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## WHAT IS DEMOCRACY AND HOW HAS IT CHANGED OVER TIME?

### Summary

Democracy is one of the fundamental priorities of modern civil societies and the mainstay of nations and governments. Some people believe that democracy was born in United States. But democracy was born thousands years ago in Ancient Greek. Today democracy is only alternative choice against authoritarian and repressive regimes emerges as one of the most eligible mode of administration. In this article, we will look at the types of democracies and how democracy has changed from first version to present version. Also, why philosophers' divided on democracy?

**Key words:** *history, democracy, magna carta, turks, vikings, middle ages, modern democracy*

### Introduction

What is democracy? Why democracy is important? First of all, democracy is equality of all citizens. Not only equality in front of law but also equality of opportunities. The word of "democracy" consist of two Greek words - power (kratos) and people (demos). It is absolute power belongs to people instead of dictators and inherited kings-aristocrats. Democracy introduce us demand and protect our laws, ability to elect and be elected, be equal in any field. On the other hand, we cannot deny that democracy has changed during timeline. In addition, it collapsed several times and even replaced by its updated version. But how democracy was created? Why it was created? What is its main purpose first times?

### Democracy in Ancient Greece

If we are talking about democracy, we automatically remember Ancient Greece democracy. In Greece, there were many small cities (polis) and they had own kings, legislation. Actually just Athena had people's governance. It means Athena democracy was unique. But unfortunately, philosophers were divided on democracy. Aristocracy and Democracy were opposite each other's. Some philosopher (such Empedocles, Anaxagoras, Democritus) supported democracy and they believe it was suitable for governance. On the other hand, others (such Plato, Socrates, Aristotle and Pythagoras) were not keen on democracy. For example, Democritus faced with leaving his polis (Acrogas) because of that. Empedocles refused to be king of his polis. He preferred democracy rather than others.

On contrast, Pythagoras was conservative, he quoted that:

"Human consist of three parts- head, main body, legs and arms. Like human, society consist of three parts- the wise, soldiers and citizens. Human body is managed by head. Society should be managed by the wise". Plato and Aristotle did not believed equality and they supported aristocracy. Some historians say that Aristotle was not supporter of aristocracy, he just believed that anyone can manage government but after learning how to do this. Socrates had negative view on democracy. He believed that only educated part of the citizens should control government. (Platon)

In addition, we can show that Solon and Pericles were different. Unlike others, they preferred to use democracy in specific field. Solon used democracy just in law, Pericles used democracy only in government administration.

Ancient Greece democracy also called classic democracy. Despite passed thousands years, even today it doesn't lost its actuality.

### Democracy in Ancient Rome

It was called "republic" (in Latin "res publica") in Rome. In the early days, only patricians (aristocrats) could participate in public administration. However, as a result of the development of society, citizens (in Rome they were called "plebs") also had the right to participate in this procedure. (Brown, 2016)

Before tyranny, Rome was managed by the senate. The Senate was look like modern parliament. The wise part of people discussed and made decisions. Until Caesar, dictator was an official position which was elected by the Senate (for a maximum period of 6 months,)

Neither Caesar nor Pompey wanted Cicero as an enemy and both men appealed to him for his allegiance. Cicero chose to side with Pompey at Civil War (49-45 BC). After Civil War, in 46 B.C. Caesar was declared himself "Dictator perpetus" (endless dictator),

Cicero blamed military regime and he was stand against of military coups and dictators. Cicero gave a speech at the senate about that.

Due to that, Cicero left Rome. He had read Socrates's plays but he did not agree with him absolutely. After traveling, he backed to Rome. Aristocrats showed him as danger and Cicero was killed dramatically. His body was shredded and his head was cut. Democracy lost again. From my point of view, it was not perfect time to try to protect previous regime and blame military regime. As we know that, after suicide of J. Caesar, totalitarian regime was not end. And again Civil War started. Future emperors (such Caligula, Nero.) did crazy things and kept the power on their hands.

Rome's democracy called "republic democracy"

### **Democracy in Vikings**

Well, we know about their life style from Viking series. But history and TV series are not similar. We review historical background. In Vikings, the council was called "Tring". They didn't have information about Ancient Greece and Rome democracy. They made their own system which based on equality. But that was for freedom people. Like Romans and Greeks, they had slaves. Secondly, they were not equal in property. Generally, Viking society consisted of 4 classes - king, aristocrats, free people and slaves. Even after being freedom, previous slaves were partially dependent to former masters.

### **Democracy in Turks**

Yes it could be sound interesting but Ancient Turks had democratic life as Ancient Greece. Unfortunately, Ancients Turks were wanderer. That's why we did not have enough information about their life style and their rules. Due to last discoveries, many historians agree with that. Until sultanate, Turks did tend to live with gender equality. Men and women did fight together against enemies. Women did stand with their husband at wars, sports, celebrities and so on. (White, 2003)

Queen Tomyris (Queen of the Scythia) was one of them. Historians note this fact at his manuscripts. In many Turk crews, gender equality, elections system, taking advice from the wise were parts of social life.

Generally their law system called "Töre" (in Turkish) and his law system based on ancient Turks' moral. We can describe this like that crew leaders were elected by the wise, the wise members were elected by other members of crew. Before staring war, travelling or other important event crew leader ask advice from the wise. It was prototype of modern parliament. Fortunately, last decades we discover many things about our ancestors. Our ancestors lived in a large area (from Arctic zone to Europe) and despite area difference, their life style, manners are similar. After sultanate many Turks crews did tend to live as Arabs.

### **Democracy in Middle Era**

If we investigate this age, we can see declaration of Magna Carta.

What is Magna Carta?

This declaration is first document to limit authority of Royal family. Everything started because of King Henry. King Henry was one of the craziest kings. He did whatever he want. For instance, he raised taxes, started wars and killed someone just for fun. Hence he hadn't good relations with Pope. Thus barons rebelled against King Henry. Due to critical rebellion, Magna Carta was written (1215).

According to Magna Carta, no one should not be arrested or deprived from property without evidence or judge decision. Civil war stopped. Ironically, this document was written in Latin language and aristocrats (king and barons) were talking in French language. Of course English people didn't understand anything. Moreover, this document was for free people. Large fraction of people did belong to barons. Naturally, this documents wasn't satisfactory. But anyway, it was important document for limiting authority of Royal family.

Thousands years later, Declaration of Human Rights was accented based on Magna Carta (December 10, 1948). Also, "800. Annual Celebration of Magna Carta" was celebrated in 2015. In 1649, strange as it may sound, England was proclaimed a republic. Four years later replaced by previous form. May be Socrates, Aristotle was right. Large fraction of people were not ready to accept democracy. They did not have any idea what was it and how to manage it?

In 1265, English Supreme Council called "Parliament". Today almost many democratic governments have parliament. The homeland of parliament is England.

### **Philosophers' ideas on democracy (Middle Era)**

First of all, we can talk about Thomas Hobbs. English philosopher is best known for his political philosophy. Hobbes believed that understanding physiology of human was necessary in order to understand the role of the government. In contrast, his ideas and Pythagoras (He quoted that body parts and society are similar) ideas were different. Hobbes believed that material item such as property, influenced human nature. Because of that, everyone should have the same things. He thought that all people should have equal rights and nobody should have more power over anyone else (besides the King, who should have absolute power).

John Locke argued about that everyone should have property freedom. Without property rights, labor was nothing. Locke's ideal form of government was a representative government such as English Parliament. In his Second Treatise of Government, Locke noted that the duty of government to protect human rights which involved 3 main rights - life, liberty and property. (Kelly, 2007)

### **Democracy in America**

During Civil War American Council agreed "Declaration of Independence" (July 4, 1776). Americans preferred to liberalism not monarchy. This document was also first document identify the human freedom. Unfortunately. This document wasn't include slavery, massacre of America's local residents and deportation of them. Anyway, it was important document and after that French rebellions made "Declaration of Human and Civil Rights" based on "Declaration of Independence".

### **Democracy in 20. Century**

After WWI and WWII, democracy became main priority. (http) After the World War II, The United Nations (UN) formally created in October 1945 was established as a world government that would maintain international order, but many forces that worked against such an outcome included the division of the world into two large political blocs identified with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact. But during Cold War both western and socialist sides blamed each other's to limit people's right. During this period of time democracy became second priority, governments preferred to keep their independence rather than being democratic.

On the one hand, Soviet regime introduce "Berlin Wall" project and splitted city. Due to this crazy project, even today some senior citizens cannot adapt new life style.

On the other hand, USA introduce McCarthyism project. And socialist were hunted in America from end of 1940's to end of 1950's. During one decade government influence people's carriers, life, political views.

### **Present day**

After being collapsed SSSR, many countries became freedom. Usually western countries and developed countries agree with that post-soviet countries are not democratic. These countries do not have independent legislative system, electoral system and they are managed by dictators. But we shouldn't forget that democracy is the choice of people, the attitude to democracy is the choice of the masses

But we can see many aspects which are typical of post-soviet countries. All of them were managed by socialist authorities and they always felt the pressure of SSSR. Some of them prefer to adapt based on several stages. Eastern post-soviet countries aim to EU (except Belarus) and some post-soviet countries are already members of EU such Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia. Furthermore, Eastern Partnership was created by Poland and Sweden efforts. The aim of this partnership is develop multiple relations (include trade, cultural, travelling) with post-soviet countries. Eastern Partnership covers six countries- Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine.

### **Conclusion**

Based on research and notes we can say that democracy is perceived differently in each society. Most of Ancient Greece philosopher believed that democracy could have repercussions (such as coup). And simple people did not have enough experience and ideas to use democracy. Because their ideas, they were blamed and even banished. From Greece to Rome, we can see that Rome was more conservative than Ancient Greece. In Rome, system developed. Lawyers dealt with problems of democracy, not philosophers. Also Ancient Turks lived based on main democratic rights such as gender quality. System always develop itself. During Middle Ages some philosophers introduced new ideas on democracy. Despite "classic" and "republic" versions, Locke, Hobbs believed human should have property rights. Based on these new and equal ideas America created new type of democracy. Europeans philosophers could not do that in Europe but inspired thinkers at the other side of ocean. After "Declaration of Independence" the monarchy began to

collapse. And after that, the Church separated from government. Every thinker inspired by previous thinker. "In Ancient Greece, defeated side had to leave city (polis). But in modern world, modern liberal democracy provides legitimate protection for the defeated side." (Dahl, 2004: 136) After Cold war and being collapsed SSSR, totalitarian governments replaced by democratic governments. This article reviewed how democracy changed from Ancient Greece democracy to the present. On the other hand, historians can search how democracy developed in ancient civilizations. Did Turks, Iranian crews and other eastern civilization have more developed democratic system than we think?

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