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Democracy as a Way of Life: Vincent Ostrom's Challenge

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I. Introduction

Democracy has virtually obtained nonnegotiable status in the contemporary world. During the last half of the twentieth century, all of the main alternatives to democracy had arguably lost their political legitimacy in the eyes of much of humankind. And now even authoritarian rulers hardly reject democracy outright. Moreover, "[a]lmost all normatively desirable aspects of political, and sometimes even of social and economic, life are credited as intrinsic to democracy: representation, accountability, equality, participation, justice, dignity, rationality, security, freedom, … , the list goes on."[1] But it is paradoxical enough that certain sense of powerlessness and detached cynicism pervades our public discourse on democracy, while nearly everyone favors its ideal.

On the other hand, despite its alleged 'triumph' in the contemporary world, it is also true that democracy has meant different things to different people at different times and places.[2] It is certain that what is now called democracy in the West would not satisfy some of those, past and present, who have had different conceptions of it. Democracy, in short, has been, still is, and will remain an 'essentially contested concept.' Just what do we mean by democracy? What distinguishes democracy from non-democracy? Why is democracy desirable in the first place? However banal they may first sound, none of these questions has self-evident answer.

As a preliminary step to my inquiry into democratic theory, I focus on Vincent Ostrom's work on democracy in this paper. I assume Ostrom's fundamental puzzles are twofold: "What does it mean to live in a democratic society?" and "Are democratic

[1] Przeworski 1999, 24.
[2] For the introductory survey of the main ideas and historical trajectory of democracy, see, for example, Held 2006, Arblaster 2002, Dahl 1989, Dahl 1998, and Dunn 2005.

societies viable?" The first question directs us to the reflection on the values, ideas, and ideals of democracy, while the second deals with the possible 'threats' to democracy as conceived in the first question. I argue that the way Ostrom formulates these questions and seeks for answers is posing serious challenges to the more common notion of democracy and current scholarship on democracy.

I proceed in three steps. First, I begin by investigating one of the main strands of contemporary democratic theory – namely "minimalist" conception of democracy. I offer a brief overview of the classic articulation by Schumpeter and more recent defense by Przeworski of this notion. Second, vis-à-vis minimalist conception, I attempt to reconstruct what I consider to be core ideas of Ostrom's discussion on the meaning of democracy. At the heart of Ostrom's understanding, I argue, lies his conviction that democracy is 'a way of life' before it is 'a form of government,' hence his devotion to the search for epistemic, ontological, and cultural foundations of human affairs. I will also show that Ostrom is posing a series of challenges to the current state of political science, i.e. the way it poses and formulates questions of significance, and its cultural and scientific presuppositions which he thinks tend to hinder the proper understanding of the constitution and operation of democratic societies. Third, I attempt to initiate criticism on the minimalist notion with the help of Ostrom's perspective, and in turn identify some puzzles that remain unresolved by Ostrom. Two issues are considered: Ostrom's understanding of the nature of politics, and of the role of the state in democratic societies.

Two brief additions are needed regarding my interpretation of Ostrom's work. First, this paper engages in the reconstruction of contesting visions of democracy, thus the analysis remains at the theoretical level. So does Ostrom's work: "My search is an attempt to understand these problems at their most basic levels rather than to address the great multitude of specific problems in their symptomatic manifestations" (4).[3] Second, for the purpose of this paper, I mainly focus on *The Meaning of Democracy and the Vulnerability of Democracies* among Ostrom's many publications. In my understanding, most aspects of Ostrom's intellectual endeavor is crystallized and synthesized in this book as a coherent set of arguments.

[3] All quotations of Ostrom's work come from *The Meaning of Democracy and the Vulnerability of Democracies* unless otherwise noted.

II. Minimalist Conception of Democracy

Minimalist conception of democracy – democracy as an institutionalized competition for political leadership, or democracy as competitive elections – has had a vast influence on both theory and practice of contemporary democracy. It not only well highlights many recognizable feature of modern liberal democracies, but are widely employed in academic researches across diverse disciplines of social science.[4] As a preliminary step to understand the central characteristics of Ostrom's notion of democracy, Schumpeter's and Przeworski's arguments provide valuable discussion points.

1. Proposition: Schumpeter

As is widely recognized, Schumpeter's classic book, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, has had an extraordinary impact on the development of democratic theory throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. The influence of his notion of democracy, which is aptly referred to as "competitive elitism" by David Held,[5] can be easily observed in the work of such seminar political scientists of the last century as Dahl, Almond and Verba, and Sartori, to name only a few. [6] In this section, my purpose is not to provide a comprehensive overview of his political theory or contextualize his work against his own political, intellectual background. Rather, in order to render his arguments useful referents of comparison with Ostrom's political theory, I attempt to clarify his conception of democracy and related arguments that form his understanding of the nature of politics.

Schumpeter says that his basic theoretical aspiration is to develop "more realistic," alternative conceptions of democracy which "is much truer to life" (253, 269).[7] In opposition to the main streams of political theory from classical times, he sought to free understanding of the nature of public life from what he considered to be excessive

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[4] Freedom House, for example, adopts this line of definition of democracy for its rating criteria (http://www.freedomhouse.org).
[5] Held 2006, 125. Held adds that Schumpeter's intellectual debt to Max Weber is considerable (142).
[6] Schumpeter is said to be "perhaps singly most responsible for the twentieth-century abandonment of the classical theory of democracy" (Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón 1999, 4).
[7] All quotations of Schumpeter's work come from *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*.

speculation and arbitrary normative extrapolations. "His primary task was explanatory: to account for how actual democracies work."[8]

Schumpeter's understanding of the nature of democracy essentially rests on his explicit rejection of what he calls "the classical doctrine of democracy." By this he refers to "the eighteenth-century philosophy of democracy."[9] He defines "the classical doctrine of democracy" as follows: "[T]he democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions which realizes the common good by making the people itself decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble in order to carry out its will" (250). Schumpeter emphatically rejects this notion of democracy on three grounds. Each of these criticisms sets out the fundamental foundation of his alternative conception of democracy.

First, it is both misleading and dangerous to suppose that "there exists a Common Good" which can be reached "by means of rational argument." The reason is simple: "[T]o different individuals and groups the common good is bound to mean different things" and this disagreement "cannot be reconciled by rational argument because ultimate values – our conceptions of what life and what society should be – are beyond the range of mere logic" (250-1). Second, "it is not only conceivable but, whenever individual wills are much divided, very likely that the political decision" produced by 'democratic decisions' based on 'individual volitions' "will not conform to "what people really want."" In this regard, the decision which is "imposed by non-democratic agency might prove much more acceptable." Schumpeter cites the case of a religious settlement imposed by Napoleon Bonaparte as a classic example of a satisfactory policy being established by dictatorial means. In his view, this example is "not an isolated one." Therefore, "[i]f results that prove in the long run satisfactory to the people at large are made the test of government *for* the people, then government *by* the people, as conceived by the classical doctrine of democracy, would often fail to meet it" (252-6, Schumpeter's emphasis). Third, there is a well-grounded reason to suspect "the definiteness and independence of the voter's will, his powers of observation and interpretation of facts,

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[8] Held 2006, 141.

[9] It is not clear what exactly he means by this. Held argues that it "represents a curious amalgam of theories combining elements of a variety of quite different models; Rousseauian and utilitarian ideas are alluded to, as well as, I [Held] think, certain Marxist notions about the integration of state and society." Carole Pateman criticizes that Schumpeter is erecting 'a straw man' (Held 2006, 146, 152).

and his ability to draw, clearly and promptly, rational inferences from both." As individual desires and choices of consumers are amenable to the influence of strategic advertisements in the world of consumption, so in the political world are voters vulnerable to groups "with an ax to grind": self-seeking professional politicians, business interests, or "idealist of one kind or another." In addition, considering the alleged remoteness of the "matters of domestic and foreign policy" from people's everyday lives, "ordinary citizen's ignorance and lack of judgment" is quite predictable phenomena. Schumpeter thus concludes that *volonté générale* is a fictitious concept and "what we are confronted with in the analysis of political processes is largely not a genuine but a manufactured will" (256-64).

By rejecting "the classical doctrine of democracy," Schumpeter seeks to establish "another theory of democracy" which he believes to be clearly more 'realistic' and 'workable.' Above all, Schumpeter claims, "democracy is a political *method*, that is to say, a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political – legislative and administrative – decisions" (242, Schumpeter's emphasis). An important implication of this statement is that "being a political method, democracy cannot, any more than can any other method, be an end in itself"(242). Thus, according to this conceptualization, the essence of democracy lies not in the values that it pursues, but in the procedures with which it operates. This does not mean democracy cannot serve certain substantive ideals or values. But it is important, Schumpeter argues, not to confuse these ends which certain types of democracy might pursue, with the nature of democracy itself.

Schumpeter, however, does not delve into specific institutional mechanisms of decision-making process that democracy might require, e.g. majority rule. Instead he turns to specify the boundary that demarcates the realm where democracy should operate from the realm where it should not. "[T]he democratic method," in this regard, is understood as the "institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" (269). Democracy therefore essentially designates a political method in which the people select their political leaders. This notion of democracy explicitly restricts the role of the people into a minimum political involvement: "the role of the people is to produce a government" by electing "the men who are to do the deciding" on

their behalf (269). In other words, people get to choose and authorize government, but the actual political decisions are reserved for "leaders." Democracy is therefore "the idea of government approved by the people," not "ruled" by the people (246). Schumpeter fundamentally de-links democracy's legitimacy from any pretense that politicians represent, and thus constrained by, voters.

> [D]emocracy does not mean and cannot mean that the people actually rule in any obvious sense of the terms "people" and "rule." Democracy means only that the people have the opportunity of accepting or refusing the men who are to rule them. ... Now one aspect of this may be expressed by saying that democracy is the rule of the politician. It is of utmost importance to realize clearly what this implies (284-5).[10]

Tom Bottomore, in his introduction to *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, keenly observes the "economic" characteristic of Schumpeter's view of democracy: "He formulates an economic definition of democracy, conceived as an institutional arrangement like the market, in which various groups and individuals – equivalent to enterprises and entrepreneurs – compete for the votes of electors, the political "consumers." Schumpeter emphasizes strongly this analogy between the economy and the polity, quoting by way of illustration the remark of a politician to the effect that "What businessmen do not understand is that exactly as they are dealing in oil so I am dealing in votes"" (xi-xii). Democracy, to Schumpeter, is not about establishing accountability nor is it about improving justice; it is about selling a product – governmental output – in exchange for votes.[11]

2. Defense: Przeworski

Schumpeter, however, does not provide a full-fledged justification of his conception of democracy. His main intuition is that this notion is closer to "how actual democracies work," and thus "a satisfactory interpretation of the facts of the democratic

[10] This line of argument implies that his notion of democracy serves not only as an explanatory concept but also as a normative referent.
[11] Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón 1999, 4.

process" (284). A careful defense of Schumpeter's vision was recently provided by Przeworski. He, among many others, explicitly takes up Schumpeter's conception of democracy and defend it, drawing on rich theoretical and empirical works on this issue. His defense of the minimalist conception proceeds in two steps, first empirically and second normatively.

Przeworski claims that Schumpeter's arguments – mainly, the untenability of notion of "common good" and the separation of the decisions of political leaders from the will of voters – is empirically accurate, i.e. "realistic" in Schumpeter's own term. He poses the question as follows: "Are there good reasons to think that if rulers are selected through contested elections then political decisions will be rational, governments will be representative, and the distribution of income will be egalitarian?" (25).[12] He answer in the negative to each of these three points: (1) Democratic decisions cannot be in general expected to be "rational" in the sense that democratic process is likely to reach the "common good" or "general interest" of the people; (2) Neither prospective nor retrospective voting ensures that governments will be induced to promote best interest of citizens; (3) Equality in the political realm does not lead to equality in the social and economic realm. Przeworski makes a powerful case that the principal arguments that have been advanced to the effect that democracy can be expected to achieve such substantive values as "rationality of decision," "representation," and "equality," are unsuccessful. But Przeworski is not alone in this 'pessimistic' vision. Many theoretical and empirical studies of modern democracy show that there are good reasons to suspect that democracy would be a poor device for achieving normatively desirable and political desired criteria.[13]

Accordingly, Przeworski argues, if democracy is to be defended it must be on minimalist grounds, detached from the classical expectation that it can rationally represent a general will, not to mention the widespread impulse to argue that it produces ancillary benefits such as social and economic justice. Przeworski adopts Popper's minimalist standard: Democracy is the only system in which citizens can get rid of governments without bloodshed. "The very prospect that governments may change can

[12] All quotations of Przeworski's work come from Przeworski 1999.
[13] See, for example, Roemer 1999.

result in a peaceful regulation of conflicts," by inducing the conflicting political forces to comply with the rules rather than engage in violence (45). Losers accept defeat in return for peace and the possibility of victory in the future. Winners have an incentive to be moderate while in office.[14]

> In the end, the miracle of democracy is that conflicting political forces obey the results of voting. People who have guns obey those without them. Incumbents risk their control of governmental offices by holding elections. Losers wait for their chance to win office. Conflicts are regulated, processed according to rules, and thus limited. This is not consensus, yet not mayhem either. Just limited conflict; conflict without killing (49).

At first glance, Przeworski admits, this might seem a trivial achievement. But he further argues that the judgment "depends on the point of departure": "If one begins with a vision of a basic harmony of interests, a common good to be discovered and agreed to by a rational deliberation, and to be represented as the view of the informed majority, the fact that rulers are elected is of no particular significance. ... Yet if the point of departure is that in any society there are conflicts, or values and of interests, electing rulers appears nothing short of miraculous" (44). In the modern world driven by endemic conflicting interests, Przeworski argues, democracy's value derives not from the promise of achieving such substantive values as social and economic justice, but rather from the possibility it holds out of managing conflict peacefully. He concludes: "My point is not that democracy can be, needs to be, improved, but that it would be worth defending even if it could not be" (50). I shall later discuss the implications and limits of minimalist notion of democracy, as proposed by Schumpeter and defended by Przeworski. I first turn to Ostrom's work.

III. Democracy as a Way of Life

It is not difficult to notice many diverging points of Ostrom's work from Schumpeter's and Przeworski's. But a careful comparison is necessary in order to capture fundamental

[14] It should be noted that this justification is not Schumpeter's own.

differences in their perspectives and understandings about the nature of politics and the meaning and conditions of democracy.

In the beginning chapter of *The Meaning of Democracy and the Vulnerability of Democracies*, Ostrom states that the central task of his inquiry is "rethinking the meaning and viability of democracy" (5). He takes up Tocqueville's puzzle about whether democratic societies are viable forms of civilization, and then couples the implications of this question with the inquiry into the meaning of democracy. Understanding the threats to democratic ways of life and the vulnerability of democracies is considered to be an essential part of this larger task. In other words, Ostrom's work revolves around two fundamental questions: "What does it mean to live in a democratic society?" and "Are democratic societies viable?" At this section, I attempt to reconstruct Ostrom's response to these questions with three focuses.

1. On The Nature of Politics: Politics of Ideas vs. Politics of Ideologies

What is politics all about? This question looms large in Ostrom's inquiry into the meaning and viability of democracies. According to Ostrom's understanding, political order of the human society, in its final instance, depends on "rule-ordered relationships," in the sense that a distinctive set of rules structures the inner logic and outer perimeter of political life of a particular society in one way than the other. In this regard, a central issue of politics is essentially connected to the ways in which a society formulates, applies, enforces, alters, and reforms the rules that condition interpersonal relationships among communities of people (138). We then can reasonably expect that there are as many ways of constituting political orders as there are different political communities. However, before we ask about the specific characteristics or institutional manifestations of particular systems of order, it is important to understand the underlying logic of the process of constituting that order itself. Through what process do human beings constitute systems of order? How do people conduct themselves as they relate to one another both in the ordinary exigencies of life and in constituting broader framework of political relationships? These questions from the central part of Ostrom's work.

How should we understand the underlying logic of democratic political process? In answering this question, Ostrom puts great emphasis on the role and place of "ideas" in the constitution of democratic political orders. He claims: "The idea that ideas articulated through the use of language permeate all of life is the key to understanding what it means to live a life in democratic societies" (29). It might seem somewhat counterintuitive to our commonplace understanding of politics to grant the world of "ideas" such a central place in political life. But Ostrom is emphatic in stressing "[h]ow you and I conceptualize our relationships with one another and to the world in which we live is … the foundation on which systems of order are constituted in human societies" (4). On the other hand, Ostrom also emphasizes that ideas as such are not self-sufficient. Ideas come to fruition only when they are connected to and complemented by deeds in the process of communicating and working with others. "Shared knowledge and understanding come not from ideas alone but from the way that ideas and deeds complement each other in what gets accomplished" (8). Therefore, Ostrom argues, how words, ideas, and deeds get related to one another in patterns of communication and activities of life is fundamental to the constitution of democratic societies.

In Ostrom's exploration, how the complementarity between ideas and deeds is achieved in democratic politics is well exemplified by the process of crafting institutional arrangements for water resource development in the Los Angeles metropolitan region. In this endeavor, according to Ostrom, engineers, lawyers, accountants, economists, and many others who were engaged, did not adhere to the principles of bureaucratic, hierarchical administration. Rather they exercised "public entrepreneurship" in pursuing what can be described as "independent public enterprises," putting together diverse perspectives and modes of analysis in establishing and maintaining productive working relationships among diverse actors concerned with water problems. "The key features" of this process, Ostrom reports, "involved, first, the use of ideas in pooling, rearranging, and compromising existing interests through the consent of the community at large as expressed in legislation and, second, the creation of a competent organization to carry out the engineering solution. The planning and preparation of that "legislation" was being viewed as constitutional in character for establishing a competent organization capable of

making collective decisions to bring the engineering solution to an operational reality."[15] Politics, from this perspective, is "conceived as a problem-solving process using ideas drawn from diverse modes of analysis to accomplish deeds" (23-4).

The meaning of 'politics of ideas' can be better captured when contrasted to the opposite, and allegedly perverse, form of politics – 'politics of ideologies.' According to Ostrom's exposition, serious difficulties arise when people ignore the place of "ideas" in the constitution of societies, and when political ideas are addressed only in the context of "ideologies" or "political myths." When that happens, "[p]atterns of partisan politics … yield corruption in the use of language and the way we live our lives." The logic of "deception, self-deception, and strategic opportunism" replaces "the basic element of trust and candor necessary in considering the relationship of ideas to deeds." "[G]littering generalities, slogans, and sonorous phrases" used to appeal to voters renders meaningless the process of critical inquiry in coping with common problems. Finally, politics deteriorates into the competition for "winning elections, creating winning coalitions, claiming popular mandates, and enjoying the fruits of victory" and political realm comes to be dominated by those "political entrepreneurs who make it their business to put together slates of candidates to win elections and gain control over legislative, executive, and judicial offices" (5-7, 55, 208). Politics, from this perspective, is conceived to be "an art of manipulation devoted to making a political system work to one's advantage" at the expense of others' (ix).[16] When ideas are corrupted into ideologies and politics is reduced to "an art of manipulation," citizens become spectators who register their response through, or only through, "opinion polls and voting." Under these circumstances, politics creates the illusion that people can be spared "all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living," and rely instead on outside authorities to take care of exigencies of everyday life. Politics then generates "a sense of helplessness on the part of a disoriented people," rather than enabling problem-solving capabilities of self-governing citizens (67-8). This is what Tocqueville called the danger of democratic despotism (15-8).

[15] For a detailed discussion on the meaning of the constitution and constitutional analysis, see Ostrom 1987, 3-10.

[16] Ostrom cites William Riker's exposition of political process as "structuring the world so you can win" (ix).

2. On Two Prototypes of Human Order: Self-governing Society vs. State-governed Society

Above discussion on the role and place of ideas and ideologies in politics shows two contrasting perspectives of conceptualizing the nature of political process. Drawing on these underlying logics of politics, Ostrom in turn constructs two contrary prototypes of human order, namely "Self-governing Society" and "State-governed Society."[17] He begins *The Political Theory of a Compound Republic* by quoting seminar passages from Hobbes and Madison respectively. Since they serve as fundamental reference points of Ostrom's discussion on two different approaches to the design of political order throughout his entire theoretical framework, they certainly deserve long quotations.

> The only way to erect such a Common Power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of Forraigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort, as that by their owne industrie, and by the fruites of the Earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; is, to conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, or upon one Assembly of men, that may reduce all their Wills, by plurality of voices, unto one Will: ... ; and therein to submit their Wills, every one to his Will, and their Judgements, to his Judgement. ... This is the Generation of that great LEVIATHAN, or rather (to speak more reverently) of that *Mortall God*, to which wee owe under the *Immortall God*, our peace and defence. ... And he that carryeth this Person, is called SOVERAIGNE, and said to have *Soveraigne Power*; and every one besides, his SUBJECT (Hobbes 1968, 227-8; Hobbes's emphases).

> In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions. This policy of supplying, by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced through the whole system of human affairs, private as well as public. We see it particularly displayed in all the subordinate distributions of

[17] I follow Ostrom's practice of capitalization when referring to his concepts. It is important to understand why he proposes this practice. See Ostrom 1997, x-xiii.

> power, where the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that each may be a check on the other – that the private interest of every individual may be a sentinel over the public rights. These inventions of prudence cannot be less requisite in the distribution of the supreme powers of the State (*Federalist* 51, cited from Ostrom 1987, ixxx-xxx)

To Ostrom, Hobbes and Madison epitomize two contrary ways of constituting political order. Hobbes's approach relies on a single ultimate center of Supreme Authority constituted as Sovereign, which exercises a power of command and control over people – or Subjects – as members of a Society. The entity called "the State" exercises a monopoly over all authority relationships in the Society. Erecting Sovereign is possible only when everyone "give[s] up [one's] Right of Governing [one]self" (Hobbes 1968, 227). In contrast, Madison's political order relies on power to check power amid "opposite and rival interests." This approach in turn depends on "shared communities of understanding among individuals and requires the mediation of conflict and the achievement of conflict resolution … in the context of continued learning and cultural evolution" (175).[18] Federalism and polycentric system of governance are important institutional mechanisms of this type of order.

One way to capture the meaning of this contrast is by consulting the way Ostrom formulates the nature of power relationships – or "coercive capabilities" – in either forms of order. Ostrom admits that power relationship is an indispensable part of human societies. Nevertheless, according to Ostrom, we can ask whether the coercive capabilities "might be sufficiently diffused through a system of social and political order so that a monopoly of rulership prerogatives can be foreclosed" (272). Here "[t]he distinction between *power over* and *power with* relationship is of fundamental significance for the governance of human societies" (274; Ostrom's emphases). Hobbes, in this regard, epitomizes the logic of *power over* relationship in the sense that his political philosophy ultimately opted for the Supreme Authority of a single sovereign representative rather than for the sovereignty of those who were being represented; in Hobbes's political theory, "a rule of law cannot be applied to sovereigns and to the

[18] For further discussion, see Ostrom 1987.

relationships among sovereign States." In contrast, Ostrom argues, "[t]he American federalists and Tocqueville … conceptualized the possibility that Hobbes failed to grasp." In their work, coercive capabilities are construed in the context of *power with* relationships which "apply to how people choose to associate with one another rather than to be governed by others." Ostrom further posits that "[t]he exercise of *power with* others occurs in mutually agreeable patterns of covenantal relationships in which patterns of social accountability are broadly shared among those constituting diverse patterns of association and communities of relationships" (275).

These two opposing ways of constituting political order, with their concomitant formulations of power relationships, represent the fundamental organizing principle of "State-governed Society" and that of "Self-governing Society" in the constitutional level of analysis. From the perspective of the inquiry into the viability of democratic societies, "a basic paradigmatic challenge" can then be rephrased as follows: "Is it possible to conceive of binding and workable relationships being achieved by mutual agreement among colleagues working with one another?" (4) If we cannot answer in the affirmative to this question, Ostrom argues, then it would be impossible to ground human relationships on the principles of self-responsibility in self-governing communities of relationships; human beings would never be able to free themselves from the principles of command and control; democracies would then be, as Robert Michels asserted, "destined to oscillate between struggles for freedom and servitude"; and finally "the most that can be hoped for" would be "some sequence of coups d'état, revolutionary struggles, and short-lived democratic regimes amid persistent autocracies" (4, 18).

3. Ostrom's Challenge

This twofold contrast – the former on two ways of conceptualizing the nature of political process, the latter on two prototypes of human order – enables us to better appreciate Ostrom's central concepts such as citizenship, self-governing capabilities, artisanship-artifact relationships, culture of inquiry, federalism, and polycentricity, etc. These concepts, in turn, form the main body of his inquiry into the meaning of democracy and the vulnerability of democracies.

Democracy as a Way of Life

In understanding the nature of Ostrom's inquiry, it is important to note that he formulates his questions as "What does it mean to live in a democratic society?" rather than "What is democracy?" His main concern lies not so much in the 'definition' of democracy, as in the 'meaning' of democratic ways of life.[19] We might be able to come up with a refined definition of democracy, but the meaning of living in democratic societies cannot be reduced to a set of rights or legal, institutional formalities so defined. A corollary is that instituting a certain form of government or legal formulations is radically insufficient in building and maintaining democratic societies.

""One person, one vote, majority rule" is an inadequate and superficial formulation for constituting viable democratic societies" (3). Ostrom argues "[w]e are required to give priority to building from the bottom up rather than the top down" (254). In order to understand the meaning of democracy we, first and foremost, need to understand "[h]ow people conduct themselves as they directly relate to one another in the ordinary exigencies of life," before turning our attention to the form of government or legal formulations that a society has developed. "Person-to-person, citizen-to-citizen relationships are what life in democratic societies is all about" (3). Democracy is a way of life before it is a form of government.

Self-governing capabilities

Then what is it that makes democracy meaningful and viable? How is it possible to build and maintain democratic societies? Ostrom's conclusion is that "democratic societies depend on self-organizing and self-governing capabilities" of citizens (84, 225). As simple as this short sentence may sound, Ostrom begins by acknowledging this is "much more demanding" task "than electing representatives who form government" (3). In this perspective, "[o]nly as long as people in the ordinary exigencies of life learn how to become self-governing and work out mutually productive relationships with others can we expect democracies to function as viable ways of life" (273). Or in other words,

[19] Schumpeter, in contrast, is interested in acquiring a definition of democracy.

democracies "cannot be maintained without the knowledge, moral integrity, skill, and intelligibility of citizens in the cultivation of those societies" (3).

The reason why these highly demanding criteria are necessary is, according to Ostrom, that they arguably are the only way to free human civilization from the everlasting threats of autocracy and its concomitant logic of command and control. Human beings, as "dwellers of Plato's cave," without knowing "ultimate goal" or "end state" of human development, have no better way but to proceed gradually by making a series of "reflective choices" in such a way as to maximize their "adaptive potentials," relying on "error-correcting procedures in the organization of decision-making processes." This is simply impossible without cultivating "a culture of inquiry" (143-7). Without patiently exploring the possibility of continuous experiments, problem-solving, learning, and error-correcting procedures, "the most that can be hoped for" would be "some sequence of coups d'état, revolutionary struggles, and short-lived democratic regimes amid persistent autocracies" (18). Any long-term, comprehensive planning which ignores this condition will necessarily deteriorate into a reckless attempt at social engineering.[20] "Being the kinds of creatures we are, we keep striving. The quest is elusive. The adventure can be enlightening." But "[w]hen we ignore such condition, human beings are capable of the most profound evils" (149-50).

> [D]emocracies as ways of life are brought to realization by learning to live and work with others in ways that are commensurate with self-responsibility, impartiality, respect for the autonomous authority of others, contestability as a road to conflict resolution through mutual enlightenment, the shaping of common knowledge, mutual understanding, and trust in patterns of associated relationships that reach out to larger communities of relationships. These foundations give meaning to democratic ways of life (59-60).

> Viable democracies are neither created nor destroyed overnight. Emphasis on form of government and the binding character of legal formulations are not sufficient conditions to meet the requirements of democratic societies. The moral and intellectual conditions of those who constitute democratic societies are of essential importance. This is why

[20] For Ostrom's criticism of communism and "Newspeak" along this line of argument, see Ostrom 1997, 61-73.

building common knowledge, shared communities of understanding, patterns of accountability, and mutual trust is as essential as producing stocks and flows of material goods and services. The epistemic and cultural contingencies of life are at least as important as the economic and political conditions narrowly construed (114).

On the Current State of Political Science

Since democracy is a way of life before it is a form of government, the meaning and viability of democracy turns on "the moral and intellectual conditions" and "epistemic and cultural contingencies" of life as well as "the economic and political conditions."[21] Democracies, in this sense, essentially rely on the "coevolutionary development" of "epistemic orders," "economic orders," and "juridical or political orders" (147-8). Thus Ostrom argues that "[w]e need to go back to basics to reconsider the human condition and what it means to be a human being relating to other human beings in the world in which they live" (116). Studies of the place of language and that of religion which respectively forms epistemological and ontological foundations of human existence, constitute important part of Ostrom's theoretical endeavor. In the midst of the broad inquiry into the "human condition," however, Ostrom maintains his focus: "If you and I are to be self-governing, how are we to understand and take part in human affairs?" (117) From this perspective, the science of politics culminates in "a science of citizenship." The science of politics is inherently embedded in a broader intellectual enterprise of the "social and cultural sciences"; "In a narrow sense, the political sciences might include law, journalism, public administration, public affairs, and political science, narrowly construed; but in a broader sense, the political sciences include the whole corpus of human knowledge bearing on choice."[22]

These considerations lead Ostrom to an emphatic criticism of the current state of political science. His criticisms can be reconstructed into two points. First, contemporary political science is not successful in understanding the broader horizon of human existence, or the complex whole of cognitive-cultural-social foundations of human

[21] "What does it mean to live in a democratic society? Unfortunately, that puzzle is bound up with questions that are not easily resolved and that ultimately turn on mysteries about the nature of life and existence that cannot be resolved in a definitive way" (ix).

[22] For further discussion on the role of political science in terms of democratic citizenship, see Ostrom 1987, 1-30.

relationships. Devoted to such abstract intellectual constructs as the "State," the "Market," the "Society," many political scientists fail to achieve a synthesis of diverse, multi-level analytical perspectives. Moreover, narrow "specialization devoid of complementarities" prompts What Ortega y Gasset called "learned ignoramus" (278). Second, contemporary political science is obsessed with the language of strategies, thus neglecting the role of "ideas" in human relationships. Ideas are often dismissed as ideologies, and the science of citizenship gives way to a "science of strategic possibilities" (216). Political science of "campaign strategies" or "wars or words" which is dominated by the strategic logic of command and control, and political science of "brute empiricism" or staunch "realism" which neglects essentially artifactual and institutional character of human existence,[23] cannot properly address the crucial question of "how people learn to be self-governing": "If the language of the political sciences include only a portion of what is constitutive of democratic societies, political scientists cannot understand how such societies *work*"(33-4).

IV. Dialogues

I've thus surveyed two different conceptions of democracy – one by Schumpeter and Przeworski, the other by Ostrom. It is true Schumpeter and Przeworski are not the main part of Ostom's referents, and vice versa. But through the confrontation of these two contrasting visions emerges some fundamental issues regarding the nature of democratic politics. I now attempt to employ a criticism on the minimalist notion of democracy partly from Ostrom's perspective, and in turn identify some puzzles that remain unresolved by Ostrom. The organization of the latter discussion is based on Ostrom's two-pronged contrast that I've reconstructed in the previous section – first on two ways of conceptualizing the nature of political process, second on two prototypes of human order.

1. "Minimalist Democracy" Revisited

[23] On the distinction between "brute facts" and "institutional facts," see Ostrom 1997, 25-6.

It is not difficult to imagine how Ostrom would respond to the "minimalist" conception of democracy, as is proposed by Schumpeter and defended by Przeworski. He would argue that this narrow notion of democracy is fundamentally flawed in that it neglects the broader epistemic, ontological, cultural foundations of democratic ways of life; its vision is confined to one particular portion of institutional arrangements of democracy – voting and election; it is obsessed with the language of strategy and ideology, thus ignoring how ideas are connected to deeds in the continuous problem-solving processes; it 'normalizes' strategic considerations of politicians and legitimizes the separation of formal politics from everyday lives of citizens; finally, it is not very helpful in understanding "how people learn to be self-governing" since it ultimately operates with the perspective of politicians not of citizens, and views democracy as nothing more or nothing less than a form of government rather than a way of life.

From this perspective, even if we agree with Przeworski that the achievement of minimalist democracy, i.e. a "peaceful regulation of conflicts," is not at all trivial one, a fundamental puzzle still remains: Can minimalist democracy be sustained by the minimalist institutional arrangements only – in case of Schumpeter, institutionalized competition for political leadership? It is helpful to see how this puzzle is, or is not, addressed by Schumpeter. The following passages deserve a close attention in assessing the tenability of Schumpeter's rejection of "classical theory of democracy" and proposition of "competitive elitism."

> It will be remembered that our chief troubles about the classical theory centered in the proposition that "the people" hold a definite and rational opinion about every individual question and that they give effect to this opinion – in a democracy – by choosing "representatives" who will see to it that that opinion is carried out. Thus the selection of the representatives is made secondary to the primary purpose of the democratic arrangement which is to vest the power of deciding political issues in the electorate. Suppose we reverse the roles of these two elements and make the deciding of issues by the electorate secondary to the election of the men who are to do the deciding. To put it differently, we now take the view that the role of the people is to produce a government, or else an intermediate body which in turn will produce a national executive or

> government. And we define: the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote (269).

As we have already seen, one of the major reasons Schumpeter rejects "classical theory" of democracy lies in "ordinary citizen's" alleged "ignorance and lack of judgment." He thus argues that we would be better off by burying people's opinions under the role of independent political leaders and letting them make actual political decisions. Here a critical issue arises: The validity of this transition of focus from the citizens to the leaders stands and falls with the tenability of the presupposition that political leaders, or "the men who are to do the deciding" on behalf of the people, are both cognitively and morally superior to "ordinary citizens" in their capacities of political judgment. However, Schumpeter fails to prove this is the case, while spending much time in discrediting "ordinary citizen's" capabilities. It is then hard to see why we should believe that the leaders are less vulnerable than "ordinary citizens" to those "with an ax to grind" – "groups … of professional politicians or of exponents of an economic interest or of idealists of one kind or another or of people simply interested in staging and managing political shows" (263).

In regard to this problem, Przeworski's work, ironically enough, has an effect of demystifying Schumpeter's proposition of "competitive elitism": He frankly admits that institutionalized competition for political leadership has at most very tenuous relationship with the 'quality' of democracy. The question remains: Why then is democracy better than, say, dictatorship? As we have seen, Przeworski's answer is that it enables us to escape Hobbesian state of nature by institutionalizing peaceful regulation of conflicts. I would make two points, one on Przeworski, the other on minimalist conception of democracy in general. First, is democracy really better in ensuring peaceful coexistence of conflicting interests? Przeworski claims that democracy can do this job, but, in my reading, does not prove democracy inherently can do better job than non-democracy. Another solution to Hobbesian state of nature was powerfully articulated by Hobbes

himself.[24] Second, more importantly, if minimalist democracy has the merit Przeworski ascribed to it, is it "election" that does the work? If the answer is negative, then contested election might simply be one of the most conspicuous institutional manifestations of democracy, not a deep cause that ensures democracy's achievement. Przeworski himself is keen to acknowledge this problem. He admits that the "miracle" of democracy "does not work under all conditions" (50).[25]

> In the end then, the Popperian posture is not sufficient, because democracy endures only under some conditions. Elections alone are not sufficient for conflicts to be resolved through elections. And while some of these conditions are economic, others are political and institutional. Thus, a minimalist conception of democracy does not alleviate the need for thinking about institutional design. In the end, the "quality of democracy," to use the currently fashionable phrase, does matter for its very survival. (50)

This 'disclaimer' bears serious implications because it admits that "more than elections are needed for elections to be held" (24). Then Przeworski's "defense" is not so much a defense of "competitive elections" *per se* as a defense of a complex set of institutional arrangements that is allegedly represented by competitive elections. Then, despite his explicit attribution, Przeworski's "defense" is not a defense of Schumpeter, since Schumpeter's notion of democracy does not include such institutional features that do the work together with competitive elections as separation of powers, mechanisms of checks and balances, constitutionalism, etc. These considerations demonstrate that the minimalist conception of democracy may not be able to defend itself in its own term, i.e. without recourse to a broader horizon which is not reduced to most obvious institutional manifestations of formal politics. Ostrom's call for a broader horizon of analysis, and dense institutional arrangements bears great relevance in this regard. Without these considerations, minimalist conception would then be nothing more than a declaration,

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[24] It seems to me that the case of Singapore, for example, is arguably closer to Hobbes's solution than that of Przeworski's.

[25] He adds: "Here then are three facts: (1) democracies are more likely to survive in wealthy countries; (2) they are more likely to last when no single political force dominates; and (3) they are more likely to endure when voters can choose rulers through elections. And these facts add up: democracy lasts when it offers an opportunity to the conflicting forces to advance their interests within the institutional framework" (50). But I consider these additions to be short of being comprehensive and somewhat tautological.

"elites rule." It would also be unable to defend why it is "more realistic" and "truer to life" than alternative conceptions.

2. "Politics of Ideas" Revisited

While Ostrom's conceptualization of democracy as a way of life has an important relevance in understanding the implications and limits of minimalist conception, his arguments also raise difficult puzzles. As I have tried to demonstrate, Schumpeter's transition of focus from "ordinary citizens" to "political leaders" is radically insufficient in sustaining minimalist democracy itself unless other complex conditions are met which enable democracy to work. If this is the case, we can also ask whether Ostrom's transition of focus from the "State" to the "citizens" would not suffer similar predicament, if from the opposite direction. In other words, just as it is groundless to believe that political elites are cognitively and morally superior to ordinary citizens in their capacities of political judgment, so would it be dangerous to suppose that citizens are inherently more virtuous and less corrupt than professional politicians. There are good reasons to suspect that the "logic of command and control" is no less prevalent in smaller-scale, local, and thus more participatory political processes than it is in larger-scale, professional, and formal politics. Contemporary researches show that more participatory and deliberative political arena is also likely to be heavily influenced by those with the resources to control agendas and bias decision-making. The point here is that bottom-up approach itself is not enough in sustaining democracy.[26] A more general point is that the complex context of institutional arrangements of a given society is much more important than the question of "Who governs?" But it should also be noted that Ostrom clearly shares these concerns.

> Such conditions are viable only when citizens develop a sufficient moral consciousness to appreciate that opportunism can be destructive of self-responsibility and mutual respect. Such conditions, however, need to be reinforced by institutional arrangements that can be

[26] Shapiro 2003, 29-30; Young 2000, 154-195.

effectively monitored, are subject to contestability, and afford access to effective modes of conflict resolution (141).

Rather, the tension in Ostrom's conceptualization seems to emerge from his notion of what I dubbed as "politics of ideas." Ostrom acknowledges that "organized inequality" is indispensable in human society in the sense that human beings cannot do without "rule-ruler-ruled relationships" which in turn require coercive mechanisms to enforce the rules: "Organization in human societies, then, depends on a Faustian bargain – a bargain with evil – where imposing deprivations on others via instruments of evil, that is, sanctions, including those of organized force, necessarily leaves some worse off rather than better off" (139). But the most fundamental dangers arise from this inevitability of political constraint, since "particular configurations of institutional arrangements will give strategic advantages to some to exploit other. No human institution exists that does not offer selective advantage to some at the cost of others under some circumstances. The Faustian bargain inherent in rule-ordered relationships can be used by some to manipulate others" (215). Thus the most important task of constitutional choice, and political science for that matter, in democratic societies, to Ostrom, is to develop such institutional mechanisms as to ensure limited exercise of coercive capabilities. This line of argument demonstrates that Ostrom, despite his apparent emphasis on "ideas" vis-à-vis "ideologies," does not neglect the exigencies of ordinary politics which "realists" often claims themselves to be the expert of. It also shows that Ostrom does not intend to promote an "idealistic" model of politics which does not bear much relevance to what we are experiencing in everyday politics. Rather he operates with an "ideal-type" of democratic ways of life in an effort to illuminate what we are lacking and how we should proceed.[27]

For all these considerations, Ostrom's understanding of the nature of politics still raises deep tension. The source of this tension, I argue, is that he conceives the logic of power politics, strategic considerations, and the language of ideology, to be "anomaly" or "pathology" rather than an integral part of politics itself (179, 214). This tension is observed in two instances.

[27] So did Tocqueville practice "ideal-typical" analysis before Max Weber invented a name for it. See Welch 2001, 1, 102.

First, Ostrom's contrast between "*power over* relationship" and "*power with* relationship" demands a critical scrutiny. Ostrom criticizes that the concept of power as, for example, defined by Lasswell and used by James Bryce and Woodrow Wilson is "closer to that of dominance, implying command and control over others." Therefore, he continues, this concept of power "does not enable us to advance very far in coming to terms with the constitution of order in democratic, as contrasted to authoritarian, societies" (272).[28] But this rendition runs the risk of a simple dichotomy of equating "*power with* relationship" with democracy, and "*power over* relationship" with authoritarianism. It is not hard to imagine the threats from the prevalence of "*power over* relationship" as articulated by Ostrom. But this does not mean that "*power with* relationship" would be attainable without proper consideration of the mechanism of "*power over* relationship." The consideration of "the Faustian bargain" and the inevitability of "coercive capabilities" in human order rather suggests that the "*power over*" relationship might be inherent to the nature of power itself, thus cannot be discarded without running the risk of losing analytical and empirical relevance. If "perverse opportunistic strategies" are something prevalent in the nature of politics as he often recognizes, then "the strategic considerations" about rule-ruler-ruled relationships should not simply be dismissed as "anomaly" of "pathology", something we should purge politics of.[29]

Second, Ostrom's emphasis on commonality and consensus as necessary conditions of democratic societies is also controversial. According to Ostrom, meaningful democracy is possible only in meaningful communities; and "the conditions of community" in turn "are met when consensus prevails about the common knowledge, shared communities of understanding, and patterns of accountability to such a degree that mutual trust prevails among those participating in such communities of relationships" (291). But to presume such a highly-integrated community as a precondition of the existence of democracy is somewhat counterintuitive in most contemporary democracies where societies are essentially ridden with economic, cultural, and moral conflicts. Seeking "a religion in common" and fashioning "public philosophy" in such conditions

[28] For details, see Ostrom 1997, 44-60, 272-79.
[29] For a similar line of argument see, for example, Shapiro 2003, 50-77.

might either aggravate 'differences' even more or deteriorate into a pseudo-consensus with oppressive implications to those who does not share mainstream views. The tendency to assume "agreement" and "consensus" as what democracy should be aiming at might have negative implications for this reason. Here again it would be dangerous to regard differences and conflicts as "anomaly" and "pathology" that we should get rid of from politics.[30]

3. "Self-governing Society" Revisited

Another difficult problem in Ostrom's analysis arises from his discussion of "vulnerabilities" of democracy. Ostrom observes that "American democracy is at risk" and asks "Why has a flood of crises inundated the United States of America and other democracies in the contemporary world?" (3) The "crisis" of American democracy is reflected in "basic transformations" that American system of governance has experienced. According to Ostrom, these transformations "have occurred over approximately ten generations."

> Basic transformations have occurred in the American system of governance, from a system with such noteworthy features as a federal system having the advantages of both large republics and small republics to one of Presidential Government run from the Executive Office of the President exercising tutelage over innumerable multitude. All citizens are presumed to be equal and alike, endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives, while turning to the Government as the sole agent and arbiter of their happiness, to paraphrase Tocqueville. ... What remains troubling is the transformation from a free, self-governing society with townships and judicial processes in which citizens participated both in tending to their common concerns and rendering judgment about the application and enforcement of laws to a society that turns to something called "Government" to address the problems of life (28).[31]

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[30] Schumpeter and Przeworski's arguments on this issue are certainly worth reconsidering. For a similar line of argument, see Shapiro 2003, 10-34; Young 2000, 81-120.
[31] Also see Ostrom 1987, 167-234.

Understanding the nature of this crisis and probing for the possibility of coping with it forms the central task of Ostrom's intellectual endeavor. As the following quotation suggests, his entire theoretical framework can be situated within this context.

> These transformations suggest why I turn from the study of "government" to questions about the place of ideas, language, and culture in the constitution of order in democratic societies. An understanding of Tocqueville's diagnosis of Democratic Despotism ... requires attention to the place of language and culture in constituting their "character of mind" and shaping "the whole moral and intellectual condition" of people (28).

Understood in this context, Ostrom's analysis of the crisis of contemporary democracies, and the vulnerability of democracies in general, culminates in the meaning and origin of this "transformations" from "Self-governing Societies" to "State-governed Societies": This crisis is inevitable "when those who exercise the prerogatives of Government attempt to cope with all of the problems of life, sparing people the cares of thinking and the troubles of living. The whole moral and intellectual conditions of a people are placed at risk" (26). This crisis in turn "place both American society and contemporary civilization at risk" (28). The rise of untrammeled governmental prerogatives is conceived by Ostrom to be the initiator and the true source of the crisis.

Thus Ostrom's discussion of how to cope with the threats to democratic ways of life also centers on the problem of how to limit and check governmental authority. "A critical issue," he claims, "is whether the principles of rule-ordered relationships can be extended to place limits on those who exercise governmental prerogatives, by recourse to a constitutional level of choice." "So long as appropriate limits can be maintained with regard to the exercise of governmental prerogatives," he continues, "citizens, through their exercise of constitutional choice and their willingness to challenge those who infringe on those limits, can be said to make the "political laws," as Tocqueville asserted" (141).

However, difficult problems emerge from Ostrom's emphatic focus on "the State" in discussing the sources of and possible solutions to the vulnerability of democracies. Despite his emphasis on the necessity of the broader horizon of political life, as manifested in his criticism of the current state of the discipline of political science, he

tends to narrowly focus on the governmental prerogatives in dealing with the threats to democratic ways of life. I draw three implications from this general observations.[32]

First, we need more complex and comprehensive understanding about the sources of the vulnerability of democratic ways of life. If the viability of democracies essentially turns on the "coevolutionary development" of epistemic, economic, juridical or political orders as suggested earlier by Ostrom, the sources of vulnerability of democracies should also be analyzed from diverse perspectives including epistemic, economic, cultural, and political realm of human existence. It is one thing to argue that the emergence of "State-governed Society" is the symptomatic manifestations of the crisis, and it is another to regard "the State" as *the* source of the crisis. Second, as a corollary of the previous argument, limiting governmental prerogatives may not be sufficient, and sometimes not the best, way of coping with vulnerability of democracies.

Third, it would thus be advisable to carefully consider the possibilities and conditions of more positive role of the state apparatus in enhancing self-governing capabilities of citizens. Ostrom's emphatic dichotomy between "Self-governing Societies" and "State-governed Societies" tends to render it difficult to probe for the possible complementarity between the role of the democratic states and the central place of citizenship. The real challenge would be not so much choosing between the perspective of the state and that of the citizens, as searching for a fruitful combination of the two. Is it possible for the state to be powerful and effective but not domineering and patronizing? Can democratic states encourage the particular perspectives of marginalized or disadvantaged social groups to obtain 'voices' in political arena, while not declaring in advance what those voices should be? Is it possible for democratic states play a positive role in developing basic skills and capacities of citizens – what Amartya Sen (1992) calls "capabilities" – without attempting to "cope with all of the problems of life, sparing people the cares of thinking and the troubles of living," as Tocqueville and Ostrom worry? Recent researches on social capital in development issues supports this line of thinking, showing state-society synergy is not an impossibility.[33] Also many prominent observers of post-communist societies persuasively argue that one of the most serious

[32] These issues also form an important part of current debates on EU integration and transnational democracy.
[33] Evans 1997.

problems these societies are facing is the incompetence and ineffectiveness of the state apparatus.[34] Moreover, Madison himself also argued that we "must first enable the government to control the governed," before "oblig[ing] it to control itself." Turning our backs on state institutions, I argue, is not necessarily conducive to building and maintaining self-governing societies.

V. In Lieu of Conclusion

Democracy typically fails to deliver what it promises. So democracy invariably disappoints. But, as Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón argues, "if we respond to this reality by abandoning the aspirations people associate with democracy, the danger is that we will end up with an ideal that will not merit enduring allegiance."[35] The value of the task of going back to the fundamental issues of the role and realm of politics, and the meaning and conditions of democracies, is not necessarily negated by the discrepancy between democracy's promise and its disappointments.[36] The challenge remains to develop both theoretical reference points and dense institutional arrangements that can bridge the gap. Ostrom's work is best understood in the context of this endeavor.

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[34] Dahrendorf 1990, Holmes 1995, Holmes 1997.

[35] Shapiro and Hacker-Cordón 1999, 18.

[36] In this regard, I think Ostrom's concept of "warrantability" has much different implications than the concept of "empirical validity" which is often employed in social science research. On "warrantability," see Ostrom 1997, 91-2.

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