Nations That Made a Conscious Decision to Adopt Democratic Government Usually Did So Because They Believed That Democracy Would Help Them to Achieve Economic and Technological Success.

Ted Kaczynski

2022

Contents

The proposition that forms the title of this appendix is somewhat of an oversimplification. In any case, it is not our intention to provide a fully developed argument in favor of the proposition; we merely offer some evidence that we hope will persuade the reader to take the proposition seriously and to doubt the widely held assumption that peoples have adopted democratic governments primarily because they believed that such governments were more humane or would give them greater freedom than authoritarian systems did. Because of the need for brevity, we paint with a broad brush; for the most part we omit reservations, qualifications, and discussion of exceptions to our general statements. Our purpose is merely to outline the overall trend.

Here we do not speak of democracy in the broadest sense of the word, but only of representative democracy as that expression is commonly used in reference to a certain type of political system that exists in the modern world. Nor are we concerned with Britain, or with other countries such as the Netherlands, Switzerland, or Sweden, in which democracy was largely an indigenous development and the outcome of long-term historical processes. Instead, we are interested in those countries that made a conscious decision to adopt☒or attempt to adopt☒democratic political systems after that form of government had shown outstanding success in Britain and in Britain's offspring, the United States.

The ideology of modern democracy grew out of English political tradition combined with 18th-century Enlightenment thought. Enlightenment thinkers were not at first inclined toward democracy. Rather, they were concerned with progress☒fundamentally with economic and technological progress, which they assumed would lead to intellectual and cultural progress☒and they believed that progress could best be promoted by benevolent, absolute monarchs. The Enlightenment turned to democracy only because efforts at reform proved futile under absolute monarchies, and because progress was seen to be most rapid under the semi-democratic regimes of Britain and the United States.[1]

One should not be misled by the fact that many of the reformers and revolutionaries continually prated about "liberty" and "equality." To see what motivated them one has to look at their programs of action and understand what kind of liberty and equality they were really seeking. It's true that in many cases the common people☒meaning primarily the people who worked with their hands☒supported democratic revolutions,

[1] For this whole paragraph see: Bury, passim, e.g., pp. 60, 113, 127–28, 134 (failure of reform under absolute monarchy), 135, 139, 169, 173–74, 176, 182, 205–06, 212, 217, 248, 324–25. Dorpalen, p. 193 (Marxist view). Haraszti, passim, e.g., pp. 28, 45, 140–41, 187, 214, 239, 307–08 note 49. Priore & Venâncio, Chapt. XIV, pp. 179–181. Randall, pp. 201, 203–04, 206, 417, 431–32, 486–87, 592. Smelser, pp. 331–32. Whitaker, the entire book, but especially the final essay by Charles C. Griffin, pp. 119–143. NEB (2003), Vol. 2, "Bolívar, Simón," p. 339 (well versed in Enlightenment thought); Vol. 3, "Condorcet, Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas de Caritat, marquis de," p. 523; Vol. 11, "Staël, Germaine de," p. 198; Vol. 12, "Turgot, Anne-Robert-Jacques," p. 54; Vol. 20, "Germany," p. 100; Vol. 25, "Political Parties and Interest Groups," p. 980; Vol. 26, "Rousseau," pp. 939–940; Vol. 27, "Socio-Economic Doctrines and Reform Movements," pp. 423–25; Vol. 29, "Voltaire," pp. 524, 527 ("growth of material prosperity").

and did so because they aspired to liberty and equality for themselves.[2] But it was not the common people who created the ideology of democracy or who led the democratic reform movements and revolutions. Leadership was mostly in the hands of the bourgeoisie☒a term that we use here to include not only well-to-do businessmen, but all those sectors of the population who worked with their heads rather than their hands and in large part shared the values and aspirations of the propertied classes; for example, lawyers, physicians, journalists, professors and other intellectuals, even those among them who were relatively impoverished. It was the bourgeoisie who created democratic ideology and determined the form of the democratic governments, and they did so in the interests of their own class.[3] Certainly many of the reformers and revolutionaries were sincere idealists who aimed to benefit the whole society, not only the bourgeoisie, but their concept of what constituted "benefit" was shaped by their bourgeois worldview.

The creed of the Argentine politician Domingo Faustino Sarmiento can be taken to exemplify the ideology of democracy as it emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries from the conflicting currents of the Enlightenment. Sarmiento identified "civilization," urban life, bourgeois values (even bourgeois fashions of dress), social order, the rule of law, "liberty," and economic and technological progress as aspects of a single, unified phenomenon,[4] which we nowadays would call "modernization." It's clear that economic and technological progress (and therefore power[5])played a central and indispensable role in Sarmiento's vision. His "liberty" comprised the basic elements of what we call "democracy," for "liberty" was to include a representative assembly,[6] balance of powers,[7] freedom of religion,[8] freedom of the press9 and freedom of thought generally,[9] equality before the law,[10] and codified individual rights or "guarantees."[11] Among these guarantees he included security of property,[12] which, with material progress, was and

[2] E.g., Priore & Venâncio, Chapt. XIV, pp. 185–86; Kee, pp. 41–73.

[3] A reading of the history of any of the great democratic revolutions, the English (1642–1649 & 1688), the American, the French, or the European of 1848, will show that few of their leaders were of working-class origin, and most of those who were aristocrats were influenced by bourgeois values. Also see, e.g.: NEB (2003), Vol. 25, "Political Parties and Interest Groups," p. 980 ("liberal ideology reflected the interests of the bourgeoisie..."); Vol. 20, "Germany," pp. 105–06. Dorpalen, p. 193 (Marxist view). Elias, pp. 274–76. Haraszti, pp. 32–33, 109. Humphreys & Lynch, pp. 19, 24.

[4] Sarmiento, pp. 44, 58–68, 71, 75, 105, 108, 110, 175–180, 190, 194, 206, 210, 218–222, 248, 252, 275–76, 281–82, 298, 337, 342–48, 352–53, 363–372. Bourgeois fashions: e.g., pp. 194, 338–39.

[5] Ibid., pp. 58, 59.

[6] Ibid., p. 366. The expression that Sarmiento actually uses is "formas representativas," but it's clear that some type of representative assembly is meant; see, e.g., pp. 324–25 ("Sala de Representantes").

[7] Ibid., p. 175.

[8] Ibid., pp. 177–78, 199, 363.

[9] Ibid., pp. 44, 194, 252, 345, 366.

[10] Ibid., pp. 120, 222, 345.

[11] Ibid., pp. 179, 298, 337, 345, 366, 367. "Seguridad individual": pp. 342, 353.

[12] Ibid., pp. 175, 366, 367.

is one of the two dominant values of the propertied classes.[13] Sarmiento's "liberty" was not the freedom just to do whatever one pleased; rather, it was the ordered and limited liberty to which the bourgeoisie aspired, for he distinguished "liberty" from "license"[14] and disdained the lawless freedom that characterized the "barbarism" of the Argentine gaucho of his day.[15]

It is evident that Sarmiento's "liberty" was not an end in itself, but a means to the creation of a certain kind of society, a modernizing society committed to "progress"☒economic and technological progress in particular. This was characteristic of the late, democratic phase of the Enlightenment and of the following decades: Liberty was primarily a tool for achieving progress.[16] Bolívar made this explicit when he wrote, "No liberty is legitimate, except when aimed at the honour of mankind and the improvement of his lot."[17]

This same conception of democracy as a means to the achievement of economic and technological progress has persisted in democratizing movements throughout the world right down to the present. During the 19th century, according to Henry Adams, the system of government by the bourgeoisie "had proved so successful that even Germany wanted to try it, and Italy yearned for it. England's middle-class government was the ideal of human progress."[18] In Germany:

> The agents of [the] introduction of technology were the middle class[,] whose minds were filled with the liberalism that had erupted in the French Revolution... .
>
> ... A prerequisite of industrial activity for the benefit of the State was that the industrialist should have a larger share than hitherto in the destinies of the State. So industrial development and constitutional aspirations were

[13] Compare Constitution of the United States, Amendment V: "No person shall... be deprived of... property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." The Fifth Amendment also contains other "guarantees" for individuals. Amendment XIV, Section 1, extends these guarantees and, in addition, prescribes equality before the law. Amendment I guarantees freedom of religion and of the press; hence, by implication, freedom of thought. The U.S. Constitution and Sarmiento's creed are two manifestations of the same ideological current.

[14] Sarmiento, p. 221. See also pp. 222 (civil order), 368 (rejecting "pretensiones exageradas de libertad").

[15] Freedom of gaucho: ibid., pp. 95, 104. Lawlessness of gaucho: passim; e.g., pp. 62, 68, 95, 98–100, 104, 110. Barbarism of gaucho: passim; e.g., pp. 64, 68, 70, 104, 110–111.

[16] The reader who has consulted the sources cited in Note 1 will probably have concluded already that liberty was regarded primarily as a tool for achieving progress. See in particular: NEB (2003), Vol. 22, "Latin America," p. 815 ("Many... identified political institutions as sources of... economic progress..."); Vol. 27, "Socio-Economic Doctrines and Reform Movements," pp. 423–25. Bury, p. 182. Haraszti, pp. 307–08 note 49. Randall, pp. 203–05, 417, 431–32, 592. Humphreys & Lynch, the entire book, especially pp. 91, 276, 300. Whitaker, the entire book, especially pp. 20, 55, 56, 59, 64–67, 109–115, 119–143. See also Note 110 to Letters to Skrbina.

[17] Simón Bolívar, Letter to William White, quoted by Trend, p. 114.

[18] Adams, p. 33.

> closely linked. And the same was true of the mass of the people. Here also the co-operation of the people could be demanded only if they also were given a voice, self-respect and self-government.[19]

The other side of the coin is shown by the fact that when Bismarck demonstrated that industrialization and progress could be achieved with only very limited elements of democracy under an essentially monarchical system, the bourgeoisie by and large was satisfied and willing to put aside its liberal aspirations.[20] In Russia the businessmen never aspired to democracy in the first place, because under the tsarist autocracy they had everything they needed for their purposes; though on the other hand many Russian lawyers, physicians, professors, etc. were deeply dissatisfied.[21]

In the years following the Meiji restoration of 1868 in Japan:

> It was believed that the West depended on constitutionalism for national unity, on industrialization for material strength... .
>
> ... True national unity required the propagation of new loyalties among the general populace and the transformation of powerless and inarticulate peasants into citizens of a centralized state... .
>
> ... Village leaders... wanted a more participatory system that could reflect their emerging bourgeois interests. ... Itagaki expanded his movement for 'freedom and popular rights'... . In 1881 he organized the Liberal Party... whose members were largely wealthy farmers... .
>
> ... Okuma organized the Progressive Party... in 1882 to further his British-based constitutional ideals, which attracted considerable support among urban business and journalistic communities. ...
>
> In [Bismarck's] Germany [I] found an appropriate balance of imperial power and constitutional forms that seemed to offer modernity without sacrificing effective control. ...[22]

It appears, therefore, that the Japanese democratization movement did not seek freedom for its own sake, but for the sake of modernity, national unity, and the furtherance of bourgeois interests.

---

[19] Klemm, p. 269.

[20] NEB (2003), Vol. 20, "Germany," pp. 105–112. Also, during the 1920s and 1930s, important capitalists supported Hitler financially because they thought that doing so would be advantageous for business purposes. Gilbert, European Powers, pp. 185–86.

[21] Ibid., Vol. 26, "Russia," p. 989.

[22] Ibid., Vol. 22, "Japan," pp. 298–99. "Despite its antidemocratic features the constitution [of 1889] provided a much greater arena for dissent and debate than had previously existed. The [popularly elected] lower house could initiate legislation." Ibid., p. 299.

Similar values appeared among political reformers and revolutionaries in China. During the earlier 20th century, reform-minded Chinese political thinkers didn't necessarily favor full democracy as we understand the term. To the extent that they did advocate steps in the direction of democracy, they did so for the sake of modernization and national power.[23] Later in the 20th century, in a secret journal that he kept, former Communist Party chief Zhao Ziyang concluded that "China must become a parliamentary democracy... . Zhao's ultimate aim was a strong economy, but he had become convinced that this goal was inextricably linked to the development of democracy."[24] Again the other side of the coin: When China showed that, apparently, it could achieve vigorous economic growth without democracy, most Chinese were satisfied with that. As long as they had progress they didn't need "liberty."[25]

In the mid-twentieth century: "The new nations [that emerged from the dissolution of the British and French colonial empires] almost invariably adopted constitutions and established parliamentary governments, believing that these institutions would lead to the same freedom and prosperity that had been achieved in Europe."[26] Needless to say, the "freedom... achieved in Europe" was the ordered and limited freedom of the bourgeoisie, and it's safe to assume that this freedom would not have been sought if it hadn't been associated with prosperity.

The assumption that democracy is a prerequisite for progress and prosperity has had a checkered history. The assumption has been strong whenever the democracies have been demonstrating superior economic success, but has been abandoned by many people when the democratic nations have fallen into severe economic difficulties (as during the Great Depression of the 1930s[27]), or when authoritarian systems have seemed to offer a prospect of more vigorous development☒as we've seen above and in Part III.D of the letter of October 12, 2004 to Dr. Skrbina. Since the collapse of the authoritarian socialist bloc of Eastern Europe the assumption that democracy represents the road to prosperity, though by no means universal, seems to have been generally dominant.[28] It's true that some people are now (2015–17) reviving doubts about that assumption, but instead of questioning the value of prosperity they question the value of democracy.[29]

So as not to oversimplify any more than necessary, let's note the following points:

---

[23] Ebrey, pp. 262–66. See also ISAIF, ¶ 97.

[24] Ignatius, p. 29.

[25] Bremmer, p. 11A. The Economist, Feb. 19, 2011, p. 46. Osnos, p. 29, col. 1; p. 30, col. 2.

[26] NEB (2003), Vol. 27, "Socio-Economic Doctrines and Reform Movements," p. 426. Of course, most of these parliamentary governments either did not long survive, or else turned into mere parodies of democratic government.

[27] See Kaczynski, Anti-Tech Revolution, Chapt. One, Part V, second paragraph.

[28] See letter of Oct. 12, 2004 to Dr. Skrbina, Part III.D. In an article published in 2000, Condoleezza Rice (later U.S. Secretary of State) exhibited her conviction that it was not possible in the long run to "decouple democracy and economic progress." Freeland, p. 83.

[29] Ibid., p. 86. Thrall, p. 7A. Rauch, pp. 62–63. Democracy is also being questioned on other than economic grounds. Thrall, loc. cit. Rauch, loc. cit. Beinart, pp. 15–16. Susan Page, pp. 1A–2A.

1. When they have lived for a time under a dictatorship that has made extensive use of brutal methods to suppress resistance☒for example, causing opponents of the regime to "disappear"☒people may indeed turn to democracy because it represents a more humane alternative. But it would be hard to prove that democracy is more humane than authoritarian regimes in general. The benign dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas in Brazil (1930–1945) was probably more humane than a typical democracy of that period; the common people greatly appreciated what Vargas did for them.31 In Slovakia, the end of communist rule and its replacement with democracy led to an increase in the crime rate and the rate of drug abuse.[30] Many inhabitants of eastern Germany have felt that life was better there under the communist government.[31]

2. In some cases people may have adopted or attempted to adopt democratic government because they have desired political freedom for its own sake. For example, political freedom per se seems to have been the main goal of many of the leading reformers who tried to liberalize the government of Czechoslovakia in 1968. But even in the Czech case the aspiration for political liberalization was inextricably entangled with a desire for economic betterment.[32]

   It's worth noting, on the other hand, that Costa Ricans are proud of their democracy☒the only democracy in Latin America that has demonstrated long-term stability☒and they would probably retain their democratic government even if they believed that doing so would cost them something in terms of prosperity.[33]

3. It should also be recognized that political liberalization sometimes has had nothing to do with any sort of idealistic intention to benefit a whole society, whether through economic progress or otherwise, but has been motivated only by self-interest in the narrowest sense. This was the case in Brazil in 1889 when the fazendeiros (landowners) and the provincial oligarchies, assisted by the military, replaced the monarchy with a republic. These groups acted only in order to maintain their own power, which was threatened by the policies of the monarchy.[34]

   From Cecil B. Currey's account, it seems that Benjamin Franklin had no other motive for helping to foment the American Revolution than resentment of the British government's obstruction of his schemes for enriching himself through land speculation. In fact, the schemes in which he was involved were so sordid

[30] World Book Encyclopedia (2011), Vol. 17, "Slovakia," p. 508c.

[31] Kirchner, p. 11.

[32] Navrátil et al., pp. 2, 3, 83, 84, 92–94. Fawn, pp. 18–20. NEB (2003), Vol. 27, "Socio-Economic Doctrines and Reform Movements," p. 407.

[33] Arias Sánchez (the entire work). NEB (2003), Vol. 1, "Arias Sánchez, Oscar," p. 550; Vol. 15, "Central America," pp. 671–75.

[34] Priore & Venâncio, Chapt. XXII, pp. 264–272. But compare NEB (2003), Vol. 15, "Brazil," p. 204.

that one is tempted to call him an out-and-out scoundrel. This may shock many people, but Currey's work appears to be based on solid documentary evidence.[35] It should be noted that Washington too was heavily involved in land speculation,[36] and so was Jefferson,[37] the most idealistic of the principal revolutionary leaders.

* * *

From our argument that, in most cases, people aspire to democracy (i.e., "liberty") only when it seems conducive to economic and technological progress, some readers might draw the inference that people are not interested in freedom. But such an inference would not be correct. The correct inference is that, for most people, democracy per se does not represent freedom.

By and large, people are interested only in their own freedom. Undoubtedly a great many people are generous enough to want freedom for everyone, but the kind of freedom they want for everyone typically is the kind of freedom that is most important to themselves. Those for whom freedom is most closely linked with democracy are the intellectuals: The tools of the intellectual's trade are words and ideas, therefore intellectuals commonly are strong proponents of freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the press.[38] But intellectuals generally have scant sympathy for other freedoms, e.g., economic freedom or the freedom to own weapons, when these freedoms seem to threaten the physically and economically secure environment in which intellectuals can best practice their trade. The businessman's trade is the production and accumulation of wealth, so businessmen emphasize economic freedom, property rights, and an environment conducive to the creation of wealth. But when they find that they can have these without democracy they often are willing, as we noted above, to forgo the political freedoms.

For the common people☒the working class☒democracy in the modern sense does not represent freedom at all. With or without democracy they remain subject to the domination of the decision-making classes. If they "believe in" democracy they do so only because they've been taught to believe in it, and they often have only a very imperfect understanding of what democracy really is.

---

[35] Currey, the entire work, but especially pp. 209–219, 283–86, 304, 311, 324.

[36] Currey, pp. 129, 258. Randall, pp. 99, 186, 228–29.

[37] Randall, pp. 111, 228. See also p. 289.

[38] This requires an important qualification. Intellectuals are strong proponents of the principle of freedom of expression as long as they feel that the principle is necessary for the protection of their own right to express themselves. But when a faction among the intellectuals finds itself strong enough to impose its will, it may suppress the expression of opinions that conflict with its own ideology. This is what happened during the Middle Ages when the intellectuals of that era imposed religious orthodoxy and persecuted heretics. It's what has been happening in recent decades with the imposition of political correctness in many of our universities and elsewhere in our society. Some intellectuals are just as greedy for power as politicians and capitalists are. Compare Beinart, p. 15, col. 3; p. 16, col. 1.

In today's society the common people, generally speaking, seem to have lost any conception of freedom beyond the kind that comes with days off from work. But where the common people have gone feral☒where they have found that they can provide for their own physical needs independently of any large-scale, organized society☒the kind of freedom that they value has nothing to do with the ordered liberty of the bourgeoisie. Rather, it is the "inorganic democracy" described in Appendix Four, above. Not being intellectuals, feral humans have little interest in ideological freedom; they tend instead to remain attached to traditional ideologies,[39] though they may modify these to suit their own needs. In other respects the freedom that feral humans prefer is anarchy☒not the gentle and more-or-less orderly anarchy of anarchist philosophers, but simple lawlessness. Sarmiento pointed out that real primitives or barbarians had a higher degree of social order than the feral and lawless gauchos of his country.[40] Colombia and Venezuela had an equivalent to the gauchos in their llaneros, "wild, half-naked cowboys of the hot plains," who showed the same inclination to lawlessness as the gauchos did,[41] an inclination likewise in evidence on much of the North American frontier.[42]

As for progress and prosperity as these are understood in modern society, most feral humans care nothing for them.45 Horace Kephart described the attitude of the Appalachian mountaineer as he existed at the beginning of the 20th century:

> [T]hese silly, stuck-up strangers who brag and brag about 'modern improvements'☒what are they, under their fine manners and fine clothes? Hirelings all. Shrewdly he observes them in their relations to each other☒
>
> 'Each man is some man's servant; every soul
>
> Is by some other's presence quite discrowned.'
>
> Proudly he contrasts his ragged self: he who never has acknowledged a superior... . And he turns upon his heel."[43]

Because they care nothing for "prosperity" in the modern sense, feral humans are "shiftless"☒they work only as much as is necessary to satisfy their basic physical needs

---

[39] See Sarmiento, pp. 70–71; Tella, Germani, Graciarena et al., pp. 212–13; Kephart, p. 455. Dick, p. 184 ("The people were fixed in their ideas of worship, anxious that the program be carried out in the old way..."); but see pp. 181–82 (widespread lack of interest in religion) and p. 335 ("Old customs and forms rested lightly on the pioneer").

[40] Sarmiento, pp. 67–69.

[41] Trend, pp. 71–72, 83–84.

[42] "[T]he backwoods [North American] people of the eighteenth century did not greet the coming of law and order with joy." Alden, p. 259. Kephart, passim, especially Chapts. VI, VIII, XVIII, and pp. 152, 156, 213, 230–31, 249, 266–67, 375, 387. C. Evans, Chapt. 4. Dick, e.g., pp. 30–31, 140–41, 155–56, 225–235, 257, 321–23, 336, 338.

[43] Kephart, p. 455.

and then they take it easy.[44] Work as a moral imperative, independent of any real need for the results of the work, is a bourgeois value, alien to feral humans.

It should now be clear that the ordered liberty of bourgeois democracy by no means represents the only possible conception of freedom. It only remains to point out that if humans were allowed to remain in a feral state long enough, they would probably develop☒eventually☒a degree of social order similar to that of real primitives, and this presumably would moderate their brutality.

* * *

In view of recent (as of December 2016) political developments, this writer would like to make clear that nothing he has written should be interpreted as an expression of contempt for democracy. The unqualified identification of "democracy" with "freedom" is naïve to say the least, but of all forms of government of major nations existing in the world today, it is liberal democracy that allows the freest circulation of ideas and therefore provides the most favorable environment for the development of an anti-tech movement.

NOTES

[44] N. American frontier: Dick, pp. 24, 25, 330–31. Appalachian mountaineers: Kephart, pp. 36–39, 43, 289, 304, 445–47. Kephart probably misses the mark when he attributes the mountaineers' traits to their Celtic heritage or to the peculiarities of their mountain environment. The traits that interest us here were mostly shared by other feral peoples such as the gauchos or the frontiersmen of the N. American flatlands, whose ethnic origins and physical environment were very different from those of the mountaineers. As for the gauchos, Sarmiento, pp. 64, 75, 95, repeatedly refers to their shiftlessness (incuria), which on p. 64 he contemptuously contrasts with the industrious habits of the Scottish and German immigrants who had settled to the south of Buenos Aires. Here it is well to distinguish feral humans from boosters. The latter move into frontier districts☒usually after ferals have paved the way☒with an eye to profiting financially from undeveloped resources and raising their status in bourgeois society. The boosters of course are quite pleased with the arrival of law and order and other appurtenances of civilization.

Ted Kaczynski
Nations That Made a Conscious Decision to Adopt Democratic Government Usually Did So Because They Believed That Democracy Would Help Them to Achieve Economic and Technological Success.
2022

Technological Slavery: Volume 1, 4th Edition