and referendums and their informal precursors in the form of opinion polls and consumer surveys – is, however, getting more attention at present.

Voter democracy and pendulum democracy are often put forth jointly as models of reform. The Dutch social-liberal party D66, an explicit

democratic-reform party, has been on this track since its inception in 1966. Pim Fortuyn, the vocal standard-bearer of system reform around the turn of the century, was a great champion of self-governing voter democracy and, at the same time, strong elected governors. In the turbulent years following Fortuyn's assassination in 2002, his reform agenda concept has been carried on by his immediate political heirs, but, remarkably enough, also by politicians such as Wouter Bos (PvdA/Labour) and Jozias van Aartsen (VVD/Liberals). Giving voters and elections greater 'decision power' has been their response to the 2002 citizens' revolt and its sequel with the referendum that rejected proposals for the 'European Constitution' in 2005.

Formally speaking, the 2005 referendum entailed no binding decision, but the Second Chamber of the Dutch parliament had promised to follow the popular vote in this matter. In 1999, the First Chamber had denounced a cabinet proposal for constitutional reform that should have made binding, decisive referendums possible at the national level. It was defeated because five senators from the VVD/Liberals resisted the party line in the ultimate vote on the matter.

In 2003, the governing coalition created a separate post for a Minister for Political Innovation. The first Political Innovation Minister was D66 politician Thom de Graaf, who devoted himself particularly to introducing a new electoral system as well as an elected mayor. When his proposals for the elected mayor stalled in the Upper House, again, he resigned and was succeeded by fellow party member Alexander Pechtold, who soon proceeded to present an agenda for democratic innovation. The two central items on this agenda were a National Convention, which was to rethink the nation's democratic constitution, and the Citizens Forum, which is to draw up plans for a new voting system. Both initiatives foundered, quite typically.

Besides such plans for political innovation, there are also plans for administrative reform, which urge the streamlining and simplification of domestic government, in the hope that this will generate greater clarity, decisiveness, and strength. The logic tends to be that of pendulum democracy, which, in domestic government, stands for streamlined intergovernmental relations: government with few tiers, transparent administrative structures, and clear divisions of powers and responsibilities. Several plans have been developed and elaborated for all three administrative tiers: national, provincial, and local government:

- At the national level: for many decades, plans have been made and discussed under the heading of 'ministerial reorganization'. The bone of contention is the both horizontally and vertically fragmented or,

according to some, 'shattered' ministerial structure. Solutions are sought but rarely found in merging and streamlining government departments.[29]

- At the subnational level: for many decades, plans have been made and discussed that are to bring order and alignment (especially along the vertical axis) to the complexity of Dutch regional government, which is considered by reformers a hotchpotch of functional regional government on top of multi-purpose provincial government. In the metropolitan areas in particular, the lack of clear and decisive government is thought to be glaring. Rationalization has been put forward to solve the issue. Proposed constructions range from municipal agglomerations to urban regions, and from mini-provinces to maxi-provinces, none of which, however, have managed to secure a permanent place on the administrative map.[30]

Lack of reform success

The throng of reform plans is not matched by a host of success stories. Major structural changes have been planned time and again, but eventually the overall structure has remained largely the same. For this reason, Andeweg has called the Netherlands the prototype of 'institutional conservatism'.[31] This characterization is not entirely adequate if we look at the informal institutions of government (see the following section on the reinvention of tradition), but from the perspective of formal institutions it is spot on. 'Thorbecke's House', the Dutch constitution devised by the liberal statesman J.R. Thorbecke in the years 1848 to 1851, is by and large still standing.

Very few plans for administrative reform have been realized. The few include municipal amalgamation (drastically reducing the number of municipalities), municipal 'dualization' (putting the executive and the representative branches of local government more on a par), and the introduction of the local referendum (adding an element of voter democracy to local democracy). The innovations these entail, however, are modest. Municipal amalgamation has only served to alter the scale but not the type of municipal democracy. Dualization of local government has tended to bring local government closer rather than less close to the ideal type of consensus democracy (one of its main characteristics, set out in Chapter 4, is dualistic executive–representive relations). The local referendum, if and when applied, has remained firmly embedded in a consensus democracy framework.[32]

In every other way, the agenda for administrative reform has proved to be unfulfilled. Dreams of streamlining the administrative system – lean and mean structures, sharp and clear procedures, trimmed national ministries,

'city provinces', 'mini-provinces', 'municipal agglomerations', and the like – have all failed to come true and are still causing sleepless nights to those involved. The plans for all-encompassing reform that should have brought about political innovation have, for the greater part, gone the same way. The referendum, the constituency voting system, the elected mayor, the elected Prime Minister: for forty years, they have been hatched, studied, and discussed in every possible way by various political parties and reform committees. Their actual realization, however, has been very limited indeed.

Even more so than the local referendum, the idea of a national referendum has been cut down to the bone little by little in order to make it fit into the existing framework. In the end, proposals to introduce the national referendum foundered. The same holds for plans that should have ushered in the elected mayor and, perhaps following in its wake, the elected Prime Minister. Plans for introducing the constituency voting system have tended to get bogged down in the decision-making process if they did not preserve the proportionality of the political system, which is crucial for consensus democracy.[33]

Situational mismatch

One of the main reasons why large-scale plans for democratic reform have proved to be so hard to implement is that there is a mismatch between such plans and the reality of practical policy issues. In policy studies, policy issues are arranged according to the degree to which the standards and values they embody are shared (is there consensus or dissensus about what needs to be done?) and to the degree to which the policy areas concerned are empirically knowable (is there consensus or dissensus about what is actually the matter?).

	Normative consensus (That's the way to go!)	Normative dissensus (What's the way to go?)
Empirical consensus (terra cognita)	Regulation problems (e.g. granting driving licences)	Pacification problems (e.g. building new asylum centres)
Empirical dissensus (terra incognita)	Knowledge problems (e.g. preparing for high water)	Insurmountable problems (e.g. dealing with climate change)

Figure 8.1 Policy issues arranged[34]

If we look at how these two dimensions connect (see Figure 8.1), we observe a simultaneously rightward and downward movement in the real world of policy-making. Particularly the category of wicked problems (in the bottom right-hand corner in Figure 8.1) is becoming increasingly important. Processes of depillarization and fragmentation are making Dutch society ever more an example of 'the unknown society', a phrase that some commentators have coined.[35] Policy areas are increasingly distant from what, in old administrative models, was represented as a 'controlled system': a system that could be known and manipulated. Value pluralism and value relativism, on the other hand, have increased in the wake of processes of multi-culturalization and postmodernization.[36] Missions and goals of policy systems are the endless subjects of controversy and debate.

Public policy-making systems have responded to this movement with forms of network government, characterized by reciprocal and interdependent relations.[37] In the Anglo-American literature, this has been labelled 'governance' – a neologism for something that has been around in the Netherlands for a long time. Patterns of network governance, mutual pacification and accommodation have been mobilized for centuries. Recent developments may have provided them with a new impetus and with new names: 'co-production', 'interactive policy-making', 'multi-level governance', etc., but if you look carefully, they are not really something new but reinventions of something old: a long-established administrative tradition, which is essentially of an integrative (decision-making by consultation) and indirect (consultation by guardians) kind.[38]

It is remarkable that the tendency towards indirect, integrative network governance is reinforced by societal transformations (individualization, informalization, internationalization, and informatization) that are also seized upon by democratic innovators who would like to see the establishment of more direct and aggregative kinds of democracy. Reformers want to simplify and streamline the system, but what they get is yet more complexity and inteconnectedness, which again bolsters their calls for reform and system change. Democratic reformers prefer it one way (direct and aggregative), but policy-makers who need to deal with real-life problems in network society often do it in another way (indirect and integrative).

Cultural mismatch

Major plans for reform have also foundered on their tendency to connect poorly with established cultural patterns. Such plans often fail to take into account the fact that culture, besides admitting certain changes, also

retains considerable constants. Despite against-the-grain movements, which have also been present, Dutch culture has remained to a large degree high-group; and the democratic culture has remained to a large degree grafted onto a stock of integrating, uniting, and sharing tendencies, in line with an unremittingly potent 'we culture'.[39]

This means that tendencies towards aggregative democracy – counting individual votes rather than developing shared visions – still meet with considerable resistance. The established institutions continue to be largely rooted in consensus democracy, and these institutions continue to have a solid basis in society. When the wages are at issue – or the pensions, or healthcare arrangements, or what you will – Dutchmen still urge close consultations with the institutionalized custodians of these interests. In such cases everyone reverts back into 'polder mode', including all those so-called individualized citizens – not to mention the officials involved. Dutch officials may flirt with notions of aggregative democracy in theory, but when this threatens their own positions in practice – with really competitive win-or-lose elections, or with voters deciding things without them – they tend to change their minds.

The tendency towards aggregative democracy also meets with resistance from the quarter of participatory democracy. In comparison with earlier decades (particularly the 1960s and 1970s), participatory democracy may have faded into the background somewhat, but from this position in the background it continues to be influential. Habermassian thought on democracy is still current, less so in administrative practice, but all the more so in academia, where it goes by the name 'deliberative democracy': direct participation of all those concerned, trying to find common ground through talks and arguments, without resorting to ultimatums or abusing unequal power positions.[40] Pleas in favour of strong governors of the Westminster kind or voter democracy of the Californian kind continue to meet with opposition from this quarter.

Plans versus realities

The modest output of democratic reform in the Netherlands cannot be explained by a lack of ambitious, consistently well-thought-out plans, but rather by its reverse: an abundance of rigorous plans, each based on a specific idea of democratic order. Time and again, solutions have been proposed in one particular direction: democratic cleansing in conformity with a specific idea of democratic cleanliness, to be accomplished by means

of a particular technical intervention, such as another voting system, or an elected governor, or a referendum, etc.

What is considered proper, 'pure democracy' by some, however, is considered improper, 'impure democracy' by others. Referendum legislation is warmly welcomed by supporters of voter democracy, but supporters of participatory democracy are dead set against it. What the former want to bring in and develop is what the latter prefer to keep out and stay away from. Different cleaning strategies, inspired by competing democratic beauty ideals, are almost ceaselessly working against one another. Carrying out large-scale reforms with any kind of success is virtually impossible. 'Thorbecke's House' (an often-used metaphor for the constitution of Dutch government) can be cleaned without end.[41] A 'conservation of (reform) energy law' seems to be at work.

The few structural changes that actually have been implemented – the proverbial exceptions to the rule – tend take effect after many years have passed, while the winds of change are meanwhile blowing from quite another quarter. A case in point is the installation of sub-municipalities in Rotterdam and Amsterdam: pressed for in the 1970s, institutionalized in the 1980s and 1990s, regarded as old-fashioned and out of date very shortly after that.

Alternative: reinventing tradition

The most popular recipe for democratic reform in the Netherlands – radical makeover – is accompanied by a surplus of short-sightedness and a lack of learning. Champions of large-scale structural reform in the Netherlands might have learned more from earlier times and from other places than they actually have. From a comparative point of view they might have learned that the Anglo-American examples of aggregative democracy, besides manifest advantages, also have disadvantages that should not be underrated.[42] They might also have learned that embedding such variants in the Dutch context, if feasible at all, will have effects that are different from when those variants are integrated into a culturally compatible Anglo-American context.[43]

From a historical point of view they might have learned that the Dutch institutions of democracy, besides manifest disadvantages, also have advantages that have proved their value over time; that these institutions are tenacious and cannot be removed; that large-scale democratic reform in the Netherlands almost always fails to be implemented;[44] and that small-scale

adaptations, part of the incremental 'reinvention of tradition', have proved to be more successful in the past than extreme makeovers.[45] Reinventing tradition is a mixture of change and preservation, of movement and counter-movement, of compensation without overcompensation. It is, arguably, the only way for democratic reform to go in the Netherlands. It makes use of the hidden elasticity, the *élasticité secrète*, that Simon Schama considers central to Dutch culture.[46]

Reinventing tradition in the past

Reaching consensus has been a dominant theme in Dutch government for many centuries. Many variations on this theme have come and gone over time. In various epochs – in the Middle Ages, in the Republic, in the decentralized unitary state, in the days of pillarization, at the time of depillarization – the Dutch tradition of pacification and accommodation has continued to resurface in new guises.

In the Republic, forms of cooperation and consultation, handed down from the Middle Ages, were cultivated and adjusted to serve the collegial governance of 'regents', who needed each other because power in the Republic was highly disintegrated and dispersed. In the decentralized unitary state, the tradition of decentralized, consensus-seeking government was continued in a changing framework: a unitary state with federal characteristics, conceived by J.R. Thorbecke as a system of mutually restraining and influencing bodies. This system, in its turn, generated a compartmentalized system characterized by politics of pacification and accommodation.[47]

With depillarization and related de-hierarchization of society, the pressure to change has been increasing. The necessity of pacification and accommodation has remained, but the readiness of citizens to leave this to others – to regents or to governors – has decreased. Adapted forms of network governance, interactive policy-making and co-production have evolved. This has taken the reinvention of tradition into a new stage. This has, however, not evened out into an acceptable new balance. A next wave of practical adaptations is to be expected. Ideally, new practices would be connected with the existing model of democracy in such a way that its strengths are updated and its weaknesses compensated as much as possible. Figure 8.2 recapitulates the upsides and downsides of the Dutch brand of consensus democracy.

Idiosyncrasies

Quality: controlled integration, collaboration	Pitfall: viscosity, coagulation
Allergy: populism, unilateralism	Challenge: transparent decision-making

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Controlled integration, collaboration	Viscosity, coagulation
Proportional representation	Effect of elections
Broad-based support in policy networks	Accountability in political institutions
Channelled multiformity	Cartel and backroom politics
Administrative expertise	Technocracy, expertocracy
Pacification and accommodation	Avoidance and ostrich behaviour
Integrated policy programmes	Compromise policies
Caring, 'kind and gentle'	Paternalism, 'suffocating'
Keeping things together	Making all contingent
Sharing responsibility	Fragmenting accountability
All have a say	No one is ultimately responsible

Figure 8.2 Recapitulation: consensus democracy in the Netherlands[48]

Updating strengths

Mutual accommodation along vertical lines, connecting different levels of governent, is presently put under the heading of 'multi-level governance'. Dutch administrative expertise in this area might go back a long way, but is also in need of reinvention. Over time, multi-level governance in the Netherlands has become 'governors' government' – governors at different administrative tiers conferring with one another. Such conferring needs to be enriched with input from society, that is, from citizens and social organizations joining in debates, carrying out reality checks on governors' government.

The same holds for mutual accommodation along horizontal lines, presently discussed under the heading of 'interactive governance', going back a long way in Dutch consensus democracy as well. Over time, interactive governance has become dominated by the conference-room experts. When social parties are listened to, this commonly takes place through the established guardians of umbrella organizations and other institutionalized interests. Such conferring needs to be widened to include parties and actors that are not routinely invited. The challenge to Dutch polder politics is to cultivate 'new polders', new arenas for policy interaction, in addition to the old ones. Mutual accommodation, in sum, would be strengthened if it were

less confined to the traditional domain of consensus democracy – seasoned governors and professionalized co-governors – and if it were to spread its wings both horizontally and vertically.

Compensating weaknesses

There is a history of adding elements of participatory democracy to consensus democracy. The effort might be renewed by making selective connections with modern forms of e-participation, communication, and deliberation.[49] Participatory democracy can be supplementary in the sense that it has something to offer that consensus democracy is not naturally endowed with: attention to and connection with those involved beyond the circle of professionalized guardians; attention to and connection with people's real-life experience beyond the abstract world of institutions and systems.

What consensus democracy, as it has evolved, is not endowed with either is expressionism, emotionality and personality. Consensus democracy has always tended rather towards the moderate, the rational, and the practical. This is not so bad in principle, but a political system can also have too much of a good thing. Then it may work out perversely, causing the government to be viewed as insensitive and faceless and citizens to feel bypassed and unrecognized. This would help to explain why pendulum democracy and voter democracy are often proposed as alternative models: they promise to add 'salt and pepper' – rivalry and contest, emotion and sensation – to a Dutch system that tends to be rather bland otherwise.

Some elements of pendulum democracy and voter democracy may be added to the system without requiring major reform operations, as evolving practice shows. Expressions of voter democracy such as citizen surveys, opinion polls, consumer panels, and the like have drifted into the system in the slipstream of the New Public Management, which had an early and rapid dispersion in Dutch governance. Under the influence of the commercial and the new electronic media, the phenomenon of 'direct popular voting' has snowballed. On the Internet, in newspapers, and also on radio and TV, public affairs are increasingly dealt with in direct and aggregative ways. Individual choices – relayed by e-mail, text messages, and phone – are aggregated swiftly into for-and-against percentages and pie charts. In some cases, such aggregative elements have been added to interactive policy-making processes.

Under the influence of the modern media, we also witness pendulum democracy increasingly encroaching on the public domain. Competitive

win-or-lose elections, not strongly developed in the formal democracy, are gaining increasing scope in the informal democracy of the Dutch media. In a popular television programme, for instance, Dutch mayors compete against each other for the viewers/voters' favour, even if the mayors' office, in a formal sense, requires them to be appointed. While the Prime Minister, formally, remains the *primus inter pares*, the media increasingly tend to present the PM as the nation's political leader who needs to prove himself as such.[50] What was a distinct possibility only a few decades ago – obtaining a political position with conference-room authority only – is now moving beyond the bounds of the possible.

If modification of informal institutions continues, formal codification may follow. This might be useful, to the extent that first modifiers and then codifiers manage to (re)discover fortunate combinations and avoid unfortunate ones. There are lessons to be learned and there is inspiration to be drawn from foreign examples, some more relevant than others. If the referendum is to be arranged on a permanent footing, the example of Swiss voter democracy, embedded in a context of consensus democracy, is a great deal more relevant for the Netherlands than Californian referendum democracy. If mayors are to be appointed with greater citizen involvement, the example of the Belgian mayor, embedded in a context that closely resembles the Dutch one, is much more relevant than the example of the strong American mayor. The Belgian mayoralty is an interesting example because introducing this model only requires a political agreement rather than thoroughgoing formal reform. According to custom, the Belgian mayor is the party leader of the coalition party that got a majority vote in the last elections.[51] By the same logic, the Prime Minister could be appointed in a more citizen-driven way.[52]

Reinventing tradition: to be continued

Reinventing the tradition of pacification and accommodation in line with the above is less a matter of structure and more a matter of culture. Those who shape contemporary democracy must at least partly sing to another tune. The patterns of leadership (regency) and citizenship (spectator-speaker) that developed along with consensus democracy cannot remain unchanged. Moving closer to the virtues of 'appealing government' and 'vital citizenship' seems to be inevitable.

Appealing government – A major drawback of consensus government is its lack of appeal. These days, sound government – government that acquires legitimacy and gains effectiveness – must be sensitive to both tasks *and*

relations, to substance *and* appearance. Sound government must obviously possess the required expertise, but it should also know how to appeal to the imagination.[53] Consensus government is facing major challenges in this area: to make democratic leadership more appealing, less expertocratic, more personal, and more sensitive. Appealing government – it should be noted – is not crowd-pleasing government. It is not the kind of government that goes in for flannel and soft soap, all honey and no sting. It will also make an appeal: it will raise the alarm, it will implore, it will both bat and catch. Such government has a voice in media democracy, but it is a voice of its own, not that of a time-server. Appealing government, in sum, is the kind of government that, on the one hand, moves with the new age but, on the other, stands firm in a level-headed tradition as counterbalance.

Vital citizenship – Another major problem in consensus democracy is its tendency to suppress a culture of vital citizenship. In the young Republic, Dutch government was founded on a vigorous republican civic culture. Owing to the rise of regency governance, pacification, pillarization, and the welfare state, this culture fell by the wayside. Revitalization – reinventing a vigorous civic culture – is a major challenge. Vital citizenship, of whatever kind, is always self-confident citizenship: depatronized and co-responsible; it is citizenship that asserts itself, that has will and ability, that stands up for itself and operates under its own steam. Vital citizenship is also always mature citizenship, endowed with a mature feeling for striking the proper balance between assertiveness and civility, between claiming and accommodating competences, between the will to change and a sense of reality, between give and take. Vital citizenship, in sum, is the kind of citizenship that is both assertive and answerable.[54]

The reinvention of tradition should be put into effect first and foremost in the real-life behaviour of and interaction between governors and citizens. To achieve this, structural change of the drastic, all-encompassing type is not required. This is not to say that structural change is a taboo, but it should not be the launch pad, as it so often has been in post-war Dutch reform policies, despite their lack of success.

In conclusion: tailor-made democracy

As noted earlier, all readers are invited to write their own final chapter on the reform of a cherished democratic system, small or big, near or far. In this attempt, the case of the Netherlands as dealt with in the above may serve as a frame of reference but not as a blueprint. The analytical set-up may be used as a sensitizing framework but not as a copier. If there is one thing this

book has made clear it is the fact that democracy is a multiform phenomenon, which, in being reformed, requires a multiform approach. What we need is original combinations, not blueprints; tailor-made solutions, not one-size-fits-all. For this purpose, it is important to understand what the options are, what is worth considering, what is practicable, and, particularly, what is impracticable. This work and this analysis could contribute to such understanding.

Closing Debate

Six Characters in Discussion with the Author

VICTORIA Dear Frank, welcome in our midst! We've read your book over the last few weeks, and we're about to take you up on your invitation at the end: 'write your own sequel'. So it's great to see you here to join in our discussion.

FRANK Thank you. I'm very pleased to be here, and I'm very curious to hear what you'll come up with.

VICTORIA This meeting has an open agenda. I suggest that we speak freely, raise questions, pass comment, make suggestions, etc. I'll only intervene when we lose sight of the topic of democracy, ha ha ha. Who can I call upon to be the first to speak?

RODERICK Shall I? I have a general point to make which is possibly on other people's minds too. Chapter 2 contains a schedule that gives an overview of the various theoretical distinctions you make in this book. At the centre of this schedule are the four basic models of democracy. At the bottom, we find the foundations beneath these models, and, at the top, their visible expressions. But I wonder: does reality always match the theoretical connections that you make? You suggest, for instance, that consensus democracy comes with a regent-type leadership style. I see what you mean, but, at the same time, I also see movements away from such regency in classic consensus democracies like Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Some politicians there behave less like 'bridge-builders' and more like 'opinion formers' or 'gladiators' that must try and get a thumbs-up in the public arena.

HARRY But that's just a minority, you know, Roderick. And what is that minority after? Less 'consensus, compromise, and consultation', the three Cs of consensus democracy. What they want instead is more of

the decisiveness, guts, and clarity of pendulum democracy. Less Rhineland and more Anglo-Saxon democracy, I would say.

DIANA Meanwhile, though, their institutional environment remains predominantly of the Rhineland type. Or rather steeped in consensus democracy, for those three Cs are not confined to the European Rhineland, as I now understand.

VICTORIA No, unfortunately they aren't! Through the EU, the whole of Europe now has to deal with consensus democracy, and even traditionally Anglo-Saxon systems are now infused with consensual elements. Don't look so sad, Roderick. I'm not blind to the advantages of consensus democracy. But I cannot ignore its disadvantages, and to me they outweigh the advantages. Consensus democracy is a dish I wouldn't like to be served heaps of. To be acceptable to me, it really needs to be combined with and checked by a great deal of pendulum democracy.

JONATHAN And what about voter democracy? This is on the up and up in all Western democracies, in Anglo-Saxon as well as Rhinelandic systems. And I'm all for it! It makes sense in a highly individualized modern society. In the theoretical schedule that Roderick just referred to, voter democracy is related to individualism. To me, that's a recommendation. The individualistic culture is the least fenced-in culture. Both group pressure and regulation pressure are low. Allowing people freedom and self-determination: that's what democracy is all about in my view.

SELMA It makes you look really cheerful, Jonathan, and it all sounds hunky-dory, but in practice this self-determination boils down to nothing but self-protection. It's me, myself, and I, and don't give a damn for anyone else. To use direct democracy to protect individual self-interest: that's what I call abuse of democracy. Democracy should be different: working from the bottom up, not just for yourself but for the common good. I may be expressing a 'we culture' here, as you call it, Frank, but I don't think that's in any way a term of abuse.

FRANK Nor is it meant to be one. Concepts like 'me culture' and 'we culture' and all those other theoretical concepts in the schedule Roderick referred to are just sensitizing concepts that support the process of clarification and interpretation. They are 'ideal types' that enable you to position, compare, and contrast democratic practices. The ideal types indicate what you might expect from a logical, or rather socio-logical, point of view. But, of course, democratic practices always deviate from the pure types to a greater or lesser degree. Having these ideal types at hand, or in your mind, allows you to name and discuss such deviations, and that's

just what happened when you kicked off, Roderick. Interesting how this gives rise to all sorts of observations and discussions.

DIANA Including all sorts of normative suppositions.

FRANK That's inevitable. Jonathan and Selma are talking about the same phenomenon – individualization in democracy – from totally different points of view. Roderick and Victoria do the same when they talk about political leadership. Victoria's beauty ideal is pendulum democracy. She prefers to polish up what matches it and to eliminate what deviates from it. 'Dirt is matter out of place', to quote that phrase once again. For Roderick, whatever deviates from consensus democracy is not quite right. For Selma, whatever deviates from participatory democracy is fishy. And for Jonathan, lastly, whatever deviates from voter democracy is not altogether reliable. He talks about voter democracy in the way an economist talks about the pure market: like an aggregation machine that must be kept free from 'distortions'.

DIANA I see what you mean, Frank, but I think you should add something. With Jonathan, Selma, Roderick, and Victoria, I saw changes occurring in the course of our discussions. They remain loyal to their principles, but they have become more sensitive to other points of view. I think that's positive. But I also think they should stick to their guns. That'll keep the debate lively and sharp. Harry and I are also making a contribution to the debate, but it's a different kind of contribution: we're not so passionate about one model or the other. Nor are you Frank, or am I mistaken?

FRANK I suppose you're right, Diana. What with all this reading and writing about models of democracy, their advantages and disadvantages, I'm having increasing difficulty in feeling at home in any particular corner of the playing field. This is why I argue in favour of combining different models of democracy, of letting go of this penchant for one pure model. I'm convinced this has many advantages at the system level.

HARRY Well, I can't let you off the hook that easily, my friend. The one mixed system is not like the other, as you yourself wrote. So that still leaves us with the question: which system do you prefer?

FRANK Then I first want to know: what time and what place are we talking about? If we take the present-day Netherlands, where I live and work, I would say: a mix with consensus democracy inevitably in the centre, kept on its toes by rival models of democracy. I wouldn't recommend this mix anywhere, any time. You have to take it case by case always. Never one size fits all. That's really crucial.

SELMA Taking things on a case-by-case basis sounds like a good idea to me, but why do you come up with a Western country like the Netherlands to

illustrate your point at the end of the book? Why not a non-Western country, such as India? Is your choice of the Netherlands a principled one or a practical one, as I fear?

FRANK As you might have guessed by now, I have no problem with pragmatism. I'm by no means such a stickler for principle. But, in this case, I must say that both practical and principled considerations go hand in hand. NOT using the Netherlands as a case in point would be incorrect, to my mind, both practically and in principle. I could make some sweeping statements on democratic reform in general, but then I would be making the same mistake I blame others for making: flying over multiform reality at high altitude and passing over differences in context, culture, and systems as these have evolved. I suggest you should take these differences into account. The triangle of context, culture, and system should be considered for each distinct case separately.

DIANA Alright, so you don't want to dole out universal prescriptions, no panaceas for all complaints ...

FRANK Exactly! Authors that would hesitate to force one view of life upon the whole world often rush to present one particular model of democracy as worthy of general emulation. As if a model of democracy doesn't involve an inherent world view! No one needs another normative position in democratic theory. We're not short of normative opinions, which is fine, but we also need reflection: sensitivity to views other than our own, the ability to see the other side of the coin. That's what I've tried to do in this book: to reflect on democracy rather than pouring out just another view on democracy.

DIANA That's all very well, but I hadn't finished yet. You may be able to bracket your personal preferences, but you will never be value-free, of course.

RODERICK Doesn't that boil down to the same thing as I'm saying? That consensus democracy is the best model?

FRANK Ha ha, Roderick, don't you give me that! I can see how you would want to spin my message in that way, but I won't go there. I've already presented my general point – that there is no 'best model' for each time and place – but if you also want to hear a personal disclosure, here it is. I'm convinced that consensus democracy will continue to play a leading part in the present-day Netherlands, but as a private person I'm not a great fan of it. I don't really care for all this assembling and palavering. A well-known columnist once called himself a *Vernunftdemokrat*: someone who's in favour of democracy not with his heart so much as with his mind. That's how I'm in favour of consensus democracy in the Dutch context, if only this model is kept on its toes by rival models.

SELMA But if your heart's not in consensus democracy, it's got to be in another type of democracy, right? When you follow your heart, I'm sure you'll end up with participatory democracy.

HARRY Darned, the academic study of democracy is beginning to look more and more like political practice, isn't it? The substance of what you are saying is no longer enough; now they also want to know what makes you tick emotionally!

FRANK I see what you mean, Harry, but in for a penny, in for a pound now, I'm afraid. If I ignore the weaknesses that are inherent in all models of democracy and just look at their selling points, I would have to say that what voter democracy has to offer is the most appealing to me personally. But then again: that's a big IF. I simply cannot ignore the weaknesses. They're inextricably bound up with each model. So no, I cannot embrace one model. At the end of the day, I really prefer to see a mixed model, with checks and balances between the different models to keep them on their toes.

HARRY But there's nothing new about such an argument for a mixed model with checks and balances, is there? It's already in the works of Aristotle, Cicero, and Montesquieu. In the work of the latter, we also find a strong plea for contextualism.

JONATHAN That argument won't wash, Harry. You yourself have said: 'if true not new, if new not true'. By the way: not new to you may well be new to me. I'm not such a connoisseur of the classics as you are, of course.

VICTORIA That will do, Jonathan. Harry's got a point. The idea of checks and balances is old and well known.

DIANA Sure, but then you're talking about the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches that must balance one another out, and that's quite different from various models of democracy that correct each other.

FRANK You're right, Diana, but this is a valid point that's being made here. In its development, my line of argument is not the same, but it's certainly related to ideas that have been around for quite some time about forces and counter-forces in a mixed model. 'If true not new, if new not true' – there's a lot to be said for that. A long time ago, Aristotle did actually argue in favour of a mixed model, of hybridity and pluralism, as it would be called in today's jargon. But not everyone can bear the idea, especially not staunch democratic reformers. They tend to have a predisposition towards pure models and a dislike of irregularities in the beauty ideal cherished by them. Anthropologists like Douglas call this 'pollution reduction'. Vital democracy, on the other hand, needs a healthy dose of 'pollution', an efficacious form of hybridity and pluralism.

HARRY Sure, I agree, but how do you accomplish it? I understand that you're opposed to blueprint planning of democratic reform. But what's the alternative? Unplanned evolution? Hoping the democratic system will adapt itself to the requirements of place and time?

FRANK It wouldn't do any harm to 'go with the flow' a bit more in democratic reform. That's better than building dream palaces, far removed from reality. Mind you, though, going with the flow should not be the same as just letting things take their course. Democracy needs an overhaul every now and again, involving now smaller now bigger interventions. Never with blueprint planning. Better with 'intelligent design'. Whether there is such a thing in nature is doubtful. But in culture, in the domain of man-made institutions, there are some good examples. A good example in the Dutch case is the constitutional framework that was designed by Thorbecke in the middle of the nineteenth century, 'intelligently designed', I would say, for, based on this design, subsequent redesign and redevelopment have proved to be possible right up to the present day. Thorbecke's design was not a closed blueprint but an open design geared towards further organic development. The same has been said about the federal constitution designed by the American Founding Fathers.

DIANA So no blueprint planning, and no totally unplanned evolution either, but we are to have organic development that is institutionally prepared but not prepackaged.

FRANK You could put it like that. Thorbecke and other Founding Fathers have been able to secure their place in history through intelligent design. Intelligence in further constitutional development is not going to get you anywhere prominent in the history books, but it's very important.

VICTORIA Enough for now, ladies and gentlemen, lunchtime.

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SELMA Now that we're all replete, I'd like to call attention to those parts of the world where this is not a common thing at all, being replete. I want to broaden our debate to include the non-Western world. This is much needed. Look at us, Westerners talking about Western democracies, for crying out loud!

VICTORIA What's wrong with that? Hasn't democracy developed most strongly and most diversely in what is commonly known as the Western world? First in Western Europe, North America, and Down Under. Then, after some delay, in parts of South America, and Eastern Europe. To the east of the enlarged European Union I don't see any well-rooted democracy for the time being. In Russia, democracy is a very precarious

thing. In China and the rest of Asia, democratization is going at a snail's pace. Ditto in Africa. Not to mention the Arab world. Virtually no nation in the League of Arab States is a democracy by any definition.

RODERICK Aren't you skipping some parts of the globe there, Victoria? What about South Africa? And India and Japan? Democracy has been pretty much institutionalized over there, hasn't it? And these are not Western countries, are they?

SELMA My point exactly. Those countries go to show that 'Western democracy' is not a pleonasm like green grass and white snow. There really is such a thing as non-Western democracy. I'm thinking not only of the countries Roderick mentioned but also of non-Western tribal cultures that have kinds of deliberative decision-making that closely resemble what we call participatory democracy.

DIANA Proves that democracy is not bound up with the Western world, even though this tends to attract most people's attention.

FRANK I agree. I've written it down somewhere: the West has no patent pending on democracy. The overall models of democracy I distinguish and the dimensions behind them – direct versus indirect, aggregative versus integrative – are not confined to a particular territory. The specific examples I give in my book are, though. They have a location. And I can't deny that this tends to be the so-called Western world. That's where I've found the most salient illustrations.

SELMA So there you are, you did make choices!

FRANK I certainly did. I wasn't out to make a kind of catalogue of democratic practices from all over the world. I wanted to take my cases from the four models of democracy, not so much from the four points of the compass.

DIANA In fifty years' time, we might find the most striking examples in the parts of the world Victoria just mentioned, which we now don't consider 'established democracies'.

SELMA Don't forget that these countries were suppressed by us in the recent past. Small wonder they're lagging behind.

JONATHAN And you reckon they'll catch up with us? I think we need to be realistic rather than politically correct in our expectations. I don't think in fifty years' time many of those countries are going to show much evidence of democracy, of any type whatsoever. The triangle you mentioned before – system, culture, context – is just not going to allow it.

FRANK Time will show. A lot can happen in fifty years. Just look at how the number of democracies has increased over the past half century.

RODERICK And think of Germany and Japan. Just think of their plight at the end of the Second World War. Who would have thought at the time that

they would ever be readmitted into the ranks of established democracies? We owe it to a considerable degree to the American efforts after the war, let's not forget.

HARRY Yes, but in Germany these efforts turned out way better than in Japan. A substantial number of the democratic reforms the Americans meant to introduce in Japan failed because they were insufficiently sensitive to context. I have a quote here from an American who was closely involved in the 're-education' of the Japanese. He writes: 'I sometimes thought that if the Mission had been sent the the Artic Circle instead, it would have come up with the same prescription for the Eskimos, seals and seagulls.'

SELMA And it's the same old story in Afghanistan and Iraq! These countries are force-fed American ideas on democracy. And then the US expect their gratitude. Quite the opposite is actually happening. The way democracy is parcelled out to them – from the West, top-down, based on a feeling of superiority – will only serve to aggravate their distrust of democracy. Which is a downright shame, of course, because it could have been done differently.

VICTORIA In line with your ideal of democracy, I suppose? Talk talk talk till the cows come home! No, give me the American approach anytime. They waste no time in making democracy visible. The Afghans and the Iraqis have already gone to the polls several times. This is of great symbolic importance!

RODERICK But also very risky in a country like Iraq, with its three large minorities that don't see eye to eye. In such a case, I'd prefer to downplay competitive elections and to focus more on talks and finding consensus. This is how the Netherlands avoided a Northern Irish type of conflict between Catholics and Protestants.

JONATHAN Should these countries really turn into democracies at all, or at this rate? Shouldn't a functioning economy be their top priority?

VICTORIA Of course they must become democratic! Studies show that people are happiest in systems that offer them both material security and a decent measure of self-determination. This is precisely what democracies do. There are no famines in democracies. And there is scope to shape your own destiny.

HARRY Yeah yeah, and at this point they always come up with Sen's work. But you shouldn't forget to look at the work of other authors. Take Zakaria, for instance, who shows that democratic institutions and high system performance don't always go together. Take the East Asian tigers:

Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan – little democratization, huge increases in prosperity. And then compare that to India: just the reverse.

DIANA But Zakaria isn't opposed to democratization in itself, is he? He's against democratization that's too early, too fast. First economic freedoms and property rights, which are essential for developing prosperity and social security; then the vote and political freedoms, which are essential for recognizing democracy. Launching into democracy right away, in Zakaria's view, is asking for trouble. Operation successful, patient dead. What you get is a paper democracy without any vitality.

RODERICK A category III case, I would say, with reference to the classification in Chapter 7.

HARRY Precisely! Fully-fledged democracy combined with not-so-good governance. You'd be better off with category II: non-democracy combined with good governance. This is an existing situation, as the Singapore case shows. Singapore doesn't meet the minimum requirements for democracy, but it's a city-state that does well, in a way that's considered legitimate by those involved.

VICTORIA For the time being, perhaps, but the more educational levels go up, the less the enlightened-despotic model will meet with acceptance and the greater the demand for democracy. What is as yet considered a decent form of governance will then not be recognized as such. The options, in that case, are to revert to category I, the worst of two worlds, or to evolve into category IV, the best of two worlds.

DIANA Evolving into a sustainable democracy will be possible once a system has developed economically. A functional foundation has been laid that facilitates the leap into democracy. It's always been like that in the past. The established democracies did not become established democracies overnight. They grew into it.

FRANK Yes, democracy needs time to grow, but I'd like to caution you against all too naive arguments like 'first this, then that'. This and that are mutually dependent. Zakaria is right in saying that property rights and economic liberties are important in the growth of prosperity, which, in its turn, serves as a substrate for democracy. But the institutional economist Van Zanden also rightly says that democracy, or at least a vigorous start of democracy, is essential for building trust in the sustainability of property rights and economic freedoms. Which in its turn is essential for making investments, accepting credit, engaging in transactions, etc. All I'm saying is, always to prioritize the establishment of democracy may be absurd, but so is never to prioritize it.

SELMA I think we always ought to aspire to the highest possible standard. I want to see good governance combined with deep or solid democracy. Dahl's core package of competitive elections with civic liberties is only elementary democracy: thin or flimsy democracy. You need a lot of things on top of that before you can even begin to call it true democracy.

VICTORIA Yes, but we continue to have conflicting points of view. What you call an upgrading of democracy is what I call a downgrading of democracy. And the other way around, I have no illusions about that any more.

RODERICK What I've learned now, though it pains me to say so, is that each type of democracy, however nicely you elaborate on the core package, will always have serious disadvantages. There will always be a democratic deficit. You can have good governance, in the sense of good enough governance, but never perfect governance, as in democratic government without failings.

FRANK The latter would be an unattainable ideal. The former is a realistic alternative, though hard enough to achieve and retain. Good governance and democracy are consonant if democracy manages to combine two basic qualities: effectiveness, the ability to get things done, and legitimacy, the ability to do so with broad-based support. There is not a single democratic system that manages to do so in a perfect and flawless way. Sometimes, a democratic system does well on both counts, but even then there will be debate on whether this is good enough or whether it can't be improved upon. You can have good enough governance, as you called it, but it will never be low-maintenance. It will require ceaseless grooming, exhibiting, and defending.

DIANA Without the existence of a univensal thermometer that will say: above this point, we have good governance, and below this point, we have not-so-good governance.

HARRY I think that distinction can only be made endogenously, that is, within the democratic system itself. External institutions – such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, or any other external institution – can make an assessment, but that will remain an assessment from the outside. The final verdict on the performance of a democracy must always be formed from within the democratic system itself.

FRANK But observations and interpretations by external institutions can play a role as input for internal quality control. Quality assessments should always be susceptible to context, but that doesn't mean we should pursue a postmodernist 'anything goes' ethos. Good governance and not-so-good governance can be the subject of fruitful debate in a democracy.

What's more, they should be the subject of debate if you wish to preserve the vitality of the democratic system.

VICTORIA But we'll never quite settle it, will we? Democracy will inevitably be wanting, as you just said. Doesn't that also mean that dissatisfaction with democracy, which is what tied us together in the first place, is inevitably part and parcel of it? That we'll never shake it off completely?

FRANK There is always dissatisfaction with democracy, to varying degrees, though. In a vital democracy, dissatisfaction will not run out of hand in any destructive way but is introduced and made productive in the democratic process.

DIANA So we need to keep talking to each other. We must keep each other on our toes. I believe that's the essence of democracy. It's just like cycling. To get anywhere, and not to fall over, you need to generate your own movement and counter-movement.

FRANK I like that as our closing words. That says it all.

Notes

Preface

1. H. Hoppe, *Democracy: The God That Failed: The Economics and Politics of Monar chy, Democracy, and Natural Order*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 2001.
2. Too much democracy is, according to Zakaria, too much of a good thing. See F. Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, New York, Norton, 2003.
3. cf. R.E. Goodin, *Reflective Democracy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003.
4. These and other distinctions are elaborated further in Chapter 1.
5. In addition to democratic states (such as the UK, New Zealand, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and many others) particular places (like Birmingham, Munich, Amsterdam, Los Angeles, Porto Allegre, and many others) may be mentioned.
6. A good example is: D. Ravitch & A. Thernstrom (eds.), *The Democracy Reader: Classic and Modern Speeches, Essays Poems, Declarations and Documents on Freedom and Human Rights Worldwide*, New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.
7. An excellent example is D. Held, *Models of Democracy*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2006.
8. A good example is the country by country overview of democracy in the world presented by Freedom House. See, e.g., Freedom House, *Freedom in the World 2005*, Oxford, Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.
9. An excellent example is A. Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty six Countries*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999.
10. The influence of Mary Douglas is elaborated further in Chapter 2.
11. See Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999. His ten characteristics of Westminster democracy and of consensus democracy are characteristics of the institutionalized democratic structure at the national state level.

Chapter 1: Plural Democracy

1. R.A. Dahl, *On Democracy*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000.
2. The popular Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia, for instance, defines democracy as 'majority rule'. This would immediately turn 'non majoritarian democracy' into a non category. For the necessary correction of this picture, see, among

others, Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999. Lijphart's division into majoritarian and non majoritarian democracy matches March & Olsen's division into aggregative and integrative democracy. See J.G. March & J.P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*, New York, Free Press, 1989.

3. If it looks as if an appointed mayor in the Netherlands is going to be replaced by an elected one, this is widely interpreted as a transition to direct democracy. A Dutch quality newspaper front page headline ran 'Putin wants to curb direct democracy' when the Russian president decided he no longer wanted to have his regional governors elected by the people. See *NRC Handelsblad*, 13 September 2004, p. 1.
4. Quoted in A. Arblaster, *Democracy*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1987 (note 1). Huntington puts the rediscovery of democracy at a slightly earlier date than does Macpherson. His 'first wave' runs from 1828 to 1926. See S.P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.
5. Huntington, *op. cit.*, 1991.
6. See Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, p. 8 (65 democracies in 1990) and the appendix, pp. 196 199 (subdivision into 23, 7, and 35). Dahl's subdivision matches that of POLITY III, a University of Colorado database (at the time of writing, POLITY IV has just become available). This database does not count microstates like San Marino and Barbados, whereas these are actually included as full democracies elsewhere, at Freedom House for example. This independent democracy watch organiza ton, on the basis of its own definition of liberal democracy (an electoral democ racy 'that Freedom House regards as free and respectful of human rights and the rule of law'), arrives at a total of 85 in December 1999. The wider category of electoral democracy (democracy with the general right to vote in competitive multi party elections) included 119 states at that time (but these also included microstates and electoral democracies that are not simultaneously liberal democracies). See Freedom House, *Democracy's Century: A Survey of Global Politi cal Change in the 20th Century*, New York, Freedom House, 1999.
7. Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, pp. 164 165. For a sketch of the long path of democracy, see also Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, p. 7ff.
8. For pre modern times, Dahl uses the wider term 'popular rule'. In contrast with others (Madison, for instance) he does not distinguish between direct and democratic, on the one hand, and indirect and republican, on the other. De mocracy and republicanism both refer to archetypes of popular rule in ancient Athens or Rome in antiquity. See Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, p. 17.
9. Finer, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 1589, and p. 1638 for an overview of the extension of suffrage in Europe.
10. What are *non* democratic regimes? Swift follows the Freedom House division into totalitarian regimes ('one party systems that establish effective control over most aspects of information, engage in propaganda, control civic life, and intrude into private life'), authoritarian regimes ('typically one party states

and military dictatorships in which there are significant human rights viola tions'), and traditional and absolute monarchies ('in which monarchic power is exercised in despotic fashion'). Examples of totalitarian regimes include: Cuba, North Korea, Laos, and Vietnam. Examples of authoritarian regimes include: Algeria, Angola, Zimbabwe, Gambia, Iran, and Sudan. Examples of traditional monarchies include: Swaziland, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. See R. Swift, *No Nonsense Guide to Democracy*, London, Verso, 2002. Opinions differ on the exact divisions. In major outline, however, there is considerable agreement: no author, for instance, puts any of the EU countries in the non democratic category; and all authors classify the member states of the Arab League in this category.

11. Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, pp. 45, 60.
12. cf. Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000; B. Holden, *Understanding Liberal Democracy*, Oxford, Allan, 1988; D. Beetham (ed.), *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, London, Sage Publications, 1994; M. Saward, *The Terms of Democracy*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1998.
13. Saward, *op. cit.*, 1998, p. 15.
14. J. Lane & S.O. Ersson, *Democracy: A Comparative Approach*, London, Routledge, 2003, p. 3; D. Beetham (ed.), *op. cit.*, 1994, p. 28; A. Hadenius, *Democracy and Development*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 9; K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1945, p. 69; Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, pp. 37 38; J. A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1943, p. 269; Freedom House, *op. cit.*, 1999; R.E. Goodin, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 1; S.E. Finer, *The History of Government, Part III*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 1568; A. Lincoln, *The Gettys burg Address*, speech on 19 November 1863.
15. Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000.
16. Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000, p. 85.
17. See the glossary to M. Saward, *Democracy*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2003.
18. Held, *op. cit.*, 2006; Lane & Ersson, *op. cit.*, 2003; F. Cunningham, *Theories of Democracy: A Critical Introduction*, London, Routledge, 2002; A. Heywood, *Poli tics*, Houndmills, Palgrave, 2002; Young, *op. cit.*, 2000; M. Dogan, Political Science and the Other Social Sciences, R.E. Goodin & H.D. Klingemann (eds.), *A New Handbook of Political Science*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 97 130; Macpherson, *op. cit.*, 1977; R.A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1963; G. Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited. I. The Contemporary Debate*, London, Chatham House Publishers, 1987; R.N. Stromberg, *Democracy, A Short, Analytical History*, Armonk, M.E. Sharpe, 1996; Swift, *op. cit.*, 2002; Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999.
19. Saward, *op. cit.*, 2003.
20. The distinction between 'weak' and 'strong' democracy is made by Barber among others. See B.R. Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1984. The distinction between

'thin' and 'deep' democracy is found in Young among others. See I.M. Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000. The distinction between old versus new democracy and classical versus modern democracy surfaces in the discourse on New Social Movements (which champion a 'new politics', deviating from the 'old politics') and in movements for democratic reform (which want to 'modernize' democracy beyond the 'old forms and uses').

21. The distinction between majoritarian and non majoritarian is well known from the works by Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999. Cognate categorizations, such as aggrega tive versus integrative, have been made by March & Olsen, *op.cit.*, 1989, or voting versus deliberating, in J. Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
22. The distinction between direct and indirect is well known and often made. See the surveys in R.A. Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1989, and Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000. The idea of distinguishing between be holders and spectators, constituting the audience, on the one hand, and fend for yourselfers and gladiators, who enter the arena, on the other can be found in the work of L.W. Milbrath & M.L. Goel, *Political Participation: How and Why Do People Get Involved in Politics*, New York, University Press of America, 1982; B. Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Chapter 2: Layered Democracy

1. In the volume by M. Thompson, G. Grendstad, & P. Selle (eds.), *Cultural Theory as Political Science*, London, Routledge, 1999, p. 18.
2. See, among others, M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; M. Douglas, *Natural Symbols*, London, Berrie & Rockliff, 1970; M. Douglas, *Cultural Bias*, London, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1978; M. Douglas & A.B. Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technical and Environmental Dangers*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1982; M. Dou glas, *How Institutions Think*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1986; M. Douglas, *Thought Styles: Critical Essays on Good Taste*, New York, Sage, 1996; M. Douglas & S. Ney, *Missing Persons: A Critique of Personhood in the Social Sciences*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998.
3. See Douglas, *op. cit.*, 1966.
4. See also Douglas, *op. cit.*, 1970; 1978; 1986; 1996.
5. Not every political culture values democracy. Political cultures that reject de mocracy are outside the scope of the classification presented here.
6. D. Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, pp. 35 44, as well as pp. 62 78.
7. J. Locke, Second Treatise of Government, p. 348, J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, P. Laslett (ed.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970 (orig inally 1689/90).

8. Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, pp. 2001 2008, calls this a core principle of 'legal democra cy', which to a large extent is consonant with a protectionist democratic ethos.
9. R. Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, New York, Basic Books, 1974; F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, London, Routledge, 1976.
10. See, e.g., the double majority required for constitutional referendums in the Swiss case, 'designed as a safeguard against "the tyranny of the majority" by the most populous cantons', write Kriesi and Trechsel, in *The Politics of Switzerland*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 52. They also write that this gives a powerful minority veto to a small proportion of the population.
11. cf. C. Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970; C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977; N. Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*, London, New Left Books, Verso edition, 1980.
12. See R.E. Goodin, *Green Political Theory*, London, Polity Press, 1992.
13. J. Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1981.
14. J.S. Dryzek, *Discursive Democracy: Politics, Policy, and Political Science*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.
15. J. Jacobs, *Systems of Survival*, New York, Vintage Books, 1994. See also the 'guardian' approach to collective decision making as described by Dahl, *op. cit.*, 1989.
16. Plato, *Constitutie Politeia*, Amsterdam, Atheneum Polak & Van Gennep, 1991. On the effects of Platonic thought on the discourse of democracy, see, among others, Dahl, *op. cit.*, 1989.
17. See H.L. Wilensky on *mass democracy*, for instance in H. Daalder (ed.), *Compara tive European Politics, The Story of a Profession*, London, Pinter, 1997.
18. J.A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1943, p. 283.
19. The following are also used as shorthand: outlooks on life, ways of life, world views, and cultural biases.
20. See, among others, Douglas, *op. cit.*, 1970; M. Douglas (ed.), *Essays in the Sociolo gy of Perception*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982; Douglas, *op. cit.*, 1996; Douglas & Wildavsky, *op. cit.*, 1982; M. Thompson, R. J. Ellis, & A. B. Wildavsky, *Cultural Theory*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1990; D.J. Coyle & R.J. Ellis (eds.), *Politics, Policy and Culture*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1994; Thompson, Grendstad & Selle, *op. cit.*, 1999.
21. Here, I deal with types of culture inasmuch as these relate to democracy, for that is what this study is about. In wider cultural categories, sub varieties can be distinguished that do not relate to democracy, or are even hostile to the basic idea of democracy, but those are outside the scope of this study.
22. On the use of ideal types, see A.C. Zijderveld, *De culturele factor: Een cultuur sociologische wegwijzer*, Culemborg, Lemma, 1983/1988. In addition, of course, M. Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, New York, Bedminster Press, 1968 (originally 1921/22). On elective affinities in a wider

sense, see J.W. von Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, Köln, Könemann, 2001 (originally 1809).

23. See Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, *op. cit.*, 1990, in a chapter devoted to the relation between Weber's approach and Douglas's approach to societal forms.
24. Barber believes we should have more of the one (the language of 'we') and less of the other (the language of 'me'); see Barber, *op. cit.*, 1984. This is not a presup position in the present study.
25. The link between hierarchy and consensus democracy is also made by A. Wil davsky, Democracy as a Coalition of Cultures, *Society*, 1993, 31, pp. 80 83, quote on p. 82. To be able to properly see this link, we need to let go of common negative bias in the approach to hierarchy. See M. Douglas, Being Fair to Hierarchists, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 2003, 151, pp. 1349 1370.
26. In order to release the concept from unwanted connotations as much as possi ble, 'atomism' is preferred to 'fatalism' here. In essence, the concept does not imply anything beyond a culture of both weak group integration and strong person oriented regulation.
27. R.D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2000. See also D. Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*, New York, Doubleday, 1956.

Part II: Practices

1. cf. R. Rhodes, *Beyond Westminster and Whitehall: The Subcentral Governments of Britain*, London, Routledge, 1988.
2. The concept of consensus democracy admits, and is given here, a wider defini tion than by Lijphart. The concept of Westminster democracy is not so elastic. It refers to a very specific part of the world, which may cause some confusion. Lijphart, for instance, typifies the French state as a Westminster democracy, which makes sense within his frame of reference but raises some eyebrows outside it. Does 'Westminster' represent the essence of the French state? As a general concept, 'pendulum democracy' is a more fitting term, as the pendulum is an appropriate metaphor for this type of democracy.
3. Like pendulum democracy, voter democracy is of a majoritarian nature; but it is at loggerheads with the Westminster style representative democracy. Like consensus democracy, participatory democracy is of an integrative nature; but it is averse to the guardian type of government that is common in consensus democracy.

Chapter 3: Pendulum Democracy

1. Speech by W. Churchill in the House of Commons, 31 October 1944.
2. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, especially pp. 10 25.

3. D. Marquand, *The Unprincipled Society: New Demands and Old Politics*, London, Cape, 1988, p. 242.
4. D.E. Ashford, *Policy and Politics in Britain: The Limits of Consensus*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1981.
5. J. Dearlove, Bringing the Constitution Back In: Political Science and the State, *Political Studies*, 1989, 37, pp. 521 539.
6. E.C. Page, *Political Authority and Bureaucratic Power: A Comparative Analysis*, Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 1985.
7. See Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999.
8. To different degrees: Australia and Canada, for example, are clearly Westminster type democracies on Lijphart's executives parties dimension (the first set of five factors), but not on his federal unitary dimension (the second set of five factors).
9. Q.M.H. Hailsham, *The Dilemma of Democracy: Diagnosis and Prescription*, London, Collins, 1978, p. 127.
10. E. Burke, Speech to the Electors of Bristol at the Conclusion of the Poll, E. Burke, *The Works of the Right Honorable Edmund Burke*, vol. 2, Boston, Little, Brown & Company, 1866, pp. 95 96. For an analysis of the British approach to represen tative democracy, see also R.G. Dahrendorf, *Die Krisen der Demokratie: Ein Ge spräch mit Antonio Polito*, München, Beck, 2002.
11. K. Newton, *Second City Politics: Political Processes and Decision making in Birming ham*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1976.
12. Bennett, Assignment of Competency and Resources, R. Bennett (ed.), *Territory and Administration in Europe*, London, Pinter Publishers, 1989; S. Humes, *Local Governance and National Power*, New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991.
13. This section is based on a comparative study of post war planning and politics in Birmingham, UK, and Munich, Germany. See: Hendriks, *Public Policy and Political Institutions*, Aldershot, Edward Elgar, 1999a. Also Hendriks, Cars and Culture in Munich and Birmingham: The Case for Cultural Pluralism, D. Coyle & R. Ellis (eds.), *Politics, Policy and Culture*, Boulder, Westview, 1994, pp. 51 71.
14. Analogously to Lijphart's ten point typology of Westminster democracy at the national level.
15. G. Jordan & J.J. Richardson, The British Policy Style or the Logic of Negotiation, J.J. Richardson (ed.), *Policy Styles in Western Europe*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1982, pp. 80 110; A. Sampson, *The Essential Anatomy of Britain: Democracy in Crisis*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1992.
16. K.H.F. Dyson, *The State Tradition in Western Europe: A Study of an Idea and Institution*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1980.
17. In addition: the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Barbados. Lijphart presents Barbados as a paragon of Westminster democracy.
18. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 10, 247 248.
19. On Lijphart's executives parties dimension, therefore, the US tends towards the majoritarian side, despite the system's relatively strict separation of powers, causing it to diverge from the ideal typical, monistic Westminster system.

20. R.W. Giuliani, *Leadership*, New York, Miramax Books, 2002.
21. It is not an unadulterated pendulum model, as the similarity is less than 100%. New York's city government system, for instance, is actually spread over several layers.
22. Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 1999a.
23. A. Sutcliffe, Political Control in Labour controlled Birmingham: The Contrast ing Styles of Harry Watton (1959 1966) and Stanley Yapp (1972 1974), *Local Government Studies*, 1976, 2, January, pp. 15 32.
24. See M. Foley, *The British Presidency: Tony Blair and the Politics of Public Leadership*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2000, on the 'presidential' character istics of Prime Minister Blair's political leadership.
25. This is so despite a strong executive legislative balance: marked dualism in the relations between President and Congress. Nevertheless, the logic on the execu tives parties dimension is clearly more majoritarian than consensual.
26. B. Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.
27. B.R. Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Tribalism and Globalism are Reshaping the World*, New York, Random House, 1995.
28. G.A. Almond & S. Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, New York, Princeton University Press, 1963.
29. M. Schudson, *The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life*, New York, Free Press, 1998.
30. C. Hood, *The Art of the State: Culture, Rhetoric, and Public Management*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998.
31. M. Weber, Politics as Vocation, H.H. Gerth & C.W. Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1972. See also Held's excellent dissection of Weber's concept of democracy in Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, pp. 125 141.
32. Quote in Swift, *op. cit.*, 2000, p. 46.
33. See R.A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New York, Yale University Press, 1971; G. Sartori, *Democratic Theory*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1962; B.R. Berelson, W.N. McPhee, & P.F. Lazarsfeld, *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1954.
34. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999.
35. cf. A.W. Lewis, *Politics in West Africa*, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1965.
36. cf. E. Roller, *The Performance of Democracies: Political Institutions and Public Policy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005; P. Norris, *Driving Democracy: Do Power sharing Institutions Work*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008.
37. See also Chapter 7, the section 'Strengths and Weaknesses Revisited'.
38. H. Klingemann, Mapping Political Support in the 1990s: A Global Analysis, P. Norris (ed.), *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 31 56.

39. C.J. Anderson & C. Guillory, Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross National Analysis of Consensus and Majoritarian Systems, *American Political Science Review*, 1997, 91, pp. 66–81.
40. On the popular core qualities model, see D.D. Ofman's work on core qualities and the enneagram.
41. This case description is based on Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 1999a; 1994.
42. H. Heclo & A.B. Wildavsky, *The Private Government of Public Money*, London, Macmillan, 1974, p. 12.

Chapter 4: Consensus Democracy

1. In a radio interview on 20 December 1996. Another remark typical of the Dutch Prime Minister in general and Wim Kok in particular: 'This "the boss of the Netherlands" depends on how you look at it. I often have the feeling that the Netherlands has a lot more to say about me than the other way around' (Kok on the *Brandpunt* TV talk show, 20 August 1995); 'In my book, the word "team" is written in capitals. Many of our Cabinet decisions are taken together . . .' (Kok in Kok in P. Klein & R. Kooistra, *Wim Kok: Het taaie gevecht van een polderjongen*, Amsterdam, Prometheus, 1998, p. 241).
2. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, especially pp. 34–41.
3. In Dutch: IBZMA (*Iedereen Bemoeit Zich Met Alles*). A. Hoogerwerf, *Vanaf de top gezien: Visies van de politieke elite*, Amsterdam, Sijthoff, 1986.
4. See Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999; Daalder, *Van oude en nieuwe regenten: Politiek in Nederland*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 1995; L. Huyse, *Passiviteit, pacificatie en verzuiling in de Belgische politiek: Een sociologische studie*, Antwerpen, Standaard, 1970; L. Huyse, *Over politiek*, Leuven, Halewyck, 2003 (this also includes his earlier essays on democracy in Belgium, entitled De gewapende vrede ('Armoured peace') and De verzuiling voorbij ('Beyond pillarization'); G. Lehmbruch, *Proporzdemokratie: Politisches System und politische Kultur in der Schweiz und in Österreich*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1967; G. Lehmbruch, K. von Beyme, & I. Fetscher, *Demokratisches System und politische Praxis der Bundesrepublik*, München, Piper, 1971; G. Lehmbruch, Die korporative Verhandlungsdemokratie in Westmitteleuropa, *Swiss Political Science Review*, 1996, 2, pp. 19–41; J.A. Steiner, *Amicable Agreement versus Majority Rule: Conflict Resolution in Switzerland*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1974; M.N. Pedersen, *Political Development and Elite Transformation in Denmark*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 1976.
5. For more details, see the section on State and Society in this chapter.
6. Lijphart takes Belgium and Switzerland as his prototypical examples. See A. Lijphart, Power Sharing Approach, J.V. Montville (ed.), *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*, New York, Lexington Books, 1990, pp. 491–509. Switzerland is dealt with at length in the chapter on voter democracy. Though Switzerland has pronounced tendencies towards consensus democracy, it is the

addition of rather strong expressions of voter democracy that distinguish its system from other systems.

7. Before the establishment of the unitary state, the country was a highly disjointed federal republic. In its actual performance, this federal heritage of the administrative system is still making itself felt. See Th.A.J. Toonen, B.J.S. Hoetjes, & F. Hendriks, Federalism in the Netherlands: The Federal Approach to Unitarism or the Unitary Approach to Federalism?, F. Knipping (ed.), *Federal Conceptions in EU Member States: Traditions and Perspectives*, Baden Baden, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1994, pp. 105 121.
8. In theory, at least; in practice, a fair degree of power concentration and centralization is evident in the regions, which are actually new forms of national government. On Belgium, see also L. Huyse, *op. cit.*, 1970; 2003.
9. The only element on Lijphart's federal unitary dimension that deviates somewhat is the system of two representative chambers; the new Senate is not strong enough to be able to consider this a system of balanced bicameralism.
10. For details and references on the Swiss case, see Chapter 5, the section 'Switzerland: a special case'.
11. The position of the trade unions is even relatively strong.
12. R. Michels, *Zur Soziologie des Parteiwesens in der Modernen Demokratie: Untersuchungen über die oligarchischen Tendenzen des Gruppenlebens*, Kröner, Leipzig, 1925.
13. See A. Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1977.
14. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999. The ten largely stately and formal characteristics of consensus democracy lend themselves more readily to generalization and large scale measurement.
15. Daalder, *op. cit.*, 1995; F. Hendriks & Th.A.J. Toonen (eds.), *Polder Politics: The Re Invention of Consensus Democracy in the Netherlands*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001.
16. e.g. U. Rosenthal, De media: Machtsuitoefening en controle op de macht, *Bestuurskunde*, 2001, 10, pp. 292 298.
17. Hendriks & Toonen, *op. cit.*, 2001.
18. See P.W. Tops, *Afspiegeling en afspraak: Coalitietheorie en collegevorming in Nederlandse gemeenten (1946 1986)*, 's Gravenhage, VUGA, 1990.
19. Politicians under the proverbial 'cheese cover' in The Hague, however, sometimes take a different view.
20. The conference table of the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (SER), where the government, employers, and employees engage in consultation, is possibly a more fitting metaphor for Dutch consensus democracy than the assembly room of the Lower House. In any case, the SER conference table, together with all those other less well known sectoral and subnational conference tables, should not be overlooked if one wants to get a good picture of Dutch polder politics (see the various contributions in Hendriks & Toonen, eds., *Polder Politics*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001).

21. In the UK, the study of politics also takes precedence over the study of adminis tration. To the British, public administration denotes matters of practical imple mentation, whereas, to the Dutch, public administration (as a field) and Public Administration (as a discipline) both denote complex decision making issues.
22. Japan has low scores on both the federal unitary dimension and the executives parties dimension, which is distinctive of consensus democracy. See Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, Appendix A, p. 312.
23. For a wealth of information on Japanese culture and politics, see, among others, I. Buruma, *De spiegel van de zonnegodin: Achtergronden van Japan, de Japanners en hun culturele waarden*, Amsterdam, De Arbeiderspers, 1990.
24. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 249.
25. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999.
26. Cohen was even acclaimed as the 'great master' of the art of being mayor in a VARA TV programme in the spring of 2005.
27. See our previous analysis in Chapter 3.
28. H. te Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap: Persoon en politiek van Thorbecke tot Den Uyl*, Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 2002.
29. H. te Velde, Passie, theater en narcisme, *Pluche*, 2003, 1, pp. 63 70.
30. In the periodical *Binnenlands Bestuur* (H. Bekkers, De rede als wapen, *Binnenlands Bestuur*, 28 April 2006), the US campaign strategist Michael Waldman was shown some pictures of Dutch party leaders. Straightaway he dismissed the one of Jan Peter Balkenende with the words: 'Someone with an appearance like that no charisma at all can only be a politician in a country where party democracy is very important.'
31. cf. D. Pels, *De geest van Pim: Het gedachtegoed van een politieke dandy*, Amsterdam, Anthos, 2003; D. Caramani & Y. Mény, *Challenges to Consensual Politics: Democ racy, Identity, and Populist Protest in the Alpine Region*, Brussel, Peter Lang, 2005.
32. cf. Daalder, *op. cit.*, 1995, p. 18.
33. Daalder, *op. cit.*, 1995. See in this volume his essay 'Leiding en lijdelijkheid in de Nederlandse politiek,' pp. 11 20.
34. Almond & Verba, *op. cit.*, 1963. In Putnam's popular terms, this would now be called bonding without bridging; see Putnam, *op. cit.*, 2000.
35. D.P. Conradt, Changing German Political Culture, G.A. Almond & S. Verba (eds.), *The Civic Culture Revisited*, Boston, Little, Brown & Company, 1980, pp. 212 272.
36. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1968.
37. E. van Thijn, *Democratie als hartstocht: Commentaren en pleidooien 1966 1991*, Amsterdam, Van Gennep, 1991.
38. Behold the power of metaphor: a 'fan' has a series of juxtaposed parties and actors, with many gradations and hybrids from left to right; a 'pendulum', by contrast, swings either to the left or to the right.
39. Hendriks & Toonen, *op. cit.*, 2001.

40. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999. See particularly chapter 15 where Lijphart contrasts the implications of consensus democracy with those of Westminster democracy.
41. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 307 308.
42. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 294.
43. On the contrast between masculine and feminine values, see, among others, G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 2001.
44. About associative democracy, see P. Hirst, Associational Democracy, D. Held (ed.), *Prospects for Democracy: North, South, East, West*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1993, pp. 112 117.
45. Sub local institutions such as *Bürgerbezirken* and *Bürgerversammlungen* play a major part in all of this, besides institutions, such as the *Münchner Forum*, which have been designed for interaction and cross fertilization. See Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 1994; 1999a.
46. Hendriks, *ibidem*.
47. F. W. Scharpf, *Politische Immobilismus und ökonomische Krise*, Krönberg, Athenäum, 1997; F. W. Scharpf, The Joint Decision Trap: Lessons from German Federalism and European Integration, *Public Administration*, 1988, 66, pp. 239 278.

Chapter 5: Voter Democracy

1. In an essay available on the Internet, Evan Schwartz sketches what an electronic town meeting might look like, see E.I. Schwartz, *Wired 2.01, Electrosphere, Direct Democracy*, Wired Ventures Ltd., 1993, p. 1.
2. D. Osborne & T. Gaebler, *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, Reading, Addison Wesley, 1992.
3. The fact that US citizens can directly enter their vote in elections not only for presidents, governors, and mayors, but also for judges, state attorneys, tax collectors, and county sheriffs is often misunderstood by Dutch observers who are unused to directly elected government leaders, governors, and mayors as a paragon of direct democracy. In fact, it is a paragon of indirect democracy.
4. The referendum, feared by some as a majoritarian crowbar, mainly appears to be operating in California as a protective bulwark against government interven tion. The best known example here is 'Proposition 13', which, in 1978, served to fix taxation at the level of 1975 and sharply defined the limits to potential future tax increases. See J.G. Matsusaka, *For the Many or the Few: The Initiative, Public Policy, and American Democracy*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2004; Sabato et al. (eds.), *Dangerous Democracy? The Battle over Ballot Initiatives in America*, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.
5. See T.E. Cronin, *Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1989; M. Setälä, Referendums in Western Europe: A Wave of Direct Democracy?, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 1999, 22,

pp. 327 340; L. Leduc, *The Politics of Direct Democracy: Referendums in Global Perspective*, Toronto, Broadview Press, 2003.

6. Osborne & Gaebler, *op. cit.*, 1992.
7. A.O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1970.
8. T. Goebel, *A Government by the People: Direct Democracy in America, 1890 1940*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2002; J.F. Zimmerman, *The New England Town Meeting: Democracy in Action*, Westport, Praeger, 1999; J.A. Con forti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid Twentieth Century*, Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
9. A well known textbook is *Robert's Rules of Order*. A tenth edition is out now (Cambridge, Perseus, 2000). One of the authors is Henry M. Robert III, grandson of general Henry M. Robert, who published the first edition in 1876, inspired by his experience in civil and church organizations and, as a descendant of Hugue nots who settled in the US, by his Protestant upbringing and background.
10. On the Founding Fathers, see, among others, N. Schachner, *The Founding Fathers*, New York, Putnam, 1954; C.W. Meister, *The Founding Fathers*, Jefferson, McFarland, 1987; A.S. Trees, *The Founding Fathers and the Politics of Character*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004. See also S.E. Finer, *The History of Government*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 1485 1516.
11. Cronin, *op. cit.*, 1989, p. 12.
12. Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, discusses this tendency in the context of the model of democracy that he calls 'legal democracy'. See also Finer, *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 1570 1571, on constitutionalism.
13. Cronin, *op. cit.*, 1989, p. *x*, Preface.
14. B.A.G.M. Tromp, De ruk naar rechts, *Internationale Spectator*, 2002a, 65, 7/8, p. 346. See also B.A.G.M. Tromp, Het virus van de plebiscitaire democratie, *Socialisme en Democratie*, 2002b, 12, pp. 31 34.
15. cf. B.A.G.M. Tromp, De vertegenwoordigende democratie ondermijnd, *NRC Handelsblad*, 6 January 2003, p. 4.
16. A less extreme version of strong presidentialism is found in the US, with a strong president, secure in having a solid voter mandate, not relentlessly accountable to Parliament but exposed to checks and balances in other respects.
17. Lijphart discusses referendums, which do not clearly correlate with his majori tarian and consensual models of democracy. This need not cause any surprise as these models are chiefly operationalized in indirect democratic and macro political ways. He considers direct democracy as a distinct 'third dimension'. In the present study, the direct indirect dimension is a separate, second dimen sion, set at right angles to the majoritarian non majoritarian dimension. See A. Lijphart in M.L. Crepaz, T.A. Koelble, & D. Wilsford (eds.), *Democracy and Institutions: The Life Work of Arend Lijphart*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michi gan Press, 2000.

18. D. Butler & A. Ranney (eds.), *Referendums: A Comparative Study of Practice and Theory*, Washington, DC, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1978, pp. 23–37, citation on p. 36.
19. Many of the male voters still carry their sword to the *Landsgemeinde*, echoing an old tradition that stipulated that only those who were able to protect their own and the common household should be allowed to vote in the *Landsgemeinde*. Paraphrasing the famous dictum 'no taxation without representation', the motto here appeared to be 'no self determination without self protection'. The well known American motto, 'fend for yourself', is an implicit motto underpinning Swiss democracy as well.
20. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 182.
21. See Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, p. 206.
22. A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, London, Murray, 1872.
23. See and compare Held's (*op. cit.*, 2006) interpretation of 'protective republicanism' (pp. 35–44) and 'protective democracy' (pp. 62–78). The dissection of what he calls 'legal democracy' (pp. 201–208) has also been very helpful in thinking through the logic of voter democracy here.
24. See among others Hayek, *op. cit.*, 1976; Nozick, *op. cit.*, 1974; M. Friedman & R.D. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1962; A. Rand, *The Fountainhead*, London, Cassell, 1947; C.A. Murray, *What it Means to Be a Libertarian: A Personal Interpretation*, New York, Broadway Books, 1997; G. Sorman, *The New Wealth of Nations*, Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1990.
25. Hayek, *op. cit.*, 1976, p. 52.
26. Nozick, *op. cit.*, 1974, p. 33.
27. Nozick, *ibidem*, 1974, p. 312.
28. V. Ostrom, *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration*, Drawer, University of Alabama Press, 1974; V. Ostrom, *The Meaning of Democracy and the Vulnerabilities of Democracies: A Response to Tocqueville's Challenge*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1997.
29. M. Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*, London, Verso, 1990.
30. F. Hendriks & J. Musso, Making Local Democracy Work: Neighborhood Oriented Reform in Los Angeles and the Dutch Randstad, P. Bogason et al. (eds.) *Tampering with Tradition: The Unrealised Authority of Democratic Agency*, Oxford, Lexington, 2004, pp. 39–62; T.L. Cooper & J.A. Musso, The Potential for Neighborhood Council Involvement in American Governance, *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior*, 1999, 2, pp. 199–232; T.L. Cooper & J.A. Musso, *Creating Neighborhood Councils: Emerging Issues*, Los Angeles, USC, 2000.
31. Stretching things a little, the New England town meeting and the Swiss *Landesgemeinde* or *Gemeindeversammlung* could be understood as framing systems of subnational government, but whatever they frame is of a highly local

nature and also limited scale. Moreover, what they frame is embedded in regional and national systems of democracy in which the main features of voter democracy direct and aggregative democracy are neither exclusive nor predominant. Californian referendum democracy has systemic characteristics that bear upon a sizeable state with 34 million inhabitants, but that does not yet make voter democracy the dominant umbrella system in California, nor in Switzerland, with its 7 million inhabitants who regularly get to cast their vote in referendums.

32. A. Lijphart, *Choosing an Electoral System: Issues and Alternatives*, New York, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, 1984, p. 200.
33. Setälä, *op. cit.*, 1999. See also Leduc, *The Politics of Direct Democracy: Referendums in Global Perspective*, Toronto, Broadview Press, 2003.
34. Setälä, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 4. In sum: the link with plebiscitary populism, which is the ceaseless object of Tromp's denunciation (see earlier in this chapter), is about a specific kind of referendum practice that is located in the margins of the general category of voter democracy.
35. S. Möckli, *Direkte Demokratie: Ein internationaler Vergleich*, Bern, Haupt, 1994, pp. 75 79.
36. Switzerland is often considered an exception: interesting, to be sure (Setälä, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 164ff.) but also 'peculiar' and 'not a trendsetter' (Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 180). Apart from these works, my analysis in this section is mainly based on H. Kriesi & A.H. Trechsel, *The Politics of Switzerland: Continuity and Change in a Consensual Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; 2008; U. Klöti et al., *Handbook of Swiss Politics*, Zürich, Neue Zurcher Zeitung Publishing, 2004; J. Lane (ed.), *The Swiss Labyrinth: Insitutions, Outcomes and Redesign*, London, Frank Cass, 2001; W. Linder, *Swiss Democracy: Possible Solu tions to Conflict in Multicultural Societies*, Houndsmill, Macmillan, 1998.
37. In order to have a referendum take place, certain conditions must be met. A minimum of 100,000 citizens that are entitled to vote can submit a proposal for constitutional amendment to the electorate by way of a referendum. A mini mum of 50,000 citizens, or eight cantons, may challenge federal legislation by way of a so called optional legislative referendum.
38. T.N. Clark, The Swiss Communal Ethic, D.J. Elazar (ed.), *Commonwealth: The Other Road to Democracy The Swiss Model of Democratic Self Government (part II)*, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2001, pp. 137 152.
39. Female suffrage has had an eventful history; it was only introduced in the last mountain canton (Appenzell Innerrhoden) as late as 1991.
40. A. Ladner, *Die Schweizer Gemeinden im Wandel: Politische Institutionen und Lokale Politik*, Chavannes près Renens, Cahier de l'IDHEAP, 2008.
41. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 7. Between 1997 and 2007, Switzerland has become less of an extreme type of consensus democracy and more of a normal case of it, argues A. Vatter, Vom Extremtyp zum Normalfall? Die schweizerische Konsen susdemokratie im Wandel: Eine Re Analyse von Lijpharts Studie für die Schweiz von 1997 bis 2007, *Swiss Political Science Review*, 2008, 14, 1, pp. 1 47.

42. cf. Y. Papadopoulos, How Does Direct Democracy Matter? The Impact of Referendum Votes in Politics and Policy making, *West European Politics*, 2001, 24, 2, pp. 35 58; K.W. Kobach, *The Referendum: Direct Democracy in Switzerland*, Aldershot, Dartmouth, 1993; G.A. Fossedal, *Direct Democracy in Switzerland*, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers, 2002.
43. On the crucial role of elites in Swiss referendums see: H. Kriesi, *Direct Democratic Choice: The Swiss Experience*, Oxford, Lexington Books, 2005. See also Setälä, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 149.
44. Kriesi & Trechsel (2008, p. 56) illustrate this point: four out of every ten votes were mandatory referendums, of which over two thirds were accepted in line with government wishes; only 7% of the bills subject to a referendum were actually challenged by an optional referendum, of which 55% were ultimately successful.
45. cf. S. Möckli, *Direkte Demokratie: Ein internationaler Vergleich*, Bern, Haupt, 1994; Von Arx, *Aehnlich, aber anders: Die Volksinitiative in Kalifornien und in der Schweiz*, Basel, Helbing und Lichtenhahn, 2002.
46. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 180.
47. H.L. Schachter, *Reinventing Government or Reinventing Ourselves: The Role of Citizen Owners in Making a Better Government*, New York, State University of New York Press, 2003.
48. T.L. Becker & C.D. Slaton, *The Future of Teledemocracy*, Westport, Praeger, 2000.
49. See M. Chavannes, Een website als vliegwiel in de politiek: MoveOn.org sluit Amerikaanse burgers weer aan op het politieke systeem, *NRC Handelsblad*, 1 November 2003, p. 5.
50. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 185. For professional canvassers, parallel canvassing for, say, eight initiatives simultaneously is not uncommon. One signature may be worth $1 in one initiative and $1.50 in another, depending on how tight the deadlines are that must be met. A clever canvasser, who stays within the 30 second time constraint for an individual passer by, can make up to $400 in a single day. Examples from the VPRO documentary *Direct Democracy in California*, 4 July 2004.
51. See the earlier section in this chapter, entitled: 'Ideals . . .'.
52. *Wired*, <http://www.hotwired.com>, 5.04, April 1997.
53. Murray, *op. cit.*, 1997.
54. See, among others, N. Negroponte, *Being Digital*, New York, Knopf, 1995; B. Gates & C. Hemingway, *Business @ the Speed of Thought: Using a Digital Nervous System*, London, Penguin, 1999. Not surprisingly considering his background, Gates highly values the liberating, emancipating, and empowering potential of modern information technology, but he does not venture as far as wishing to replace representative democracy entirely by teledemocracy. To him, teledemocracy is a useful supplement to democracy, which in itself would remain representative.

55. P.H.A. Frissen, *Politics, Governance and Technology: A Postmodern Narrative on the Virtual State*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 1999. For a somewhat different per spective, see M. Bovens, *De digitale republiek: Democratie en rechtsstaat in de informatiemaatschappij*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2003.
56. A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2000 (originally 1835/1840), p. 491. In this regard, Bellah et al. mention essen tial 'Habits of the Heart', formed and strengthened by voluntary association; see R.N. Bellah, R. Madsen, W.M. Sullivan, A. Swidler, & S.M. Tipton (eds.), *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985.
57. De Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, 2000, p. 243.
58. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003. However, in his study of historical production leaps in Renaissance Italy, in the Dutch Republic, and in Industrial Revolution England, Luiten van Zanden shows that the introduction of public control (democratiza tion) cannot take place entirely at the tail end. Such production leaps require major investments, which people will only venture to make if they are confi dent that fundamental political and economic rights will be upheld. A crucial element here is the notable presence of a functioning public control system to counterbalance hierarchical, feudal arbitrariness. See J. Luiten van Zanden, *Een klein land in de 20e eeuw: Economische geschiedenis van Nederland 1914 1995*, Utrecht, Het Spectrum, 1997; J. Luiten van Zanden & A. van Riel, *Nederland 1780 1914, Staat, instituties en economische ontwikkeling*, Amsterdam, Balans, 2000.
59. His analysis reveals that Zakaria's criticism is strongly focused on direct aggrega tive democracy, thereby actually confirming the American tendency to equate democracy with voter democracy.
60. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 183; cf. Broder, *Democracy Derailed: Initiative, Campaigns and the Power of Money*, New York, Harcourt, 2002; Ellis, *Democratic Delusions: The Initiative Process in America*, Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2002; Gerber, *The Populist Paradox: Interest Group Influence and the Promise of Direct Legislation*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1999.
61. G. Hardin, The Tragedy of the Commons, *Science*, 1968, 162, 3859, pp. 1243 1248.
62. Referring to Huxley's *Brave New World*, Barber criticizes the Brave New Democ racy that would fit the Brave New McWorld. See, among others, Barber, *op. cit.*, 1984; B.R. Barber, *A Passion for Democracy: American Essays*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1998.
63. Derived from W. van de Donk & P. W. Tops, Orwell or Athens, W. van de Donk et al. (eds.), *Orwell in Athens: A Perspective on Informatization and Democracy*, Amsterdam, IOS Press, 1995, p. 13 32.
64. Besides the potential loss of status for politicians, Alain de Botton observes a great potential for 'status anxiety' in the horizontalized, over democratized American relations; see A. de Botton, *Status Anxiety*, New York, Pantheon Books, 2004.

65. R. Weissberg, *Polling, Policy and Public Opinion: The Case against Heeding the 'Voice of the People'*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. Government led by the *vox populi* is madness, according to Weissberg.
66. Budge's fear of the 'unmediated popular vote', therefore, is fulfilled to a lesser degree in Switzerland. See I. Budge, Direct Democracy: Setting Appropriate Terms of Debate, D. Held (ed.), *Prospects for Democracy: North, South, East, West*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1993, pp. 136 155; cf. Möckli, 1994; Von Arx, 2002.
67. Hendriks & Musso, *op. cit.*, 2004; Cooper & Musso, *op. cit.*, 2000.
68. The Los Angeles municipality comprises approximately 4 million inhabitants. Its political government comprises 1 elected mayor and no more than 15 local councillors. Inhabitants of city districts such as the San Fernando Valley (with almost 1 million inhabitants) feel underrepresented and underserviced by the municipal administrative centre.

Chapter 6: Participatory Democracy

1. Elster, *op. cit.*, 1998, p. 1.
2. Barber, *op. cit.*, 1994, p. 151.
3. Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, p. 37, distinguishes Greek type 'developmental republican ism' from Roman type 'protective republicanism', with the latter stressing the instrumental value of participation for the protection of citizens' interests. Protective republicanism has been discussed in the context of the previous chapter, on voter democracy.
4. I will come back to this in the section on communicative and deliberative democracy. Cognate concepts include: discursive democracy (Dryzek, *op. cit.*, 1990), radical democracy (D. Trend, ed., *Radical Democracy: Identity, Citizenship, and the State*, New York, Routledge, 1996), green democracy (R.E. Goodin, *op. cit.*, 1992), directly deliberative polyarchy (J. Cohen & C.F. Sabel, Directly Delibera tive Polyarchy, *European Law Journal*, 1997, 4, pp. 313 340). See also D. Fuchs, *Models of Democracy: Participatory, Liberal and Electronic Democracy*, Edinburgh, ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops no. 22, 28 March 2 April 2003.
5. Dryzek, *op. cit.*, 1990.
6. V. Mamadouh, *De stad in eigen hand: Provo's, kabouters, krakers als stedelijke sociale beweging*, Amsterdam, Sua, 1992. The observations and quotations in the fol lowing section are based on this book.
7. Just like the 'Provo', the 'Kabouter' was invented by Roel van Duijn, an anarchist who had earlier been involved in 'Ban the Bomb' campaigns in The Hague (1961). The Kabouter (gnome or dwarf) was meant to symbolize human beings living in harmony with nature and to express an ethic of 'small is beautiful'.
8. My translation, Dutch source.
9. Mamadouh, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

10. C.T.L. Butler & A. Rothstein, *On Conflict and Consensus: A Handbook on Formal Consensus Decisionmaking*, Takoma Park, Food Not Bombs Publishing, <http://www.consensus.net>, 2005. See also: <http://www.squat.net/eurodusnie/bd/>.
11. Goodin mentions the example of the Grünen in the German state of Hessen, who convened in no fewer than six successive weekends in order to agree on the 1983 Green Party programme. See Goodin, *op. cit.*, 1992.
12. In her study on participatory democracy, Pateman discusses labourers' self government in Yugoslavia as an example of functional self government, but this, of course, is now an obsolete example; see Pateman, *op. cit.*, 1970. Self government in the kibbutz, a form of communal self government with a liberal dash of functional self government, has proved to be more enduring.
13. J. Fidler (journalist and member of Kibbutz Beit Ha'emek), *Kibbutz: What, Why, When, Where*, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society & Culture/kibbutz1.html>, 2009.
14. Alternative communities are also common in the non Western world. See D. Maybury Lewis, *Millennium: Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World*, New York, Viking, 1992.
15. M. Livni, The Common Denominators of the Communities I Visited, *Communes at Large Letter: International Communes Desk*, <http://www.communa.org.il/e call.htm>, 2001.
16. cf. Finer, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 1647; P.J. Proudhon, *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, London, Freedom Press, 1923 (original French ed., 1851).
17. My translation, Dutch source. See K.H. Marx & F. Engels, *De burgeroorlog in Frankrijk*, 's Gravenhage, Boucher, 1968; E.S. Mason, *The Paris Commune: An Episode in the History of the Socialist Movement*, New York, Macmillan, 1930.
18. History was to repeat itself at a later point in time, when there was revolution in the air in several German cities after Germany lost the Great War. The 'dictatorship of the proletariat' was proclaimed in the Munich Councils' Republic. Fierce opposition caused the insurrection to be quashed on 30 April 1919, putting an end to a series of chaotic experiments with socialist and communist councils' government. For more information on this communist revolution, see G. Schmidt, *Spartakus: Rosa Luxemburg und Karl Liebknecht*, Frankfurt am Main, Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft, Athenaion, 1971.
19. Elements and versions of Athenian democracy are evident in other city states: Rome, Florence, Venice, and Geneva. See Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2001.
20. See M.H. Hansen, *The Athenian Democracy in the Age of Demosthenes: Structure, Principles and Ideology*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991; S.E. Finer, *The History of Government, Part I*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999.
21. Slaves, women, children, and resident foreigners had no right to speak.
22. The People's Assembly could expel a detested orator or general. If there was a majority vote supporting the use of potsherds as voting tokens, all were given the opportunity to scratch the name of their candidate on a piece of broken

pottery. The person receiving the highest number of votes was exiled from the city state for ten years.

23. Drawing lots was a means of selection that did not put anyone at a disadvantage: it gave a fair and equal chance to each citizen to serve his community. An egalitarian, as opposed to an inegalitarian, means of selection, according to Manin, *op. cit.*, 1997, p. 238. See also Montesquieu: selection by drawing lots fits the nature of democracy; selection by election fits the nature of aristocracy. See Montesquieu, *Spirit of Law*, New York, Hafner, 1966 (originally 1748).
24. Athenian democracy had a 'culture of talking' more than a 'culture of voting'. With his dialogues and the Socratic dialogue in particular, Plato, self confessed critic of Athenian democracy, may be a major testator of the 'culture of talking' in Athenian democracy in spite of himself.
25. J.J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968; translation of *Du Contrat Social ou principes du droit politiques*, originally 1762.
26. Pateman, *op. cit.*, 1970. See also W. van der Burg, *Het democratisch perspectief: Een verkenning van de normatieve grondslagen der democratie*, Arnhem, Gouda Quint, 1991.
27. Rousseau, *op. cit.*, 1968 (originally 1762), p. 141.
28. See Held, *op. cit.*, 2006, pp. 36 40. On the city republican alternative see also Finer, *op. cit.*, 1999, Part II, pp. 950 1023.
29. Manifesto of 'Students for a Democratic Society', cited in J. Dunn (ed.), *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey, 508 BC to AD 1993*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 145.
30. Not quite so strongly marked though sympathetic to participatory democracy, there is a movement within democratic theory that equates democracy with 'equal, clear and loud participation', see S. Verba, K.L. Scholzman, & H.E. Brady, *Voice and Equality*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1995; see also B. Kliksberg, Six Unconventional Theses about Participation, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 2000, 66, pp. 161 174.
31. S. Benhabib (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996.
32. See Dryzek, *op. cit.*, 1990; Cohen & Sabel, *op. cit.*, 1997.
33. It is for this reason that supporters of other conceptions of democracy often experience the rules of deliberative democracy as passive aggressive: ostensibly liberating but at the same time severely limiting.
34. This is also called 'rhizomatic'. The growth of the Internet the network of electronic networks also has rhizomatic features.
35. Barber, *op. cit.*, 1984.
36. B.R. Barber, recommendation in the book of B. Ackerman & J.S. Fishkin, *Deliberation Day*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004.
37. Or, on a subnational level, prior to elections of governors and mayors.
38. Ackerman & Fishkin, *op. cit.*, 2004, p. 40.
39. In a deliberative poll on supra local development policy, people's resistance against sharing and spreading public funds decreased from 80% to 40%, and

support for establishing a voluntary tax sharing mechanism increased consid erably. See Ackerman & Fishkin, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

40. Ackerman & Fishkin, *op. cit.*, 2004, pp. 44 59.
41. cf. M. Pinbord & T. Wakeford, Overview Deliberative Democracy and Citizen Empowerment, *PLA Notes*, 2001, 40, pp. 23 28; G. Smith, *Power Beyond the Ballot: 57 Democratic Innovations from around the World*, London, The Power Inquiry, 2005; G. Stoker, *Why Politics Matters: Making Democracy Work*, Basing stoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
42. P.C. Dienel & O. Renn, Planning Cells: A Gate to 'Fractal' Mediation, O. Renn, T. Webler, & P. Wiedemann (eds.), *Fairness and Competence in Citizen Participa tion: Evaluating Models for Environmental Discourse*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995, pp. 117 140.
43. See R.E. Goodin, *Innovating Democracy: Democratic Theory and Practice after the Deliberative Turn*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008.
44. A. Roobeek, *De Stad dat zijn de burgers*, Amsterdam, Van Gennep, 1995.
45. See also Chapter 5 on citizen juries.
46. R.C. Box, *Citizen Governance: Leading American Communities into the 21st Century*, Thousand Oaks, Sage, 1998.
47. A. Fung, *Empowered Participation: Reinventing Urban Democracy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004.
48. D.C. Miños, *Porto Alegre, Brazil: A New, Sustainable and Replicable Model of Partici patory and Democratic Governance?*, 's Gravenhage, ISS, 2002.
49. B. Cassen, Brazil's New Experiment: Anatomy of and Experiment in People's Power, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, <http://mondediplo.com/1998/10/09brazil>, 1998a.
50. cf. Elster's tripartition into voting, negotiation, and deliberation, in Elster, *op. cit.*, 1998.
51. This last point depends on the degree to which a region had access to or was provided with a particular service in the past.
52. Transport; education, culture, and leisure; healthcare and social affairs; econom ic development and taxation; urban development and organization.
53. These data were taken from an informative series on Porto Alegre in *Le Monde Diplomatique*: expérience exemplaire au Brésil: démocratie participative à Porto Alegre, *Le Monde Diplomatique*: <http://www.monde diplomatique.fr/1998/08/ CASSEN/10841>, 1998b; Cassen, *op. cit.*, 1998a; I. Ramonet, The Promise of Porto Alegre, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, <http://www.globalpolicy.org/socecon/ tncs/davos/01pal1.htm>, 2001. See also K. Koonings, Strengthening Citizen ship in Brazil's Democracy: Local Participatory Governance in Porto Alegre, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 2004, 23, pp. 79 99; Miños, *op. cit.*, 2002.
54. Schumpeter, *op. cit.*, 1943. See also Weber, *op. cit.*, 1972.
55. J. Chang & J. Halliday, *Mao: The Untold Story*, London, Jonathan Cape, 2005.
56. Michels, *op. cit.*, 1925.
57. Hood, *op. cit.*, 1998, p. 127.

58. D.P. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action in the War on Poverty*, New York, Free Press, 1969.
59. Citizens' participation in the Porto Alegre model, for instance, centres on the budgeting process; in the model of the planning cells, it centres on specific components of the planning process.
60. See, among others, H.P. Kunneman, *Der Wahrheitstrichter, Habermas und die Post moderne*, Frankfurt am Main, Campus Verlag, 1991; L. Boelens, *Stedebouw en planologie, een onvoltooid project: Naar het communicatief handelen in de ruimtelijke planning en ontwerppraktijk*, Delft, Delftse Universitaire Pers, 1990; A.R. Edwards, *Planning betwist: Communicatieve strategieën van boeren en natuurbeschermers in de ruilverkaveling*, Utrecht, Van Arkel, 1990.
61. F.R. Ankersmit, *Aesthetic Politics: Political Philosophy Beyond Fact and Value*, Stan ford, Stanford University Press, 1996.
62. Instead of 'knowledge is power', Bacon's famous thesis. See B. Flyvbjerg, *Ratio nality and Power: Democracy in Practice*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1998.
63. N. Machiavelli, *Discorsi*, Amsterdam, Ambo, 1997.
64. F. Bolkestein, Zelfverwerkelijking leidt niet tot een betere burger, *NRC Handels blad*, 3 December 1998, p. 12.
65. Referring to testimonies from hands on experts. See Goodin, *op. cit.*, 1992, p. 141.
66. J. Freeman, *The Tyranny of Structurelessness*, Hull, Anarchist Workers Association Kingston, 1980.
67. G. Orwell, *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story*, London, Secker & Warburg, 1984.
68. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 59.
69. Chang & Halliday, *op. cit.*, 2005; H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York, Harcourt, 1951. Despite, or thanks to, its extreme emphasis on equality (as with the Mao suits) and fraternity (as in mass campaigns), Maoism was observed with great interest and barely concealed appreciation by some New Social Move ments in the 1970s.
70. In the 'Variations on a theme' section, I discussed a few of these models. See also Part III on mixed models of democracy.
71. Elster, *op. cit.*, 1998, p. 9, in which he summarizes the arguments of different authors.
72. Arguments in favour of interactive policy making are these: (1) sounder policy; (2) more broadly based support for policy; (3) better relations. Interactive policy making is supposed to have all these benefits. See F. Hendriks & P.W. Tops, Making Sense of Interactive Policymaking: Observations from the Nether lands. *Dutch Crossing: A Journal of Low Countries Studies*, 2002, 26, 1, pp. 9 27.
73. Besides the example of Amsterdam, one might think of cities like Munich, San Francisco, and Porto Alegre (see earlier in this chapter). In post war Munich (discussed in Chapter 4), along lines similar to Amsterdam, a dominant and encompassing model of consensus democracy was supplemented and kept on its toes by an emerging model of participatory democracy. The addition of

participatory democracy was on a more modest scale than in Amsterdam. There was a network of action groups that opposed the construction of an under ground system (deemed to be too ambitious), but this did not prevent the underground network from being realized on a much larger scale than the one in Amsterdam. Far reaching prestigious projects, such as the Olympic Games, met with less resistance and more support than in Amsterdam and did eventu ally go through. Squatters' groups and other new urban movements made themselves heard but not as vociferously as in Amsterdam; cf. Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 1999a; Mamadouh, *op. cit.*, 1992.

74. Mamadouh, *op. cit.*, 1992.
75. See, among others, R.F. Roegholt, *Amsterdam na 1900*, 's Gravenhage, Sdu Uit geverij, 1993. See also the criticisms dispersed throughout Mamadouh's book.
76. G. Komrij, *Het boze oog*, Amsterdam, De Arbeiderspers, 1983, pp. 86 87.
77. Mamadouh, *op. cit.*, 1992, p. 94.

Chapter 7: Mixing Democracy

1. Montesquieu, *op. cit.*, 1966.
2. Zakaria, *op. cit.*, 2003, p. 22.
3. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 10; M. Flinders, Majoritarian Democracy in Britain: New Labour and the Constitution, *West European Politics*, 2005, 28, 1, pp. 61 93.
4. Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 21 27; A. Shick, *The Spirit of Reform: Managing the New Zealand State Sector in a Time of Change, A Report Prepared for the State Services Commis sion and the Treasury New Zealand*, Wellington, State Services Commission, 1996.
5. cf. Thompson, Ellis & Wildavsky, *op. cit.*, 1990; M. Thompson, *Inherent Rationality: An Anti dualist Approach to Institutions*, Bergen, Los Senteret, 1996; M. Thompson, Clumsiness: It's as Easy as Falling off a Log, Presentation to the Carnegie Council, New York, 2001; Perri 6, Institutional Viability: A Neo Durkheimian Theory, *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 2003, 16, pp. 395 415.
6. See among others Douglas, *op. cit.*, 1966; 1986; 1996.
7. Douglas, *op. cit.*, 1966; see also S. Schama, *Overvloed en onbehagen: De Nederlandse cultuur in de Gouden Eeuw*, Amsterdam, Contact, 1987.
8. J.G. March & J.P. Olsen, Organizing Political Life: What Administrative Reorga nization Tells us about Government, *American Political Science Review*, 1983, 77, pp. 281 296; see also F. Hendriks, Democratic Reform Between the Extreme Makeover and the Reinvention of Tradition: The Case of the Netherlands, *Democratization*, 2009, 12, 2, pp. 243 268.
9. On 'moderate' democracy, involving force and counter force, reciprocal influen cing and restricting, see, among others, Montesquieu, *op. cit.*, 1966.
10. With reference to this study's basic schedule (see Figure 2.2), we are in the realm of the basic models of democracy and the cultural foundations beneath them.
11. On 'settlements' see Perri 6, *op. cit.*, 2003.

12. R. Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1990; see also T.N. Clark & R. Inglehart, The New Political Culture: Changing Dynamics of Support for the Welfare State and Other Policies in Post Industrial Societies, T.N. Clark & V. Hoffmann Martinot (eds.), *The New Political Culture*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1998, pp. 9 74.
13. See Chapters 5 and 6 and the introduction to Chapter 6.
14. Hirst, *op. cit.*, 1994; Barber, *op. cit.*, 1984.
15. See the section 'Leadership in consensus democracy' in Chapter 4.
16. F. Hendriks, The Post Industrialising City: Political Perspectives and Cultural Biases, *GeoJournal*, 1999b, 45, pp. 425 432.
17. Almond & Verba, *op. cit.*, 1963; 1980. See also the section on citizenship in Chapter 4.
18. See Chapter 6.
19. Caramani & Mény, *op. cit.*, 2005.
20. One might think of the *Neue Steuerungsmodell*, inspired by the Anglo Saxon, highly market and consumer oriented New Public Management. See F. Hendriks & P.W. Tops, Between Democracy and Efficiency: Trends in Local Government Reform in Germany and The Netherlands, *Public Administration*, 1999, 77, 1, pp. 133 153.
21. See the section 'Voter democracy plebiscitary populism referendum democ racy?' in Chapter 5; cf. Setälä, *op. cit.*, 1999; J.J. Linz, The Perils of Presidential ism, *Journal of Democracy*, 1990, 1, pp. 51 69.
22. In the Napoleonic systems in Southern Europe, Rousseau's notion of popular sovereignty has traditionally nurtured a special relation between *demos* and *polis*, both represented as one and indivisible, as an organic whole.
23. For example, Porto Alegre, described in Chapter 6; see also A. Cornwall, Delib erating Democracy: Scenes from a Brazilian Municipal Health Council, *Politics & Society*, 2008, 36, 4, pp. 508 531.
24. See R. Doorenspleet, Electoral Systems and Democratic Quality: Do Mixed Sys tems Combine the Best of the Worst of Both Worlds, *Acta Politica*, 2005, 40, pp. 28 49 on mixed systems: blends of consensus and pendulum democracy.
25. See earlier in this chapter. See also the section on the Westminster model in Chapter 3.
26. See Chapter 8. See also the section on the Dutch system in Chapter 4.
27. Perri 6, *op. cit.*, 2003.
28. Hood, *op. cit.*, 1998.
29. See also M. Verweij & M. Thompson (eds.), *Clumsy Solutions for a Complex World: Governance, Politics and Plural Perceptions*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; D. Gyawali, *Water in Nepal*, Kathmandu, Himal Books, 2002; Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 1999a; T. Brandsen, W. van de Donk, & P. Kenis (eds.), *Meervoudig bestuur: Publieke dienstverlening door hybride organisaties*, Den Haag, Lemma, 2006.
30. cf. Schama, *op. cit.*, 1987, p. 48.

31. This is not possible by definition in a democracy, nor even in a polyarchy, the rule of the many, put forth by Dahl as a moderate alternative for democracy as the rule of all. See Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000.
32. Not so fortunate combinations in domestic administration, for example, can be compensated and hidden from view by foreign aid and support.
33. See among others R.D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993; L. Huyse, *De lange weg naar Neufchateau*, Leuven, Van Halewyck, 1996; Lijphart, *op. cit.*, 1999.
34. That is, in order to gain a position of long term esteem in reality; in order to gain a permanent position in pure theory of democracy, this is by no means imperative.
35. See, for instance, the demands Dahl makes upon democracy (Dahl, *op. cit.*, 2000); see Chapter 1.
36. The former dimension relates to effectiveness; the latter to legitimacy.
37. In addition to some basic requirements that apply, anywhere, any time (see Part I).
38. This example does not come out of the blue. See my comparison of post war reconstruction in Birmingham and Munich in Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 1999a.
39. What is achieved in a specific domain or a specific context is not also automati cally accomplished in another; requirements made upon democracy differ in time and place.
40. The more detailed narrative behind these tables is represented in Part II of this study, in which our discussion of each model of democracy is rounded off with an overview of its inherent strengths and weaknesses.
41. With reference to the proverbial glass that is both half empty and half full, we might say that different cultures tend to perceive the glass of the congruent model of democracy as for the most part full and the glass of the non congruent model of democracy as for the most part empty.
42. See the section 'Democracy and societal culture' in Chapter 2.
43. *Wahlverwandschaft* does not imply a perfectly painless match. *Wahlverwandte* institutions are like lovers that are mutually attracted and compatible but, therefore, also run a certain risk. cf. J.W. Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, Köln, Könemann, 2001.

Chapter 8: Reforming Democracy

1. S. Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, New York, Knopf, 1987, p. 10.
2. Schama refers to Claudel's 'élasticité secrète': 'the essential kinetic quality for a country where the very elements of land and water seemed indeterminately separated, and where the immense space of sky was in a state of perpetual alteration.' Schama, *op. cit.*, 1987, p. 11.
3. See also Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 2009.

4. On the roots of the polder model, see F. Hendriks & Th.A.J. Toonen (eds.), *Polder Politics: The Re invention of Consensus Democracy in The Netherlands*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001; J. Lendering, *Polderdenken: De wortels van de Nederlandse over legcultuur*, Amsterdam, Athenaeum, 2005; H. Pleij, *Erasmus en het poldermodel*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2005. On the entrenched culture of pacification and accommodation, see H. Daalder, *Van oude en nieuwe regenten: Politiek in Neder land*, Amsterdam, Bakker, 1995; W. van Vree, *Meetings, Manners and Civilization: The Development of Modern Meeting Behaviour*, London, Continuum, 1999; H. Daalder & G.A. Irwin (eds.), *Politics in the Netherlands: How Much Change?*, London, Frank Cass, 1989; R.B. Andeweg & G.A. Irwin, *Dutch Government and Politics*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1993.
5. On citizenship and leadership in consensus democracy, see Daalder, *op. cit.*, 1995; G.J.M. van den Brink, *Mondiger of moeilijker? Een studie naar de politieke habitus van hedendaagse burgers*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2002; H. te Velde, *Stijlen van leiderschap: Persoon en politiek van Thorbecke tot Den Uyl*, Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 2002; P. 't Hart & M. ten Hooven, *Op zoek naar leiderschap: Regeren na de revolte*, Amsterdam, De Balie, 2004.
6. A governor on a water board an archetype of Dutch government says the following: 'During my term in office, we've only ever had to vote three times on a proposal. In all other cases, we always managed to reach agreement' (M. Kool, water board chairman, quoted in P. Brouwer, Een heel moderne overheid, *Binnen lands Bestuur*, 1 oktober 2004, p. 21). This is characteristic of the governmental tradition.
7. J.I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477 1806*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995; M.R. Prak, *Gouden Eeuw: Het raadsel van de Republiek*, Nijmegen, SUN, 2002; J. Huizinga, *Nederlandse beschaving in de zeven tiende eeuw: Een schets*, Amsterdam, Contact, 1998.
8. Daalder, *op. cit.*, 1995.
9. Lendering, *op. cit.*, 1995.
10. No town in the Netherlands was ever at war with another town, in stark contrast to the Italian system of cities, to which the Dutch system is often compared. See Pleij, *op. cit.*, 2005, p. 28.
11. H. Pleij, *De herontdekking van Nederland: Over vaderlandse mentaliteiten en rituelen*, Amsterdam, Prometheus, 2003; Pleij, *op. cit.*, 2005. See Prak, *op. cit.*, 2002; Israel, *op. cit.*, 1995.
12. Schama, *op. cit.*, 1987, p. 42.
13. The pyramid shaped command and control structure is the most simplistic, modernist sub type of hierarchy, erroneously considered by some to be the main type of hierarchy. The holarchic structure of responsibility is the more complex, classic variation on the theme of hierarchy. See M. Douglas, Being Fair to Hierarchists, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 2003, 151, pp. 1349 1370; see Th.A.J. Toonen, *Denken over binnenlands bestuur: Theorieën van de*

gedecentraliseerde eenheidsstaat bestuurskundig beschouwd, 's Gravenhage, VUGA, 1987, about '*holarchie*' as main feature of the Dutch constitution by Thorbecke.

14. P. Brood, R. Kok, G. Mak, E. Somers, B. Speet & R. van Stipriaan (eds.), De kleine zeemacht, 1648 1672, *Beslissende momenten uit de vaderlandse geschiedenis: De 25 dagen van Nederland*, 11, Zwolle, Waanders Uitgevers, 2005, p. 295.
15. See W. van Vree, *op. cit.*, 1999, who argues that consensus seeking proceeds mainly through informal agreement rather than formal unanimity.
16. cf. Hendriks & Toonen (eds.), *op. cit.*, 2001; and U. Rosenthal, De media: Macht suitoefening en controle op de macht, *Bestuurskunde*, 2001, 10, pp. 292 298.
17. E. Zahn, *Regenten, rebellen en reformatoren: Een visie op Nederland en de Nederlan ders*, Amsterdam, Contact, 1989; Schama, *op. cit.*, 1987; Huizinga, *op. cit.*, 1998; A.C. van Dixhoorn, Goed burgerlijk leven in de republiek, P. Dekker & J.J.M. de Hart (eds.), *De Goede burger: Tien beschouwingen over een morele categorie*, 's Gravenhage, Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2005; I. de Haan, *Zelfbestuur en staatsbeheer: Het politieke debat over burgerschap en rechtsstaat in de twintig ste eeuw*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 1993.
18. Pleij, *op. cit.*, 2003, pp. 27 29: 'wise' should be conceived as clever, sly, smart, and taking care of oneself and one's family.
19. On developments in Dutch politics and their implications for political leadership and citizenship, see Daalder, *op. cit.*, 1995; Van den Brink, *op. cit.*, 2002; P. 't Hart & M. ten Hooven, *op. cit.*, 2004; A. Peper, *Een dolend land: Over de politieke architectuur van Nederland*, Amsterdam, De Bezige Bij, 2002; J. de Vries, *Paars en de manage mentstaat: Het eerste kabinet Kok (1994 1998)*, Leuven, Garant, 2002; J. de Vries & S. van der Lubben, *Een onderbroken evenwicht in de Nederlandse politiek: Paars II en de revolte van Fortuyn*, Amsterdam, Van Gennep, 2005; M.A.P. Bovens & A. Wille, *Diploma Democracy: On the Tensions between Meritocracy and Democracy*, Verkenning for the NWO programme Contested Democracies, Utrecht/Leiden, NWO, 2009.
20. H. Righart, *De eindeloze jaren zestig: Geschiedenis van een generatieconflict*, Amster dam, De Arbeiderspers, 1995; J.C. Kennedy, *Nieuw Babylon in aanbouw: Neder land in de jaren zestig*, Meppel, Boom, 1995.
21. Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, *In het zicht van de toekomst; Sociaal cultureel rapport 2004*, Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 's Gravenhage, 2004.
22. In the one case, such social decompartmentalization is rather like 'uprooting'; in the other case, it is more like 'unchaining'.
23. There is increasing criticism of the viscosity of such institutions. For a discourse analysis see F. Hendriks, Polder Politics in the Netherlands: The 'Viscous State' Revisited, F. Hendriks & Th.A.J. Toonen (eds.), *Polder Politics: The Re invention of Consensus Democracy in the Netherlands*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2001, pp. 21 61. Interest in reforms that give voters greater power is increasing. See Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 2009. See also the following section on major plans for reform.
24. H.J.G. Beunders, *Publieke tranen: De drijfveren van de emotiecultuur*, Contact, Amsterdam, 2002; See B.A.M. van Stokkom, *Emotionele democratie: Over morele vooruitgang*, Amsterdam, Van Gennep, 1997.

25. Hendriks & Toonen, *op. cit.*, 2001.
26. J.C. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 1995; also J.C. Kennedy, *De deugden van een gidsland: Burgerschap en democratie in Nederland*, Amsterdam, Bert Bakker, 2005.
27. Among others: H. van Mierlo, co founder of D66, who argued for decades that the democratic system needed thorough reform through a.o. referenda, directly elected mayors and district voting; E. van Thijn, former PvdA/Labour leader in parliament, who, for many decades, called for a new voting system, substituting the poor, mitigated, effect of elections in consensus democracy; E. Brinkman, former CDA/Christian Democrat Party leader, who expressed the need to streamline the Dutch system and get rid of its 'viscosity'; J. Marijnissen, SP/ Socialist Party leader, who called for the replacement of elitist 'backroom de mocracy'; J. van Aartsen, temporary VVD/Liberal Party leader, who converted to the D66 body of ideas after almost forty years.
28. Among others: the Committee Hoekstra, assembling a 'National Convention' for democratic reform; the Committtee Kok, calling for new governing struc tures for the Dutch Randstad; the Committee Elzinga, designing a 'dualized' system of local government; the Committee Deetman, considering constitu tional reform writ large; the Committee Van Thijn, advising on the Dutch mayor; the Committee Biesheuvel, advising on the national referendum.
29. Innovation of government departments is, to a large degree, verbal innovation. See M.J.W. van Twist, *Verbale vernieuwing; Aantekeningen over de kunst van bes tuurskunde*, Rotterdam, Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam, 1995. See J.F.M. Kop penjan, *Management van de beleidsvorming: Een studie naar de totstandkoming van beleid op het terrein van het binnenlands bestuur*, 's Gravenhage, VUGA, 1993.
30. See M. Boogers & F. Hendriks, *Middenbestuur in discussie: Analyse van en reflectie op de naoorlogse discussie over middenbestuur in Nederland*, Tilburg, UvT, 2005.
31. R.B. Andeweg, Institutional Conservatism in the Netherlands: Proposals for and Resistance to Change, *West European Politics*, 1989, 12, pp. 42 60.
32. On municipal amalgamation, see Th.A.J. Toonen et al., *Gemeenten in ontwikkeling: Herindeling en kwaliteit*, Assen, Van Gorcum, 1998. On dualization, see M. Boogers et al., *Effecten van dualisering voor burgers: Beweging naar buiten?*, 's Gravenhage, VNG uitgeverij, 2005. On the local referendum, see M. Boogers & P.W. Tops, *Hoe het referendum werd 'gewonnen': Een evaluatie van het Groninger referendum van 29 juni 2005*, Dongen, Pijnenburg, 2005. On the Mayor referendum, see P.W. Tops et al., *Het burgermeestersreferendum in Vlaardingen: Terugblik op een democratische primeur*, Vlaardingen, Gemeente Vlaardingen, 2002.
33. Plans for the introduction of the national referendum and the elected mayor did not pass the Senate. Plans for district voting have been put on hold because of the resistance of various political parties. A 'Burgerforum Kiesstelsel' has been installed to forge a breakthrough in this dossier, but this Citizen Assembly has basically (and quite surprisingly to some) endorsed the status quo, with only a few minor changes proposed.
34. Adapted from Douglas & Wildavsky, *op. cit.*, 1982.

35. H.R. van Gunsteren & E. van Reyven (eds.), *Besturen in de ongekende samenleving*, Den Haag, Sdu uitgeverij, 1995.
36. P.H.A. Frissen, *Politics, Governance and Technology: A Postmodern Narrative on the Virtual State*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar, 1999.
37. Compare A.M. Kjaer, *Governance*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2004; W.J.M. Kickert, E.H. Klijn, & J.F.M. Koppenjan, *Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector*, London, Sage, 1997; J.F.M. Koppenjan & E.H. Klijn, *Managing Uncertainty in Networks: A Network Approach to Problem Solving and Decision Making*, London, Routledge, 2004.
38. Aggregative and direct elements may have been added to it very selectively, but, in the main, network government remains of the consensus democracy type. See Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 2009; Hendriks & Toonen, *op. cit.*, 2001.
39. On 'we culture', group focus, and collective behaviour, see J.W. Duyvendak & M. Hurenkamp, *Kiezen voor de kudde: Lichte gemeenschappen en de nieuwe meerder heid*, Amsterdam, Van Gennep, 2004; see also M. Elchardus, *De dramademocratie*, Tielt, Lannoo, 2004; J. van Ginneken, *Brein bevingen: Snelle omslagen in opinie en communicatie*, Amsterdam, Boom, 1999.
40. For overviews, see S. Benhabib, *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Bound aries of the Political*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996; J. Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
41. Hendriks, *op. cit.*, 2009.
42. See Chapters 3 and 5 for the downsides of pendulum democracy and voter democracy, respectively.
43. See Chapter 7 on the interaction between democracy and the context in which it is to prove itself.
44. See previous sections in this chapter: 'Sweeping plans for reform' and 'Lack of reform successes'.
45. See the next section: 'Reinventing tradition in the past continuous'.
46. Schama, *op. cit.*, 1987, p. 11.
47. Hendriks & Toonen, *op. cit.*, 2001.
48. This figure continues to build on that in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.2, strengths and weaknesses of consensus democracy) and that in Chapter 7 (Figure 7.6, strengths and weaknesses revisited). The items on the last three lines were added because they are particularly relevant to the case of the Netherlands.
49. See, for example, initiatives for popular self government and pleas for delibera tive decision making structures, in the 'Sweeping plans for reform' section.
50. His performance, and that of other officials, is permanently monitored and expressed in pass marks (clear pass or clear fail), which is remarkable in an administrative tradition that has always been collegial and collective in terms of accountability.
51. The Belgian mayor is an interesting mix of the Dutch mayor, appointed by central government from outside, and the US mayor, elected in a personal capacity.

52. This would only require the confirmation and extension of the agreement that the party leader of the biggest party is to be the person charged with forming a new government and is entitled to the office of Prime Minister.
53. For another argument, see M. van der Veen, Jan Peter, Wouter, Jozias en Femke: Kom met mooie woorden en krachtige speeches, *NRC Handelsblad*, 25 February 2006, pp. 25 26.
54. This is in line with Aristotle, who declared many centuries ago that citizenship involves the capacity of both (co)governing and being governed. See Almond and Verba, *op. cit.*, 1980; H.R. van Gunsteren, *A Theory of Citizenship: Organizing Plurality in Contemporary Democracies*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1998.

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