DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Class: L1 AEI Political Science UPEC

Lecturer: Fatima KHEMILAT

[fatima.khemilat@u-pec.fr](mailto:fatimat.khemilat@u-pec.fr)

Plenary sessions (cours magistraux): 11 sessions of 1h30 each, tutorials in small groups

2 evaluation modes :

-Continual assessment (contrôle continu): presentation + oral participation + 2 exams: mid-semester/at the end

-Final exam (dissertation at the end of semester) but only for those who can’t attend to the tutorial sessions.

«

FB page : @DPCL1AEI (download the syllabus and the sessions program) and as an additional advice, do the readings and watch the videos suggested on the page.

Picture **« power to the people »** : characters are male, white and from Ancient Greece (clothing).

**Democracy etymology :**

*Demos* (greek) which means « the people » and *Kratia* (greek) « power, rule » : democracy (late 16th century)

Literally : Democracy (demos + kratias) means « power to the people »

In other words : « Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people », 1863, Abraham Lincoln (16th President of the US)

Nowadays, it qualifies a political system or « any form of government in which the rules of society are decided by the people who will be bound by them » -Catherine Kellogg

**When and where did democracy emerge?**

Assembly democracy, starting around 2,500 BCE, in lands corresponding now as the territories of Iran, Iraq and Syria :

\*quote to write down (fb page) « The Life and Death of Democracy, p. xvi »\*

voting by lot=tirage au sort

So, as a ccl, democracy emerges from Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, (middle east in general), Indian subcontinent and also a few territories in Europe.

The best known example is Athens (Greece) during the 5th century BCE (Before Christ Era)

Ancient Greek regime often seen as the perfect/ideal democracy because everybody could vote etc… but actually it is not, because only few men could vote so it’s not as ideal as we think it is.

direct democracy : all the ppl are supposed to be able to vote directly for some1, participating at publics affairs, social and political life.

and representative democracy : voting for someone who represents the person you’re voting for (also called as indirect democracy or representative Republic) it’s basically a type of democracy founded on the principle of elected officials representing a group of ppl, as opposed to direct democracy where ppl are directly ruling and voting laws.

Nearly all modern Western-style democracies are types of representative democracies. For instance, the UK is a constitutional monarchy, Ireland is a unitary parliamentary Republic and the US is a federal republic.

4 principles of representative government :

1. « Those who govern are appointed (désignés) by election at regular intervals
2. The decision-making of those who govern retains a degree of independence from the wishes of the electorate (the person you elected, who owns the power doesn’t necessarily have to follow all the people’s wishes)
3. Those who are governed may give expression to their opinions and political wishes without these being subject to the control of those who govern (freedom of speech)
4. Public decisions undergo (soumises) the trial of debate »

**In other words** : « The central institution of representative government is election » and therefore, the power is not inherited (at least supposedly).

**Why do you think direct democracy isn’t seen as a realistic political regime anymore ?**

1-not everybody is able to vote (demographic issue)

2-the incompetence of citizens

1- The size of our societies : « To explain why representative governments grant no role to the assembly of citizens, authors usually talk about the size of modern states. » (for ex, France: 60M ppl)

**How did Athenian gov, resolve this issue?**

Athenian regime was using chiefly lot (tirage au sort) in order to make it possible to extract a small group (de manière hasardeuse) of individuals from the citizen’s masse. Today, the judicial system still makes regular use of lot in constituting juries but never in public affairs.

2- The incompetence of citizens : « Lot, it can be argued, selects anyone, not matter whom, including those with no particular aptitude for governing. »

**How was Athenian regime facing with citizens incompetence as a political problem?**

Athenian democratic institutions :

The Popular Assembly (*Ekklesia*) : an average of 6k citizens

The Council of 500 (*Boulê*) : drawn by lot

Magistracies (*Archai*) : -civil : drawn by lot + elections

-military : elective functions

Courts *(Archos + Jurors* (juges + jury)*)* : drawn by lot

**The Popular Assembly (*Ekklesia*) : Members, Prerogatives and Functioning**

**Members** : Potentially all the citizens. Who were the citizens? More specifically men, people from Athens, people between 20 and 34. If you were a citizen, it means that you weren’t a slave.

Basically :

-ALL ATHENIAN MALE WHO HAD REACHED HIS MAJORITY (20 YEARS OLD AND OVER)

-Are not included: women, children, metics (foreign resident of Athens) and slaves

-Citizens were 20 to 60 000 (from the 5th to the 4th century BCE)

**Prerogatives** :

-Votes on laws and treaties

-Makes proposals and takes initiatives (= assemblée nationale et sénat en France)

-Elects certain magistrates

**Functioning** :

-Isegoria is a key concept: « The principle that anyone wishing to do so was equally able to submit a proposal to his fellow-citizens and, more generally, to address (parler/s’exprimer devant) them (*isegoria*) constituted one of the highest ideals of democracy. » Bernard Malin

Isegoria as the cornerstone : it is the principle according to which every citizen is equally able and allowed to talk to the other members of the Popular Assembly about any topic and issue

**The Council of 500 ( Boulê ) : Members, Prerogatives and Functioning**

**Members :**

- Appointed by lot among the Popular Assembly members, but only among those who volunteered.

- Being a 30 years or older ( *age limitation*)

- Time office : a year, can not be appointed two executive years and no more than twice in a lifetime ( *office time limitation*)

- Belonging to one of the 139 districts of Attica ( the demes). The number of seats was proportional to each deme’s population ( location limitation)

**Prerogatives :**

- Prepares Popular Assembly’s agenda : submits decrees and law proposal

- Carries out Assembly’s decisions : **executive power**

- Supervises the work done by other magistrates of Athens

**Functioning :**

Council membership was a magistracy (arche), and like most magistracies was collegial

The most decisive magistracy was exclusively assigned by lot.

**The Magistracies**

* The Civil & Military magistracies

**Membership :**

- Older than 30 years old, the ones elected are designated by the raising of hands by the Popular Assembly

- Elections were annual, but no time office limitation for the elective posts

- About the elective posts >

- The Athenians reserved appointed by election for magistracies for which competence was judged vital

- These included the generals and top military administrators, the chief financial officials the conduct of war and the management of finance.

**To counter incompetence : the stricly controlled power of magistrates :**

A priori (*Dokinasia*) : This test examined whether they were legally qualified to be magistrates, it also checked whether their conducts towards their parents had been satisfactory and wether they had paid their taxes and had performed their military service. The test had a political side to it, too : an individual know for his oligarchical sympathies might be rejected.

A posteriori ( *Euthynai*) : After leaving their office, magistrates had to render account and can be sued if their assessment is judged unsatisfactory.

(En France, actuellement on présente son bilan au moment des élections.)

In between : Any citizen could lay a charge against a magistrate, a kind of impeachment procedure.

\* Dissuasive effect : «  The combination of voluntary nature of such service and this advance knowledge of the risks incurred must in fact have led to self-selection among potential magistrates » (Bernard Malin)

\* picture : symbol of the black panther party with the words « power to the people »

Against the Vietnamist War, sentence used by a movement.

What was the Black Panther Party ?

Fighting against segregation in usa, they used violence because policeman used it

Okhland 1966 creation of the BPP by Bobby Seal and Huey Newton

Documentaries in Netflix

Comment dans les pays démocratiques on traite les minorités (raciales) ?

**Why it was not a perfect democracy ?**

Political leaders tended to be recruited from wealthy families of good standing, whose fortunes, derived for most of them, from slave-manned ( mains d’oeuvres esclaves) workshops.

Slaves : In Greek Society, slaves were seen as a necessary and a perfectly normal part of city-life. Acquired through war and conquest, kidnap and purchase. Some philosophers like Aristotle argued that slaves were conspicuously inferior, a product of their environment and inherited characteristics. Whereas Greeks thought they had the purest blood line and were, therefore, born to rule. The slave population in Greek world ranged from 15 to 40% of the entire population.

Women statutes : They were unable to vote, own land, or inherit woman’s place was at home and her life purpose was the rearing of childrens. Contact with non-family males was discouraged and women occupied their time with indoor activities. Women had to marry as a virgin and marriage was usually organized by the father, who chose the husband and accepted from him a dowry.

Ancient Greek society presented the same social plagues are the contemporary ones : the domination of economical elites, sexism and racism.

**Palaver (Under the Baobab)Tree :**

An African model of direct democracy

PALAVER IS A TRADITIONAL AFRICAN INSTITUTION OF DEBATE AND CONSENSUS

The fokonolona is a key socio-political institution of pre-colonial Africa characterized by :

* + An assewmbly where a variety of issues are freely debated and important decisions concerning the community are taken
* Equal access to public speech ( or to be represented by a *griot*)
* It maintains peace, social order and social cohesion

Harmony versus majority domination dialogue instead of using strength or violence.

Nelson Mandela in his autobiography, spoke of the African palaver as : a «  democratic institution in its own right » in which « all who wanted to speak did so. It was democracy in its purest form ».

**What were the advantage of the Athenian direct democracy ?**

1. Rotation between being governed and governors = question of fairness, this was the reason why you can be more than 2 office time
2. Equal opportunity to speak ( isegoria), to submit a proposal and, to become magistrate
3. It prevents from the professionalization of political functions and the monopolization of positions by a few people

\* picture : quote «  Man is by nature a political animal - Aristotle »

the human being has to be involved in the political life

**Who was Aristotle ?**

* A Greek philosopher and scientist ( but was a metic in Athens) who lived in the 4th century BCE.
* He was Plato’s disciple ( he studied at the Academy), he founded his own school of philosophy « Lycaeum » and was tutor to Alexander the Great.
* His masterpiece is « Politics » in which he tried to give a classification of the different kind of political regimes because he believed : **« Mankind is by nature a political animal »**

**Aristotle classification of regimes**

He raised two questions :

Who holds power ?

3 possibilities : One, some, and All

In whose interest is it exercised ?

2 possibilities : The Holder of power or everyone

He made a distinction between virtuous ( correct) and corrupted ( deviant) government

Therefore, there are six possible constitutional forms

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | CORRECT | DEVIANT |
| ONE RULER | monarchy / kingship | tyranny |
| FEW RULER | aristocracy | oligarchy |
| MANY RULERS | polity / respublica | democracy |

For instance : the goal of oligarchy is wealth ; the one of democracy ( poor people) is freedom.

They are several varieties of each of the six basics types, they can be combined in many ways.

**Monarchy**

* Rule by one most of the times it qualifies a kingship or a queenship
* Hereditarian power : he / she holds the power for life or until voluntary renunciation (abdication)

Two types pf monarchy :

Absolute one ( in which a monarchs holds absolute power) ( c’est une tyranny enft)

Limited monarchy ( such as the modern constitutional monarchy)

Remarks : Modern monarchies are mostly constitutional. In those, the sovereigns are obliged to exercise their powers and authorities within the limits prescribed in the legal framework, usually a written or unwritten constitution.

According to Aristotle one wise man can rule in the interest of all, especially because the realm is his property. It would be in his own interest to help the country to be prosperous.

**Tyranny**

* An absolute ruler. For Aristotle a tyrant is one who rules exclusively in his own interest.
* Tyranny is a regime characterized by :
* The abusive use of violence
* The absence of the rule of law
* The concentration of power in the hands of a single individual (or clan)

Remarks : Nowadays «  tyranny » is used as a synonymous of « dictatorship ». The term tyranny can also be used in an other context :

« The tyranny of the majority » it is when the majority uses is numerical domination in order to dominate and exploit the minorities (we’ll see more about it session 5)

**Aristocracy**

In Greek, *Aristokratia* comes from :

*Aristos* « excellent » / «  the best »

*Krastos* « power »

Literally it means «  Rules by the best »

* Rules by the few in the interests of the many
* In Ancient Greek, the best ones were the qualified citizens with specific highly qualified skills and the most deserving (meritocracy + ou -). It was the better regime according to Aristotle.

Nowadays « aristocracy » refers to a type pf government where the power belongs to a minority class with hereditary privileges.

2 kinds of aristocracy :

> When a few people are ruling in collegiality, if they are considered as the best among all the citizens ( the ideal type, ancient meaning)

> Where a few people are ruling but under the monarch’s authority. It is the most familiar in Europe ( for instance in the UK)

These current meaning of « aristocracy »

1. The legal political aspects. The ruling class is identified through the possession of land and secondly through rules of succession ( usually by kingship / hereditarian) Above all, being all, being an aristocrat confers you legal rights. For example, in the UK.
2. The economics aspects. In Marxist theory, there are relations of power which underlies the relationship between the person who controls and owns land (therefor the person who detains the power) and the person who is forced to work on it ( submitted to the landlord’s will)
3. The social aspect. This is perhaps the most striking and common meaning in the popular imagination, which identifies aristocracy with all hereditary privilege and the leisure, luxury and manners related to it. in other words aristocracy come to stand for an idea of breeding ( social reproduction)