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# POPULISM, PLURALISM, AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

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The first decade of the twenty-first century has not been a happy time for the fortunes of democracy in the world. After a period of extraordinary advances in the final quarter of the twentieth century, the overall spread of democracy came to a halt, and there have even been signs that an erosion of democracy might be getting underway. According to Freedom House's annual survey, there have now been modest declines in the level of freedom in the world for three consecutive years. Earlier in the decade, democratic hopes had been inspired by the success of the "color revolutions" in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, and even Kyrgyzstan, but subsequent developments in these countries have on the whole been disappointing. Moreover, nondemocratic regimes elsewhere became obsessed with the threat of color revolutions, and having learned from the failures of their fellow autocrats, they launched a set of efforts that have reduced the space for opposition and civil society groups in their own countries—a phenomenon described as the "backlash" or "pushback" against democracy.

Another indicator of what Larry Diamond has labeled a "democratic recession" is that the world's autocratic regimes have begun to show a new *élan*, leading other commentators to speak of the emergence of an "authoritarian capitalist" alternative to democracy. In the 1990s, political scientists tended to regard authoritarian regimes as transitory, and studied them largely from the perspective of their potential for achieving progress toward democracy. Of late, however, impressed by the staying power of many of these regimes, scholars have begun to focus on what has enabled them to persist and often to display a considerable degree of stability—a phenomenon that Andrew J. Nathan, writing about China,

has dubbed “authoritarian resilience.”<sup>1</sup> There is no question that a large number of other nondemocratic regimes, especially in the Middle East and the former Soviet Union, have demonstrated an impressive ability to maintain their hold on power, and it makes good sense to explore the sources of their survival.

At the same time, however, the new focus on the resilience of authoritarianism may have led to a tendency to neglect or undervalue the resilience of democracy—a subject that I believe merits fresh attention. Despite the obstacles that democracy has encountered in recent years, it in fact continues to endure remarkably well. In the first place, in a departure from previous cycles, the “third wave” of democratization that began in 1974 has not yet given way to a third “reverse wave,” in which the number of countries experiencing democratic breakdowns substantially exceeds the number giving birth to new democracies. It is true, as Larry Diamond has noted, that the incidence of democratic breakdown or backsliding has increased in the last few years, but the democratic regimes that have succumbed have all been of fairly recent vintage.<sup>2</sup> Put differently, no well-established or consolidated democracies have been lost. In particular, in countries that have achieved high levels of per capita GDP, there still has not been a single case of democratic breakdown.

Part of the explanation, of course, is that democratic regimes today enjoy a high degree of legitimacy, not only among their own citizens but in the world at large. This can be seen in the endorsement that democracy has been given by international and regional organizations, in the way in which nondemocratic countries try to claim the mantle of democracy for themselves, and in the support for democracy that public-opinion surveys find in every region of the world. As Amartya Sen has written,

In any age and social climate, there are some sweeping beliefs that seem to command respect as a kind of general rule—like a “default” setting in a computer program; they are considered right *unless* their claim is somehow precisely negated. While democracy is not yet universally practiced, nor indeed universally accepted, in the general climate of world opinion, democratic governance has now achieved the status of being taken to be generally right.<sup>3</sup>

The high degree of legitimacy that democracy enjoys can also be observed in the paucity of support in established democracies for antidemocratic movements and regimes elsewhere. During the twentieth century, there were significant sources of support in Western public opinion, especially among academics and intellectuals, not only for Marxism, but for Stalin’s Soviet Union, for Mao’s China, for Castro’s Cuba, and for the Sandinistas’ Nicaragua. In the democratic world today, open backing for the regimes of Russia, China, or Iran is rarely to be found. There is,

of course, a great deal of criticism of Western and especially U.S. policy toward these regimes, but that is a very different matter from endorsing their ideological claims.

Yet although explicit sympathy for antidemocratic alternatives is virtually absent among significant groups of citizens in consolidated democracies, this cannot be taken to reflect widespread satisfaction on their part with political life in their own countries. When viewed from the vantage point of emerging democracies, the advanced democracies may appear to be paragons of successful governance, but that is not generally how it looks from the inside, where dissatisfaction with politics is widespread. This manifests itself in contempt for politicians (especially the people's chosen representatives in the legislature), frequent outbreaks of scandal and corruption, and declining trust in political institutions. Moreover, across the political spectrum, at least in the United States, one hears heightened expressions of concern about escalating partisanship, a coarsening of political discourse, an inability to get things accomplished, and a broader cultural decline.

It would be hard to deny that many of these complaints have a good deal of justification. Yet in the developed world democracy remains, if not exactly robust, seemingly impregnable. This may in part be due to an increasing acceptance of what has been dubbed "the Churchill hypothesis"—that "democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."<sup>4</sup> It is surely true that the failures and drawbacks of other types of regimes help to shore up the continuing appeal of democracy. Even cases such as the People's Republic of China, with its remarkable success over the past three decades in achieving economic growth and military power, have not been able to convince citizens in the advanced democracies that they would want to sacrifice their liberties to enjoy the putative benefits of single-party rule. The direction of migration in the world remains overwhelmingly from less free countries to freer ones.

## The Dual Nature of Liberal Democracy

Still, given the dissatisfaction of their citizens with the quality and performance of democracy, it is striking that advanced democracies have continued to show such extraordinary resiliency. So here I want to explore another possible avenue that may help to account for democracy's durability. Before doing so, however, it is necessary to say a few words about my understanding of the nature of modern democracy.<sup>5</sup>

This is no simple task, as democracy is a term and a concept with a long and convoluted history. It is also a highly contested concept in our own time. The literal meaning of democracy, as indicated by its etymological origin in ancient Greek, is the power or rule of the people. In contemporary terms, this principle is usually understood in terms of

the rule of the majority, as expressed through free and fair elections. But it is almost universally recognized that majoritarianism by itself does not capture the contemporary understanding of democracy. As Leszek Kolakowski wrote in 1990 in the very first issue of the *Journal of Democracy*, “The principle of majority rule does not by itself constitute democracy; we know of tyrannical regimes that enjoyed the support of a majority, including Nazi Germany and the Iranian theocracy. We do not call democratic a regime in which 51 percent of the population may slaughter the remaining 49 percent with impunity.”<sup>6</sup>

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democracy; we know of tyrannical regimes that enjoyed the support of a majority, including Nazi Germany and the Iranian theocracy. We do not call democratic a regime in which 51 percent of the population may slaughter the remaining 49 percent with impunity.”<sup>6</sup>

For a regime to be considered democratic today, it also must protect the rights of individuals and minorities—in other words, it must guarantee the freedom or

liberty of its citizens. These guarantees are typically incorporated into a written constitution, and government is further limited and constrained by the rule of law. Democracy so understood is often called *constitutional* or *liberal* democracy.

The relationship between the two components of liberal democracy—individual rights and majority rule—is a complex one. They can and have been separated, not only in theory but in practice. Premodern democratic city-states were not liberal (in the sense of protecting individual rights) and did not aspire to be. Some European constitutional monarchies were relatively liberal even if not democratic. Hong Kong under British colonial rule was exceedingly liberal even though its residents had very little voice in how they were governed. Yet in today’s world, majority rule and the protection of individual rights almost always appear in tandem. As a glance at the annual Freedom House survey quickly reveals, countries that regularly hold free and fair elections are much more likely to protect individual rights, and vice versa.

So when we speak of democracy in today’s world, we are really speaking not simply of rule by the people, but of liberal or constitutional democracy. But this means that modern democracy has a dual character—it is itself, in this sense, a kind of hybrid regime, one that tempers popular rule with antimajoritarian features. For while it seeks to ensure the ultimate sovereignty of the people, at the same time it limits the day-to-day rule of the majority so that it does not infringe upon the rights of individuals or minorities. In other words, it pursues not a single goal that one can seek to maximize but two separate and sometimes competing goals. The solution to the problems of democracy cannot simply be more democracy, because liberal democracy is in tension with itself.

The nature of this tension was clearly understood at the founding mo-

ment of modern democracy, as is apparent from a reading of the *Federalist*.<sup>7</sup> That work clearly endorses “popular” or “republican” government, understood as “a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people” (p. 241). At the same time, its chief preoccupation is safeguarding government based on this principle from the danger presented by “the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority” (p. 77). In the famous discussion in *Federalist* 10 of controlling the evils of faction, James Madison notes that factions representing only a minority of the people can be checked by “the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote” (p. 80). The much harder task is to protect the public good and private rights against majority factions—and to do so without departing from “the spirit and form of popular government” (p. 80).

Earlier in his discussion, before concentrating on the ways in which the *effects* of faction can be controlled, Madison examines and quickly rejects two strategies for removing its *causes*. The first is the obviously undesirable expedient of eliminating the liberty that allows factions to form. The second, which he rejects as “impracticable,” is to give “every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests” (p. 78). Although this latter approach may sound far-fetched to us, it should be noted that it was embraced as a necessary pillar of republican government not only by classical political philosophers, but also by such leading eighteenth-century thinkers as Montesquieu and Rousseau.

According to this view, if the people are to govern themselves and be dedicated to the public good, differences in their views and interests must be kept to a minimum. They must live in a small political unit and be educated toward virtue, leading them to prefer the public good to their private interests. Moreover, as Montesquieu put it, “Since every individual ought here to enjoy the same happiness and the same advantages, they should consequently taste the same pleasures and form the same hopes, which cannot be expected but from a general frugality.”<sup>8</sup> For this reason, proponents of the small, virtuous republic generally supported a predominantly agricultural society, and were opposed to commerce and the widely varying degrees of wealth that it generates.

The authors of the *Federalist*, however, emphatically reject this view. “Pure democracies,” they argue, have always been short-lived, ridden with contention, and prone to foster the infringement of personal security and the rights of property. So instead of seeking to achieve the greatest practicable degree of *uniformity* among the citizenry, the *Federalist* advocates precisely the opposite course: To multiply the *diversity* among citizens to a greater extent than had previously been thought possible in a self-governing polity. Madison and his coauthors focus in particular on economic differences, and they hail the industrial progress that gives “a variety and complexity to the affairs of a nation” (p. 349).

The political benefit of a more diversified economy is that it creates

cross-cutting cleavages among interest groups.<sup>9</sup> Rather than the poor confronting the rich, it may be that both industrial workers and manufacturers (or both landlords and small farmers) will sometimes find common interests uniting them in opposition to other sectoral groups. A similar dynamic takes hold with regard to religion. When there is an increasing diversity of religious sects, it becomes harder for any one sect to impose its will, there are less likely to be major clashes between a few large confessional groups, and all are likely to seek a *modus vivendi* that allows them to coexist in peace.

The vision put forward in the *Federalist*—a large republic marked by representation in the legislature, the separation of powers, and a complex and diverse economy—has, on the whole, worked remarkably well in preserving the rights of individuals and minorities without derogating from the majoritarian principle at the heart of popular government. In its essentials, it has been copied by democracies throughout the contemporary world. It involves, in Madison's words, providing "a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government" (p. 84)—that is, structuring the government and the society in such a way that the dangerous factionalism of majorities is restrained, but doing so in a way that retains the ultimate approval and support of the great bulk of the population.

### The Populist Temptation

This great achievement, however, does not come without its costs. For in simultaneously pursuing the dual and often conflicting goals of majority rule and individual liberty, the liberal-democratic system virtually ensures that there will be dissatisfaction both on the part of the majority and on the part of individuals and minorities. The former are often disposed to feel that the popular will is being thwarted, and that various economic or other interests are manipulating the political process to serve their own private ends rather than the public good. And minorities often feel that they are not getting a fair shake from government, and that their interests and concerns are being neglected or overridden by political leaders who are primarily responsive to the dominant electoral majority. There is some merit in the complaints from both these quarters, though typically not as much as their spokesmen might claim. In any case, the key point is that the compromises inherent in constitutional or liberal democracy—the uneasy accommodation that it requires between majority rule, on the one hand, and individual and minority rights, on the other—mean that the outcome will be a balance that often leaves both majorities and minorities discontented.

It might seem, however, that this balance, requiring as it does a kind of combining of opposites, should be a highly precarious one, perennially threatened by discontent on both sides. And indeed dissatisfaction is plentiful in most contemporary democracies, both old and new.

The question, then, is why liberal democracy, at least in those countries where it has been firmly established, has shown itself to be so durable. One possible explanation that I would like to explore here is that the opposing sources of citizen dissatisfaction tend less to cumulate than they do to counter each other.

If it is correct that liberal democracy requires the maintenance of a successful balance between majority rule and individual and minority rights, this balance can be disrupted in two different ways. One would involve a hypertrophy of its democratic side to the point where it excessively weakens the protections offered for individual and minority rights—this leads to the democratic disorder known as *populism*. The other would involve an aggrandizement of its liberal or antimajoritarian side to the point where it undermines popular self-government and social cohesion. In theory, this could take the form of excessive individualism, but in the real world of politics the only units that have a realistic prospect of gaining excessive power vis-à-vis the majority consist of minority *groups*.<sup>10</sup> I am not aware of an existing term that corresponds to this liberal-democratic disorder. The term that might best capture what I have in mind is *radical pluralism*.

The definition of populism is currently a subject of controversy among social scientists and historians. The concept has a checkered international history dating back to the latter part of the nineteenth century; its early exemplars are often said to include the Russian *narodniki* and the U.S. agrarian movement that founded the People's Party and later supported the 1896 presidential candidacy of William Jennings Bryan. Various twentieth-century parties in Latin America, especially the movement that backed Juan Perón in Argentina, are generally labeled as populist. Today, of course, it is Hugo Chávez and his imitators—Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador—who are commonly regarded as populists. In Europe, by contrast, the designation has been given primarily to right-wing politicians, including the late Jörg Haider in Austria and Jean-Marie Le Pen in France. In Thailand, the movement backing ousted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra is often called populist.

Some scholars insist on defining populist movements in terms of their social and economic bases of support, while others emphasize their “ideological” content or “discursive strategy.” As is apparent from the listing above, the populist label has been applied to a highly diverse array of leaders and movements, and some scholars even question whether populism really is a distinctive or unified phenomenon at all.

I do not propose to enter into the details of this definitional debate. I am using the term in the present context to refer not to specific historical phenomena or socioeconomic formations, but to a broad tendency that is always latent to some degree in modern democracies. Nonetheless, the most generally accepted definitions of populism by social scientists are well suited to the way I want to apply the term. Here is the definition



offered in the entry on “Populism” in the *Encyclopedia of Democracy*: “A political movement that emphasizes the interests, cultural traits, and spontaneous feelings of the common people, as opposed to those of a privileged elite. For legitimation, populist movements often appeal to the majority will directly—through mass gatherings, referendums, or other forms of popular democracy—without much concern for checks and balances or the rights of minorities.”<sup>11</sup>

It is clear that populism embodies a vision of democracy that is not wedded to liberalism or to constitutionalism. (It is true that contemporary populist leaders in Latin America, again following the example of Chávez, have pushed for the approval of new constitutions, but their purpose has been largely to weaken the constraints on executive power embedded in existing constitutions.) Populism remains democratic in the majoritarian sense, in that it justifies itself as the agent and the embodiment of the people as a whole—excluding, of course, the corrupt and privileged elite and its agents. If the populist message were issued merely on behalf of a minority segment of the citizenry, that message would be drained of its appeal. Populists want what they take to be the will of the majority—often as channeled through a charismatic populist leader—to prevail, and to do so with as little hindrance or delay as possible. For this reason, they have little patience with liberalism’s emphasis on procedural niceties and protections for individual rights.

Since populist doctrines trumpet a stark opposition between “the people” and the elite that oppresses them, populists are hostile to the rich, to finance capital, and to big corporations. In anti-Madisonian fashion, they tend to reduce diverse economic classes and interests to only two—the rich and the rest. This might seem to indicate that populists would define the people broadly to embrace all the less well-off groups in a given society. Yet the populist vision does not see the world solely in economic terms, which presents a constant stumbling block to those who hope to build multiethnic or multiracial populist coalitions. In fact, populist movements tend to be antagonistic to cultural, linguistic, religious, and racial minorities. Thus populism often is accompanied by “nativism” and hostility to immigrants and immigration. Populists tend to view “the people” as a homogeneous or uniform grouping in cultural as well as economic terms. Those who differ from the majority in basic cultural traits are more typically viewed as enemies of the people rather than as potential allies.

The populist temptation surely presents a threat to the vision of liberal democracy advocated in the *Federalist*. At the same time, it might be said that the recurrence of populist rhetoric and even populist movements offers a useful corrective to the propensity of liberal democracy to move too far away from its foundations in popular sovereignty. Such movements increase the political involvement of groups that otherwise are likely to be passive, and they can provide a useful “wake-up call” to elites and public officials who have grown too cozy with their privileges

and too remote from the concerns of public opinion. In short, they can help to prevent liberal democracies from aggrandizing their liberal side and neglecting their democratic side.

## Pluralism and Multiculturalism

I suggested above that the hypertrophic disorder on the liberal side that corresponds to populism on the democratic side might be labeled radical pluralism. Explaining this requires a few preliminary words about the term *pluralism* itself. Its core meaning is “manyness”; *monism* or oneness is its opposite. Thus in a political context, it suggests a multiplicity or diversity of groups that exert influence within the polity. Though the authors of the *Federalist* do not use the word, pluralism would clearly seem to fit the concept of liberal-democratic politics that they advocate. Diversity of both economic interests and religious groups, in their view, provides favorable conditions for liberty and self-government, and regulating the conflicting and competing interests to which this diversity gives rise is “the principal task of modern legislation” (p. 79). The use of the word pluralism to describe this Madisonian-style vision of interest-group politics rose to prominence in the decades following World War II in the writings of such prominent American political scientists as David B. Truman and Robert A. Dahl. The *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia* defines the word as follows: “In political science, the view that in liberal democracies power is (or should be) dispersed among a variety of economic and ideological pressure groups and is not (or should not be) held by a single elite or group of elites.”<sup>12</sup>

In recent decades, the term “pluralism” has increasingly been used to refer not so much to economic interests as to ethnic, cultural, or religious groups, usually in a fashion that advocates wide latitude for such minorities to be able to pursue their own specific traditions and ways of life. In this usage, its meaning approaches that of the related concept of *multiculturalism*—and as with the latter term, there is significant ambiguity as to its moral and political goals and consequences. For it can refer to a wide spectrum of theoretical conceptions and political practices, ranging from a celebration of the contributions of disparate groups to a common culture, to an emphasis on the incompatibility of the various cultures within a given society.

At the farther reaches of this spectrum, a radical version of cultural pluralism would seem to present obvious dangers to both the liberal and the democratic components of democracy. In the first place, if cultural groups within society are empowered, there is a potential conflict between their rights and the individual rights of their members. At the same time, a radical pluralism would threaten to undermine the foundations of popular self-government. For if the individuals and groups that compose a society cannot agree on certain fundamental principles or at-

tachments that can form the basis for an underlying political consensus, they can hardly consider themselves to be one people, and thus they are unlikely to feel constrained to respect majority rule. Perhaps the clearest example of this problem can be found in the difficulties that have confronted the attempt to build democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But in less extreme forms, this difficulty is present in all deeply divided societies. And in the circumstances of the present day, with large-scale migration mixing populations in many parts of the world, the problem is emerging in societies that previously had been relatively homogeneous, as is highlighted by the difficulties that Europe is experiencing in integrating its Muslim immigrants.

The authors of the *Federalist* do not confront directly the dangers of excessive diversity, although John Jay in *Federalist 2* approvingly notes that the Americans are

[O]ne united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who, by their joint counsels, arms, and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established their general liberty and independence (p. 38).

As the subsequent experience of the United States has shown, not all these common bonds are necessary for democracy to flourish, and a strong common attachment to the same principles of democratic government can make up to a large degree for the absence of the others. Nonetheless, factors such as a common language certainly are conducive to self-government. And while examples such as India show that liberal democracy can work in deeply divided societies, there is no question that sharp cultural and linguistic diversity makes the task more difficult.

One might say that for the authors of the *Federalist* a certain degree of economic and religious diversity is a useful mechanism for checking the dangers to individual rights and popular government presented by heedless majorities. But diversity is not regarded as a good in itself or as a goal of political and social life, as it sometimes seems to be regarded by contemporary exponents of pluralism. The view that liberal democracy should hospitably accommodate the widest range of different cultures and ways of life, a view that is sometimes grounded in the philosophic doctrine of “value pluralism,” exalts the claims of diversity far beyond the place that they occupy in the thought of the *Federalist*.

And yet, while the radical contemporary (or postmodern) commitment to pluralism poses serious threats of its own to liberal democracy, at the same time it helps to hold in check the populist temptation, especially in the more advanced democracies. As was noted above, populism tends to be accompanied by nationalism, and is often hostile to ethnic or religious minorities. Precisely for this reason, it is anathema to the

prevailing climate of moral and political opinion in the West, which holds lack of respect for “the other” to be the greatest sin. Insofar as the majority is hostile or indifferent to minority groups, it has come to be viewed with suspicion rather than as the font of justice and political rectitude. So while European populist leaders and movements typically gain significant support by adopting stances hostile to immigrants or minorities, these leaders also incur moral disapproval in the wider society that hinders their ability to come to power.

### The Debate on Democratization

Outside the ranks of radical Islamists, there is almost no overt opposition to majority rule today, but it is not held in nearly so high esteem as other aspects of liberal democracy. This is evident in the dynamics of the debate on democratization that has been unfolding since the end of the Cold War. That debate has been shaped by Fareed Zakaria’s introduction of the term “illiberal democracy” to characterize regimes that now choose their rulers through reasonably free and fair elections, but are deficient in the rule of law and the protection of individual and minority rights.<sup>13</sup> While many of Zakaria’s critics defended the holding of elections in such countries, none of them denigrated the importance of constitutionalism, the rule of law, and individual rights, or asserted that the will of the majority should override these things. On the other side of the argument, however, Zakaria and others have expressed deep skepticism about the desirability of holding elections in places where these liberal checks on the majority are not in place.

It is also noteworthy that there is very little backing these days for the kinds of measures that in the past have been favored by those wishing to bring government closer to the people—more frequent elections, referenda and recall, and the like. In the advanced democracies at least, populist approaches are largely devoid of intellectual support—again partly as a consequence, I would suggest, of the current intellectual prestige of diversity and difference. Yet even if majoritarianism is in some disrepute, majority rule is unlikely to be altogether abandoned so long as the principle of human equality that underpins it remains unchallenged.

My conclusion, then, is that liberal democracy today owes much of its resilience to the ways in which its two leading sources of internal opposition—populism and radical pluralism—are inherently at odds with each other. Both these tendencies are at work to different degrees in different democratic societies, but to some extent they wind up canceling each other out. Yet even if this analysis is accurate, it should not provide grounds for complacency on the part of liberal democracy’s defenders. In the first place, what has been true so far may not hold in the future. After all, someone writing in 1980 could have reasonably concluded that, since consolidated communist regimes had never fallen, they would continue to

be impregnable. Moreover, the intellectual currents that prevail today and have promoted the standoff between populism and radical pluralism may well change over time. More generally, while the self-correcting mechanism I have identified here can provide significant protection for liberal-democratic regimes, this does not mean that it can substitute over the long run for a citizenry that holds a firm attachment to, and a deep appreciation of, the advantages of liberal democracy.

## NOTES

1. Andrew J. Nathan, "China's Changing of the Guard: Authoritarian Resilience," *Journal of Democracy* 14 (January 2003): 6–17.

2. Larry Diamond, "Democracy and Governance Performance: How Are the 'Third Wave' Democracies Doing?" paper presented at the "Democracy and Governance Performance" conference, Hangzhou, China, 11–12 September 2009.

3. Amartya Kumar Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value," *Journal of Democracy* 10 (July 1999): 3–17.

4. Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "The Churchill Hypothesis," *Journal of Democracy* 10 (July 1999): 169–73.

5. This is elaborated in Marc F. Plattner, *Democracy Without Borders? Global Challenges to Liberal Democracy* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

6. Leszek Kolakowski, "Uncertainties of a Democratic Age," *Journal of Democracy* 1 (Winter 1990): 47–50.

7. Clinton Rossiter, ed., *The Federalist Papers* (New York: Mentor, 1961). All parenthetical page numbers refer to this edition.

8. Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, trans. Thomas Nugent, rev. J.V. Prichard (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1914), bk. 5, ch. 3; available at [www.constitution.org/cm/sol.htm](http://www.constitution.org/cm/sol.htm).

9. On cross-cutting cleavages and the way in which they are fostered by economic development, see Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 77–79.

10. I have been asked whether this assertion fails to take account of American-style "rugged individualism," which tends to be anti-statist in the name of individual rights rather than some kind of group claims. I agree that this peculiarly American outlook does not easily fit within my framework. In fact, Sarah Palin, who might seem to represent this viewpoint, is now increasingly being labeled a populist because of her attacks on elites. But I would contend that this odd brand of populism is not a threat to liberal democracy so long as it maintains its individualist and anti-statist orientation.

11. Torcuato S. Di Tella, "Populism," in Seymour Martin Lipset, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Books, 1995), 985–89.

12. "Pluralism," *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2002).

13. Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November–December 1997): 22–43.