

A History of Democracy in Europe, 9780880339711, Social Science Monographs, 1995, Antoine de Baecque, 1995

Democracy in Europe has been a recent phenomenon. Only in the wake of World War II were democratic frameworks secured, and, even then, it was decades before democracy truly blanketed the continent. Neither given nor granted, democracy requires conflict, often violent confrontations, and challenges to the established political order. Moreover, this is a history certainly not completed. If my book concentrates in its first three parts on the building of one kind of movement for the conduct of that struggle, the class-centered politics of the socialist tradition, then it seeks to hold that tradition's omissions and foreshortenings clearly in view. This history traces the development of democracy in Europe from its origins in ancient Greece up to the present day. Considers all the major watersheds in the development of democracy in modern Europe. Describes the rediscovery of Ancient Greek political ideals by intellectuals at the end of the eighteenth century. This book is the first major account of political thought in twentieth-century Europe, both West and East, to appear since the end of the Cold War. Skillfully blending intellectual, political, and cultural history, Jan-Werner Müller elucidates the ideas that shaped the period of ideological extremes before 1945 and the liberalization of West European politics after the Second World War. A democracy is a political system, or a system of decision-making within an institution or organization or a country, in which all members have an equal share of power. Modern democracies are characterized by two capabilities that differentiate them fundamentally from earlier forms of government: the capacity to intervene in their own societies and the recognition of their sovereignty by an international legalistic framework of similarly sovereign states. Democratic government is commonly juxtaposed