

Proposing a New Election Model to Strengthen Democracy

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Abstract: *Democracy seems to be the best form of government that human beings can find. However, many democracies lack quality and effectiveness. Especially in the new era, dictators use democratic rules to come to power, and they wear and abuse these rules in the most profound way to stay in control. True democracies are based on rulers' morality and society's education and goodwill. Uncouth and uneducated populist leaders establish their dictatorships thanks to democracies and continue to remain in power for a long time. The issue of how the abuse of these democracies can be limited should be the most essential subject of study in political sciences. This article explores the challenges of modern democracies, particularly the manipulation of democratic systems by populist leaders to establish autocratic rule. It aims to safeguard democratic integrity by examining historical patterns and proposing a rotational election model. The article critiques existing mechanisms and suggests reforms to prevent the misuse of democracy, emphasizing the importance of education, institutional autonomy, and moral governance.*

Keywords: Democracy, New Model, Rotational Model, Election Reform, Rotational Election Model

1. Introduction

Robert A. Dahl summarized the advantages and disadvantages of a better government than any alternative to democracy in his book *On Democracy*:

- 1) Democracy can help prevent (not prevent) cruel dictators from coming to power.
- 2) It guarantees and provides its citizens with many fundamental rights that undemocratic systems do not and cannot. (It only guarantees, does it?)
- 3) Democracy gives its citizens more personal freedom than possible alternatives.
- 4) Democracy helps people protect their fundamental interests. (But not always.)
- 5) Only a democratic government can afford the maximum opportunity for people to enjoy their freedom of self-determination and live under their chosen laws.
- 6) Only a democratic government can (always?) provide the maximum opportunity to fulfill moral responsibilities.
- 7) Democracy supports people more than any possible alternative.
- 8) Only a democratic government provides relatively more political equality. (What does relative mean?)
- 9) Modern representative democracies do not (usually) fight each other.
- 10) Countries with a democratic government are richer than non-democratic ones (except Singapore) (Dahl, 2021).

If we list the institutions of the democratic order with some additions in Robert Dahl's book *On Democracy*, a natural and modern democracy cannot develop without the following institutional structures:

- 1) Managers come and go by election.
- 2) Free, fair, and held elections at reasonable intervals.
- 3) Freedom of expression.
- 4) Freedom and opportunity to access information.
- 5) Institutional autonomy.
- 6) Involving citizens in monitoring, criticizing, and making decisions.
- 7) The functioning of a fair legal system in a way that covers universal human rights.

- 8) Operation that gives importance to merit.

Democracy has advantages as well as disadvantages. For example, while political equality gives everyone the right to vote, it provides equal and equal voting rights to those who want to end democracy and those who defend democracy. In other words, you must treat those who want to kill your brother and those who want to protect them equally. How true is that? In order not to experience such an example, the management style in democracies should inevitably exist with protective mechanisms. For example, it is essential to include competent experts and to take the initiative in making decisions, to remove judgments from being personal decisions, to rely on the knowledge of the director, but to be aware that the director is more than information and to define the competence of management well (Tuncer, 2022).

Where modernity and postmodern understanding are intertwined, we can call this process, which develops without fully understanding its boundaries, "democratism." In other words, dictatorship through democracy (Tuncer, 2022).

Why Democracy Needs a New Model

The science of politics and management also contemplates systems that improve democracy, such as "holacracy," a new form of government that distributes authority to the organization and introduces people according to roles, not hierarchies and titles.

Perhaps the most crucial reason for gathering the dark clouds over democracy is that the idea of democracy is a form of government by the elite, aristocrats, and intelligentsia. Therefore, it is shaped by the misconception that most people will cherish well-educated people. Naturally, it did not (Tuncer, 2022).

Some will think that the new model does not comply with democracy. However, those who think this can hardly understand how populist leaders can use democracy to create dictatorships because democracy is healthy in their countries. The education level of the people and social morality are high. For this reason, I should summarize how the initiative called the election, which is just one rule of democracy, is intervened

in these countries. Democrat or Democratist (Tuncer, 2021), that is, those who gain power and destroy democracy by using democracy, claim that they are democratic by claiming to hold elections. However, their choice is not legal and legitimate (Tuncer, 2024). The proposed model is only a modification to protect democracy from harmful things, not against democracy.

Meanwhile, the number of countries with reasonably free elections rose from 147 in 1988 to 191 in 1999. Why did this anxiety begin? Now, the party contest has become a contest for the persuasion abilities of professionals. On the other hand, the citizen was passive, docile, unresponsive, and almost indifferent.

How Democrats Interference to Democratic Elections

Just because there are elections does not mean that there is democracy. Let us remember that Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Assad in Syria, Sisi in Egypt, Putin in Russia, and even Xi Jinping in China were elected not once but several times with nearly 100% of the votes. However, none of these countries have democratic country status.

Erdoğan, who remained in power for more than 20 years, also came and maintained his power through elections in Turkey.

In poor-quality democracies, elections are interfered with in various ways. These can be addressed in three separate periods: before the election, during the election, and after the election. (Tuncer 2023, Tuncer 2024, Steven 2017).

1) Before the election,

- a) Placing supporters by interfering with the selection of election commissions
- b) Intimidating the opposition by using threatening language
- c) Unfair election competition using state and private television channels
- d) Restricting social media from time to time, e. Pressuring the opposition with fake news
- e) Ignoring the Constitution and not complying with candidate justifications

2) During the election process

- a) Making unfair decisions with people appointed to the Election Boards and preventing vote counting
- b) Making people vote without registration
- c) Playing with voter numbers
- d) Intervention in ballot boxes
- e) Preventing voters from voting against votes by intimidating them and causing trouble.
- f) Not letting women vote, making their husbands vote instead

3) After the Election

- a) Manipulating the vote count
- b) Playing with the consequences
- c) Misrepresenting the vote count
- d) Appointing trustees instead of removing elected officials through legal intervention.

How will the electronic voting system work in a government that carries out all these illegal transactions without hesitation?

Electronic Voting System

Can an electronic voting system function effectively in a government prone to such illegal practices? I want to summarize the common questions I have about this system.

- 1) Who will help people who do not use electronic systems to vote in a country where education is extremely low?
- 2) While all systems are under state control, why should well-intentioned administrators not tamper with these systems?
- 3) What is the guarantee that those who openly violate the Constitution, those who take open and evidenced bribes and extortion, those who disregard public morality, and the mentality that burns young people for their future will not violate the electronic system?
- 4) Without the assurance of reliable institutions, the electronic voting system is highly insecure.

The New Model for Democratic Elections

Elections are held to determine whether the parliament and the Presidency, elected for four or five years, will continue at the end of their terms. However, from now on, it is no longer possible for this party or the President to participate in the election. Who will be apart from this party or person is voted during this period.

- 1) A citizen who has not spent most of the last year in his country will be unable to vote, even if he is in the country. JF Kennedy has a prevalent saying: "In democracies, the ignorance of a voter is a danger to the safety of the whole people."
- 2) The President and/or Prime Minister/or Party should be able to serve for a maximum of two terms and not be eligible for a third term under any circumstances.
- 3) The same people should not be elected under different party names a third time.
- 4) Even if there is a break after two terms, politics should not be continued in power again.

In this way, it will be challenging to continue to be elected with undue influence in the elections. We must admit that a mentality disregarding the Constitution will try to make this system inoperable. This model must be internationally acceptable.

President Erdoğan, the leader of the ruling party in Turkey, did not accept more than three consecutive parliamentary candidacies under his party's similar statute. However, he was running for parliamentary candidacy again after a break. He does not intend to apply this limitation to one person, for himself!

In cases where these conditions are not met, elections and the elected administration should not be considered legitimate.

2. Discussion

Plato has a scary saying: "It is impossible to prevent if the rulers of the state have decided to overthrow the state." Is it possible to prevent and treat this whole frightening picture? Events show that prevention is more accessible, and treatment is complicated. Indeed, history has proved this statement of Plato true not once but many times. Innocent people have paid a heavy price to come back this way.

The treatment status and complex consequences of World War II are apparent. Millions of soldiers have paid a heavy price with their civilian lives and the loneliness of homeless orphans. The suffering continues in the century after the end of the war.

If a society's personality cannot make a virtue revolution, it will remain a literate and developed primitive society even if it makes all the development moves. To prevent the destruction of society, it should be essential to raise individuals with the following four characteristics:

- 1) Educated, analyzing, discussing,
- 2) Having civil courage,
- 3) Taking responsibility for his actions,
- 4) Who is consistent with himself, who can realize this both in the life of the individual and in society,
- 5) Who always puts the social benefit above the individual benefit.

Unless education and citizenship rights are given importance, the development of democracy cannot be prevented. Morality, integrity, and a well-functioning political structure cannot prevent the development of democracy. The ability to react socially is seen as the most critical measure. Mindfulness is essential for this reaction. This reaction requires sound and developed institutions, free and global (360 degrees) thinking, and education (Tuncer, 2021).

Freedom House 2021 (Freedom House web) Democracy Strengthening Recommendations for Government and Private Sector:

- 1) Support civil society and grassroots movements that are calling for democracy.
- 2) Support free and independent media and protect access to information.
- 3) Emphasize programs that strengthen democracy in foreign aid.
- 4) Focus on countries and regions at critical crossroads.
- 5) Invest in alliances with other democracies and multilateral institutions.
- 6) Strengthen public support for democratic principles by investing in civic education.
- 7) Adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and conduct periodic human rights impact assessments with a commitment not to harm.
- 8) Assess potential partners' adherence to the UN Guiding Business and Human Rights Principles.
- 9) Be in constant dialogue with non-governmental organizations to understand the practical impact of company policies and products.
- 10) Take advantage of targeted sanctions as part of a comprehensive accountability strategy for human rights violators and corrupt officials.
- 11) Make the fight against kleptocracy and international corruption a key priority
- 12) Reduce aid to countries whose leaders have fled their term limits and tend to slide into autocracy/anocracy/dictatorship.
- 13) Reconsider exports of goods that could potentially be used to violate human rights.
- 14) Increase transparency requirements for state-owned foreign propaganda organizations operating in democratic countries.

- 15) Strengthen laws that protect against foreign influence on government officials.
- 16) Companies should raise their voices against human rights violations in the countries where they operate and vigorously defend the rights of employees and other affected stakeholders.

The way out of the dead-end is to build high-quality democracies on solid foundations and with reliable institutions in a multi-minded, polyphonic voice. The principles that will save society are to raise social education, make polyphony a moral understanding, make tolerance towards differences a lifestyle, and develop intolerance of those against all these.

The most important structures that will increase the resistance of the society to negative changes:

- 1) Organized, established, resistant to institutionalization,
- 2) Non-governmental organizations that are strong and have managed their internal democratic changes,
- 3) An educated and thinking society structure that can generate ideas.

Important information is given in the Qur'an and other holy books. That the oppressors and oppressors will end. Gandhi has a saying inspired by this information: "When I am in despair, I think about this. Virtue and morality will prevail. In every era, cruelty and evil have emerged, but they all had terrible ends, and the good ones prevailed."

Looking at the history of world democracy, at the end of the 20th century, 39% of people live in free societies. This rate was much lower in the 1900s. Russian communism, which lasted close to seventy years, has ended.

Other conditions, such as free and fair elections, transparent and effective government execution, adequate political participation, and general democratic cultural policy, were added to the democracy meter measurements. If we list the institutions of the democratic order with some additions in Robert Dahl's book *On Democracy*, a natural and modern democracy cannot develop without the following institutional structures:

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The importance of the separation of powers in democracy has been understood. However, what is not understood is the need for the separated forces to coordinate to find the truth, not to fight each other.

Although all developments attempt to disperse the dark clouds over democracy, they are not enough to change the atmosphere to spring.

We need to remember. Enmity, divisiveness, marginalization, and exclusion are easy. The challenge is to be on the side of peace and democracy. Those who try to unite people and stand by democracy and universal human rights have always paid the price in world history.

Why are some countries so strong at war but weak at peace? The answer is in a real democracy. Only real democracies will bring peace.

3. Conclusion

No matter what precautions are taken, the ill-intentioned, ill-mannered, complex, and uneducated populist politicians will try to consolidate and maintain their power by using democracy. Simple precautions will make this more complicated and at least prevent them from gaining legitimacy.

This study highlights the urgent need for electoral reforms to safeguard democracy from being subverted by authoritarian tendencies.

In conclusion, safeguarding democracy requires innovative reforms that prevent its manipulation by populist leaders. The proposed rotational election model offers a viable solution to this challenge by emphasizing institutional integrity and moral governance. However, its success depends on widespread education and international acceptance to ensure long-term democratic resilience.

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