

# ***The Democratic Dismantling of Democracy***

**An investigation into the possibility and the  
requirements of a democratic dismantling of  
democracy through the analysis of the pillars  
of ideal democracy**

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# **Abstract**

The aim of this essay is to investigate whether it is possible to democratically dismantle democracy and what would the requirements of such a dismantling be. The investigation is carried out through the analysis of the very fundamental features or the pillars of democracy without which democracy cannot exist.

The essay consists of two main parts. In the first part the pillars of democracy are identified and explained by analyzing texts written by scholars who deal with democracy. The pillars that are acquired are: self-determination, which means that people govern and rule, sovereignty which is needed for self-determination to exist, intrinsic equality which is a requirement of sovereignty, as well as political equality and majority rule, which are requirements of self-determination in collective matters.

In the second part of the essay the pillars of democracy are then related to the question of the democratic dismantling of democracy. The question of whether it is possible to dismantle democracy and its pillars without violating them in the process is explored, as well as what is required for this process to be complete and democratic. The conclusion that is reached makes it clear that although in theory democracy can be completely dismantled democratically, it is very unlikely to happen as in order for the dismantling to be democratic, the decision must be unanimous.

The essay looks at the problem of dismantling democracy through ideal democracy rather than actual democracy and although this must be kept in mind when considering the conclusion, it is equally important to understand that the two are strongly interlinked. Pushing democracy to its theoretical limits allows the examination of its borderlines and thus provides a better understanding of democracy, while the clear identification of the pillars of democracy enables their use in further research.

# Tiivistelmä

Tämän työn tarkoitus on tutkia demokratian demokraattisen purkamisen mahdollisuutta sekä mitkä tämänlaisen purkamisen vaatimukset ovat. Tutkimus tapahtuu analysoimalla demokratian perimmäisiä ominaisuuksia, demokratian peruspilareita, ilman joita demokratian olemassaolo olisi mahdotonta.

Työ muodostuu kahdesta eri osasta. Ensimmäisessä osassa demokratian peruspilarit identifioidaan ja määritellään analysoimalla demokratiaa tutkineiden tutkijoiden tekstejä. Pilarit jotka todetaan välttämättömiksi demokratialle ovat: itsemääräämisoikeus, joka tarkoittaa että ihmiset hallitsevat itse itseään, suvereniteetti, joka on itsemääräämisoikeuden edellytys, luontainen tasa-arvo, joka on puolestaan suvereniteetin edellytys, sekä poliittinen tasa-arvo ja enemmistövalta, jotka ovat edellytyksiä itsemääräämisoikeuden toteutumiselle kollektiivisissa päätöksissä.

Tutkielman toisessa osassa demokratian peruspilareita tarkastellaan demokratian demokraattisen purkamisen näkökulmasta. Siinä pyritään löytämään vastaus kysymykseen siitä onko mahdollista purkaa demokratia ja sen peruspilarit vahingoittamatta niitä samalla, samoin kuin kysymykseen siitä mitä vaaditaan, että kyseinen prosessi olisi perinpohjainen ja demokraattinen. Johtopäätös johon päästään tekee selväksi sen, että vaikka teoriassa on mahdollista purkaa demokratia samalla perinpohjaisesti ja demokraattisesti, on erittäin epätodennäköistä että näin käy, sillä kyseisessä tapauksessa päätöksen pitäisi olla yksimielinen.

Tämä tutkimus käsittelee demokratian demokraattisen purkamisen ongelmaa lähinnä ihanteellisen demokratian eikä niinkään käytännöllisen demokratian näkökulmasta. Vaikka tämä onkin tärkeä pitää mielessä, on aivan yhtä tärkeää ymmärtää, että kyseiset kaksi demokratian muotoa ovat vahvasti liitoksissaan toisiinsa. Demokratian työntäminen sen äärimmäisille teoreettisille rajoilleen mahdollistaa kyseisten rajojen tutkimisen ja näin ollen auttaa ymmärtämään demokratiaa paremmin. Samalla demokratian ja sen rajojen ymmärtämisen kannalta olennainen demokratian peruspilareiden määrittely mahdollistaa kyseisten pilareiden käytön tulevassa tutkimustyössä.

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Appendix A. The Pillars of Democracy

# Introduction

The question that this investigation deals with is whether it is possible to democratically dismantle democracy. This problem is not considered through the practical aspects of democracy, but rather through its theoretical side. Therefore the actual problem that is investigated in the second part of this essay is whether the dismantling of democracy can be concurrent with the fundamental features, or in other words the pillars of democracy without which democracy cannot exist. Not only does this give a better understanding of democracy itself, but by pushing democracy to its theoretical limits it is also easier to understand the borderlines of democracy.

Because the pillars of democracy are so important in finding the answer to the problem of democratic dismantling of democracy, it is necessary to determine these pillars. Indeed, a lot of consideration will be given to them and their justification, because only after they are determined can the actual problem of this essay be answered. Only after the pillars are known can one say whether it is possible to dismantle democracy without violating them and therefore without violating democracy itself.

Democracy as a political thought has evolved greatly over the course of history. Even though most people nowadays understand democracy in the form we are used to – that is, modern western representative democracy<sup>1</sup> – it should not be forgotten that the roots of democracy can be traced all the way back to the ancient Greek city-states and notably Athens. This ancient form of democracy differed from modern democracy in various ways: the institutions, traditions and processes were very different with perhaps the most notable difference being that the states were ruled directly by their citizens in the assembly and not by representatives as is the case in our time. The democratic tradition was also visible in ancient Rome for some time and continued to live on in the medieval prosperous city-states of Northern Italy, in the cantons of Switzerland as well as in the Viking “Althing,” and it was only after the American Revolution that democracy in the form we know emerged.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Dahl uses the term “polyarchy” to describe such democracy throughout his texts; the term is derived from the Greek words meaning “many” and “to rule”, and thus means literally “the rule by the many” as defined in Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p.90.

<sup>2</sup> Dahl, *On Democracy*, pp. 7-25.

Although there are various forms and types of democracy, all of them are united by certain fundamental features, the pillars of democracy, which are inseparable from democracy and inherent in it. Only by looking at different democracies and seeing what the similarities between their ideals and requirements are, can these pillars be determined. It will be exactly this that will be carried out in the first part of this investigation, before the question of the dismantling of democracy can be answered, by looking at the texts of scholars who deal with democracy and its fundamental features.

As the variety of democratic thought and examples of democracies are too numerous to be examined completely, the judgments will be drawn mainly on the two largest, most influential and therefore perhaps the most important forms of democracy: ancient Greek and modern “polyarchical” democracy. Besides their importance, there is also the factor of them being examples of direct and representative democracy, which due to the great difference between them covers the variety of different possible democratic characteristics rather well.

Actual democracy has many flaws in it and can probably never exist in the sense of ideal democracy. However, these two are inextricably linked together and in the words of Giovanni Sartori, “What democracy is, cannot be separated from what democracy *should be*. A democracy exists only insofar as its ideals and values bring it into being.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, in order to understand how actual democracy works, it is essential to understand what ideal democracy is. This will especially be the case in the future when new questions on democracy, its borderlines and possibly even its dismantling arise. In order to find out whether the democratic dismantling of democracy is possible, it is absolutely essential to understand the fundamental features of democracy – the pillars of democracy, which define the word “democratic” and without which democracy wouldn’t exist.

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<sup>3</sup> Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*, 2 vols (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1987) I, 7.

# Part 1. The Pillars of Democracy

The word democracy comes from the Greek words “*demos*”, the people, and “*kratos*”, to rule, and therefore means literally “the rule by the people”.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, throughout the history of democracy its aim has been that “the people”, whoever they are, rule instead of one or a few persons.<sup>5</sup> Already the famous Athenian Pericles said when describing Athenian democracy that, “Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people.”<sup>6</sup> And as Sanford Lakoff puts it, “In sharp contrast to the autocratic alternatives, democracy aims to empower all citizens in equal measure. However short of this aim actual democracies may fall, it is this goal... that characterizes them most centrally...”<sup>7</sup> Although this aim seems rather straightforward, problems arise when trying to define what are the fundamental features, the pillars of democracy, that are required for the rule of the people and therefore for democracy to exist.

From the fact that people themselves rule in a democracy, it follows that those who are the rulers are also the ruled. In other words the people govern and rule themselves. This is called self-determination and is a pillar of democracy which precedes other pillars.<sup>8</sup> There are different philosophic assumptions such as an innate moral sense, a rational self-interest or the pragmatic need to acknowledge the subjectivity of values, which explain reasons for people to adhere to it.<sup>9</sup> Whatever the reason to believe in it, its importance to democracy cannot be underestimated as from it stems a very fundamental value: as Robert Dahl puts it, “no persons are so definitely better qualified than others to govern that they should be entrusted with complete and final authority over the government of the state.”<sup>10</sup> This means that everyone is deemed as the best judge of themselves and therefore the principle of self-determination not only gives the opportunity for people to govern and rule themselves, but also makes them responsible for themselves.

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<sup>4</sup> Dahl, *On Democracy*, p.11.

<sup>5</sup> The pillars of democracy are essential to those who are considered as “the people”, or in other words the citizens and thus members of “the demos” of a state, and the existence of democracy can be determined by examining whether these pillars exist for them. The words “person”, “people” and “citizens” are used somewhat interchangeably within the text and all refer generally to those “within the demos”.

<sup>6</sup> Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), p.145.

<sup>7</sup> Sanford Lakoff, *Democracy; History, Theory, Practice* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), p.155.

<sup>8</sup> Self-determination is also referred to by different scholars as self-governance, self-government or autonomy. All of them mean basically the same thing – the right or ability of a person to control his own fate.

<sup>9</sup> Lakoff, p.30.

<sup>10</sup> Dahl, *On Democracy*, p.75.

Self-determination, and its key idea that a person is the best judge over himself, requires that a person has always full authority over himself in all matters related to him. The person has to have full authority over his mind and body and authority to judge how he acts with them,<sup>11</sup> and thus it is essential that no-one controls him or decides for him against his will. Having this kind of authority over oneself is called sovereignty and has always been vital for self-determination and therefore for democracy as well.<sup>12</sup>

Freedom and liberty are in many ways part of sovereignty, and already Pericles made this clear by indicating that the freedom that in democracy exists in the government, extends also to the private lives of people.<sup>13</sup> If every person has full authority over himself, a person is naturally free to do and think what he wants, however, only as long as he doesn't pursue any goal which infringes other people's sovereignty, unless such action is justified by the need to protect the sovereignty of people.<sup>14</sup> It is impossible to restrict the sovereignty of some and still preserve sovereignty as an idea, because sovereignty requires that all people have authority over themselves.

The freedom of a person especially in those matters private to him has indeed been essential throughout the history of democracy. In modern times freedom is obviously a fundamental human right, but also in for example Ancient Greece freedom of expression<sup>15</sup> was indispensable for democracy, the "*sine qua non* of democracy".<sup>16</sup> Sovereignty requires freedom and liberty for all citizens, but freedom and liberty are restricted so that they do not threaten sovereignty or self-determination.

In modern western democracies some fundamental and universal human rights are inalienably included in democracy. However, it is important to note that in ancient democracies this was not the case. The only "rights" that were present were sovereignty and self-determination and even they only due to the fact that they were necessary for democracy to function and thus inherent in democracy. "The modern liberal notion that human beings are 'individuals' with 'rights'," as David Held clarifies, "that notably cannot be traced to Athens."<sup>17</sup> Indeed, in M.I. Finley's words "There

<sup>11</sup> John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982), p.69.

<sup>12</sup> Already Aristotle noted that "In democratic states the people is sovereign," as quoted in Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, trans. by Ernest Barker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p.110.

<sup>13</sup> Thucydides, p.145.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph Raz, *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p.425.

<sup>15</sup> *Isegoria* to the Greeks.

<sup>16</sup> Lakoff, p.16.

<sup>17</sup> David Held, *Models of Democracy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p.15.

were no theoretical limits to the power of the state, no sphere of human behavior, in which the state could not legitimately intervene provided the decision was properly taken for any reason that was held to be valid by the Assembly.”<sup>18</sup> However, in order for the Assembly and citizens to be able to intervene in matters self-determination and also sovereignty were needed; if they had been taken away from citizens, it would have meant the end of the functioning of the Assembly and of democracy itself.

One of the main reasons for such differences between the understanding of rights in modern and ancient democracies is the difference between the structures of the democracies. Ancient democracies were direct democracies and therefore citizens had the opportunity to directly decide on matters, while modern democracies are representative democracies and citizens only deploy others to decide for them. Different rights are so important in modern democracies because they “provide a way of ensuring for everyone some free space that cannot be easily violated by ordinary political decisions.”<sup>19</sup> In ancient times, citizens themselves decided on basically all political matters and thus there was far less danger that they would be violated by a decision and no rights to protect citizens were deemed necessary.<sup>20</sup> The idea that some rights other than self-determination and sovereignty are inalienable to democracy is wrong, as it is clear that in direct democracies such rights have hardly ever existed.

In both sovereignty and self-determination the notion of equality plays an important role. In the former an equality ensuring that all citizens have equal sovereignty is needed, while in collective cases of self-determination an equality ensuring that everyone has equal self-determination is necessary.

By acknowledging sovereignty in the sense that every person is sovereign and that every person has full authority over himself, it necessarily follows that sovereignty has to exist for everyone who is within the demos. And all those that are sovereign have to be equal in their sovereignty. This equality is called intrinsic equality<sup>21</sup> and is required for sovereignty to exist.

<sup>18</sup> Moses. I. Finley, *Democracy, Ancient and Modern* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1973), p.78 ; Assembly was the place where citizens gathered to make decisions.

<sup>19</sup> Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p.220.

<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, violations did occur occasionally.

<sup>21</sup> Intrinsic is defined as “belonging to the essential nature or constitution of a thing” according to *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary* <<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/intrinsic>> [accessed 8 October 2007].

Although intrinsic equality means that a set of people are fundamentally equal, the foundations on which it is based on differ. In modern western democracies the notion of intrinsic equality is based on the assumption that all human beings are intrinsically equal simply because they are human and because the "worth" of one person is equal to that of another. In Ancient Greek democracy, on the other hand people "did not acknowledge the existence of universal claims to freedom, equality, or rights... Freedom was an attribute of membership – not membership in the human species, but membership (that is, citizenship) in a particular city,"<sup>22</sup> and therefore only those within the demos were intrinsically equal (i.e. slaves, women and foreigners were not). It was citizenship that entailed intrinsic equality. The differences between views on intrinsic equality are largely caused by the differences between the worldviews of societies as well as the views on the relations between humans.

For the notion of self-determination in the sense that every person has to be able to govern himself to exist, there has to be an equality ensuring equal self-determination. In matters which are strictly private, simply the notion of sovereignty (and intrinsic equality that is inherent in it) is enough, as because everyone has full authority over only himself, everyone is equal in self-determining in private matters. However, in cases of collective decisions sovereignty is not enough, because in addition to having full authority over oneself and thus being able to make own decisions, it is necessary that the views of those allowed to be self-determining in collective decisions (i.e. members of the demos) are accorded equal weight in public deliberation.<sup>23</sup> This equality between views is called political equality and a good example of this is that in collective decisions everyone has an equal amount of votes.

Political equality does not, unlike intrinsic equality, deal with the equality between people, but rather with their opportunities to rule. Also, unlike intrinsic equality only those allowed to rule (that is those within the demos) can have political equality.

Who constitute the demos is a subjective question and beyond the scope of this investigation. Although sovereignty and intrinsic equality can be reserved only for those within the demos as in Ancient Greece, in modern western democracies this is not the case as all humans are entitled to

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<sup>22</sup> Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, p.22.

<sup>23</sup> Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, *On Democracy: Towards a Transformation of American Society* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), p.149.

them. Self-determination in collective decisions and political equality, however, are even nowadays available only to those within the demos and without exploring the question with too much depth it could be said that those who have them constitute the demos.

In collective matters, the self-determination of citizens in a democracy is expressed through majority rule. It has been deemed vital from the very beginning of democratic thought and has remained the standard way of making collective decisions throughout the history of democracy. The reason why majority rule is so important is because it allows the biggest amount of citizens to be self-determining, or in other words maximises self-determination in collective decisions.<sup>24</sup> It is, however, important to note that in order for this to happen, those within the demos must not only be sovereign, but must also have political equality, which, as mentioned earlier, ensures that the view of every citizen counts for as much and that every citizen has thus equal self-determination.

Nearly all scholars agree that majority rule is *necessary* to make collective decisions in a democracy. However, what causes disagreements is whether it is *sufficient*. Those claiming that majority rule is sufficient, point out that if a majority is always sufficient the possibility that more people will be outvoted by less people is precluded.<sup>25</sup> However, those preferring other arrangements, which usually protect the outvoted minority, note that a “majority might have interests of its own which it would use for the detriment and the oppression of the minority.”<sup>26</sup> Whether a majority is sufficient to make collective decisions or whether other arrangements are required depend in part on the conditions under which people expect collective decisions to be made.<sup>27</sup> While in ancient (and direct democracies in general) only a simple majority was most often required, in modern democracies different matters usually require different magnitudes of majorities. For democracy the question of whether a majority is sufficient or not in collective decisions is not even nearly as important as the idea that a majority is always necessary.

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<sup>24</sup> Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, p.139.

<sup>25</sup> Douglas Rae, ‘Decision Rules and Individual Values in Constitutional Choice’, *American Political Science Review*, 63 (1) (1969), 40-56 (p.52).

<sup>26</sup> Arthur Twining Hadley, *Relations between Freedom and Responsibility in the Evolution of Democratic Government* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), p.7.

<sup>27</sup> Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, p.161.

Already from the word itself it is apparent that the key aspect of democracy is “the people” or “the demos”, and how it rules itself. However, as noted, who constitutes the demos has differed very much over the history of democracy. From the restricted ancient definition of people, democracy has come all the way to embrace a rather universal definition, in which basically all those who have the same nationality are considered to be part of the demos. And even those outside the demos and lacking the ability to rule are considered essentially equal due to their status as humans. Although some scholars claim that full inclusion such as existent in modern western democracies is very important for democracy itself, it is beyond the scope of this research to investigate it.<sup>28</sup> It is apparent that full inclusion has not existed in many otherwise functional democracies and therefore it is assumed here that democracy can exist without it.

For the question of the democratic dismantling of democracy it is essential to define the pillars of democracy as they explain what is required for a process to be democratic. In order to make these pillars even more clearly visible the following summary has been created, while a chart showing all the pillars of democracy is presented in Appendix A.

- What rule by the people essentially means in a democracy is self-determination of citizens.
- For self-determination to take place sovereignty is needed.
- A requirement of sovereignty is intrinsic equality ensuring that at least all citizens have equal sovereignty.
- Sovereignty with intrinsic equality is enough to ensure also equal self-determination in private matters as every citizen has full authority over himself to make any decisions he wants.
- In collective matters self-determination is expressed through majority rule, because it maximizes self-determination and majority rule is at least *necessary* to make collective decisions.
- In order for majority rule to be in line with the notions of self-determination and sovereignty, political equality is needed, because it ensures that every citizen has equal weight in collective decisions and therefore equal self-determination.

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<sup>28</sup> A notable advocate of the notion of full inclusion is Robert A. Dahl. See Dahl, *On Democracy*, pp.76-78 as well as Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, pp.119-131.

## Part 2. The Democratic Dismantling of Democracy

The pillars of democracy that were identified in Part 1 are vital for democracy to exist. As mentioned, they are: self-determination, which requires political equality and majority rule in collective decisions, and sovereignty, which requires intrinsic equality. These pillars are not ontologically separate from – or prior to, or superior to – the democratic process; to the extent that democracy exists, all the pillars of democracy must also exist, and to the extent that they are absent, democracy does not exist.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, for any action to be democratic it must naturally be in accord with the pillars of democracy and if an action violates any of those pillars, it cannot be called democratic. Thus, in order for democracy to be put out of existence democratically, all the pillars that were defined in Part 1 must not to be violated in the process.

The dismantling of democracy is obviously a collective issue, and therefore in a democracy it should be decided upon by majority rule (with at least a majority supporting the decision), which is the form of self-determination in collective matters. Also, already by definition a decision which is made by majority rule has to be in line with the notion of political equality, because political equality is a requirement of self-determination in collective issues and therefore also majority rule. Thus, simply by dismantling democracy by majority rule, it is ensured that at least the pillars of collective self-determination and with it majority rule and political equality are not violated.

What the dismantling of democracy by majority rule does not, however, necessarily ensure is the protection against deprivation or violations of sovereignty, which ensures self-determination in private matters, as well as intrinsic equality, which is a requirement of sovereignty. If a majority were to deprive anyone of sovereignty or indeed of any of the pillars of democracy, it would violate democracy itself.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, even after the dismantling of democracy by majority rule there should be protection against violations of the sovereignty of citizens; the only possible way to democratically dismantle democracy by majority rule is if the sovereignty of all citizens is preserved. The problem with this kind of a solution, however, is that the dismantling of democracy

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<sup>29</sup> Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, p.170; presented in the form of a debate between an advocate and a critic of the democratic process.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, p.170.

in such a case could hardly be considered complete. Even after democracy would be dismantled some structures would most likely have to be retained so as to ensure the protection of sovereignty; this would have to happen, because other forms of government such as oligarchy or monarchy have hardly ever been able to ensure the preservation of equal sovereignty for all. However, if the new ruler(s) preserved sovereignty, there is no reason why majority rule would not be enough to dismantle democracy. But because past experience has shown this to be basically impossible (at least for a longer period of time), such option is hardly viable.

In the scenario described above, the citizens effectively denounce their self-determination in collective decisions and such a decision is carried out by majority rule because the decision itself is collective. However, as sovereignty is a completely individual matter it cannot be taken away from citizens without their consent, and therefore a decision made by majority cannot dismantle sovereignty. Already the famous 18<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau notes that in cases of sovereignty, which he describes as an “original social contract” made mutually by people, unanimous agreement is required.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, the only possible situation in which sovereignty can be dismantled democratically is when every citizen decides to give away his or her own sovereignty. Thus, the complete dismantling of democracy where all the pillars of democracy are dismantled has to be unanimous.

Although democracy lays utmost importance on sovereignty and self-determination and therefore people being able to decide on their private matters as well as on collective issues, there are certain restrictions to this. Similarly as sovereignty and thus self-determination in private is restricted so that the sovereignty and freedom of others could not be harmed, there must also be limitations on self-determination in collective matters so that it can neither harm the self-determination or the sovereignty of other people. As Robert Dahl puts it, “The democratic process [and democracy as an ideal] obviously could not exist unless it were self-limiting, that is, unless it limited itself to decisions that did not destroy the conditions necessary to its own existence.”<sup>32</sup> These conditions, which are the pillars of democracy, must be protected if an action is to be democratic and this applies also to the dismantling of democracy itself.

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<sup>31</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract, with Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy*, ed. by Roger D. Masters and Judith R. Masters, 4 vols (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), IV (1762), 110.

<sup>32</sup> Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics*, p.154.

# Conclusion

Self-determination in collective issues and thus political equality can be abolished through majority rule, but as long as even a single person objects to a complete dismantling of democracy, such a dismantling will either be:

- not **complete**, as the person retains his sovereignty (and thus self-determination in private matters), which means that a fundamental feature of democracy is still in tact
- not **democratic**, as the person loses his sovereignty and all of his self-determination against his own will and therefore the pillars of democracy are violated in the process.

Although the dismantling of self-determination in collective matters through majority rule could be seen as the dismantling of democracy, and thus “the rule by the people”, the process is not so simple. After such a decision by the majority “the people” would evidently not be in charge of making collective decisions any longer, but the problem is that “the rule by the people”, and thus democracy, contains in itself other pillars than simply self-determination in collective matters, pillars which cannot be decided upon by majority rule. Therefore, the only way to carry out a complete democratic dismantling of democracy is through a unanimous decision by all of those within the demos.

Nevertheless, it is not beyond the scope of our imagination to see a dictator or a group of people supported by a majority or even a large minority<sup>33</sup> coming to power and seemingly democratically, that is through a majority or parliamentary decision, abolishing democracy. Although in such a case the dismantling of democracy is not complete as it is carried out through majority rule and in order for the process to be democratic the sovereignty of individuals should be preserved, it isn't hard to imagine how it could lead and has many times lead to the destruction of the sovereignty of people. If those in power respected democracy and its foundations, there would hardly be a problem. However, because the fundamental goal of such forces is most often the complete destruction of democracy, it is very important that democracy is protected from them if it is to flourish and last.

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<sup>33</sup> The fascists in Italy and the Nazis in Germany are to a certain extent examples of this.

As this investigation has been a theoretical one concerning itself with ideal democracy, the explanations it has offered are not complete. Although an idea of the democratic dismantling of democracy and thus the limits of ideal democracy has been formed, further research should be carried out so as to stronger relate this to examples of actual democracy. In order to firmly understand how the democratic dismantling of actual democracy works and what the limits of such democracy are, it is not enough to simply look at ideal democracy. Nevertheless, exploring ideal democracy offers valuable insights into the foundations of democracy and helps to develop actual democracy towards the ideal. In addition, the pillars of democracy as identified in this investigation can well be used in analysis to determine whether a government, a country or simply a group claiming to be democratic really is so.

Once a democracy is established, it is basically impossible to destroy it democratically. Although in theory this is possible, it is very unlikely that democracy will ever fail so miserably and be pushed to such distant limits. After all, as democracy is the rule by the people, it is very unlikely that all the people would want to destroy their right to decide on the affairs of their own society, their own lives and their own future, or in other words their self-determination and sovereignty. It is precisely because this unequalled ability to influence your own life that democracy is so widespread and so popular. It is precisely because of this that democracy lives on.

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# Appendix A.

## The Pillars of Democracy

