

# What is this thing called democracy? A discussion from the perspective of subjective global multi-attractedness

---

Tommi Lehtonen

Faculty of Philosophy

University of Vaasa

*Tämä artikkeli tekee selkoa demokratian käsitteestä ja sen yhteiskuntafilosofisista edellytyksistä. Tarkastelu tapahtuu modernin tutkimuskirjallisuuden (mm. Rawls ja Tuomela) sekä klassikkotekstien kuten Platonin Valtion, Aristoteleen Poliitikan ja Rousseau'n Yhteiskuntasopimuksen pohjalta. Analyysissä käytetään muun muassa näissä teoksissa kehitettyä käsitteistöä sekä artikkelin kirjoittajan esittämää näkökulman käsitteen jaottelua. Uudeksi välineeksi kehitetään subjektiiviseksi globaaliksi moniviehtyneisyydeksi kutsuttu näkemys, joka tarjoaa informatiivisen viitekehysten demokratiakäsityksen kehittämiseksi. Keskeiset tulokset ovat seuraavat: demokratia määritellään yhteistoiminnalliseksi hallintojärjestelmäksi, jossa kansalaisten tulee sopia a) päätöksentekotavoista, joilla yhteisöllisiä kysymyksiä käsitellään yhdessä, ja b) siitä, mitä ongelmia yritetään ratkaista yhdessä. Näin voidaan luoda yhdessä hyväksytty näkökulma yhteisölliseen todellisuuteen ja ihanneyhteiskuntaan. Tässä tehtävässä subjektiivisilla globaaleilla moniviehtyneillä voi olla tärkeä rooli, koska he ymmärtävät vastapuolia ja ovat kiinnostuneita heistä. Tämä mahdollistaa yhteiskunnallisten kysymysten maltillisen käsittelyn moniäänisyyttä hukkaamatta. Siitä on etua, kun astutaan neuvottelupöytien ääreen etsimään monimutkaisiin ongelmiin parhaita mahdollisia ratkaisuja.*

**Keywords:** consensus, democracy, general will, point of view, subjective global multi-attractedness

## 1 Introduction

The subject of this paper is the concept of democracy in multicultural societies where citizens have conflicting interests. In fact, such is the state of democracy practically everywhere in the world today, where different traditions come into regular contact with each other as never before. Because of this, and the growing scarcity of economic and natural resources, all modern democracies face more or less serious problems with regard to public choice.

The present paper presents a cautious view of the premises and goals of democracy. First of all, it draws from a component analysis of the concept of a 'point of view'. Such an analysis is necessary in order to identify the conditions for compromise among people with different interests and perspectives.

We consistently see things from a certain point of view, because as physical beings we are always spatially and temporally situated. Similarly, as political beings our points of view are culturally, socially, historically and in many other ways conditioned, situated and finite, as Nietzsche famously suggested (*The Will to Power* §616; Nietzsche 1968: 330), and Heidegger confirmed (Heidegger 2000: 20, 44). An appropriate comprehension of the perspectival nature of our thinking is important, because the discussion and negotiation necessary for democratic decision-making require the ability to consider things from different points of view.

This paper's understanding of democracy also draws from the standpoint I refer to as *subjective global multi-attractedness*. According to *subjective global multi-attractedness*, the backbone of democracy consists of the following principles, the first of which is individual-centred while the other two are tradition- and community-centred. First, members of a democratic society should mutually respect each other's equal right to participate in decision-making. Second, the majority of members of a democratic society should act cooperatively in a way that respects each other's opinions and traditions. Thus they should also respect the right to be heard of those members of society who live and think differently from the majority. Third, it is of benefit to a democratic society that some (or even many) of its members are attracted (but not necessarily committed) to ways of thinking that are opposed to each other, such as liberalism and conservatism, environmentalism and economic expansionism, or religiousness and secularism. The first two of the above principles form the minimum requirement for a society to be democratic. The third principle presents a recipe for sharing and identifying with at least some of the same special interests that one's opponents have, and can therefore be called *a requirement for greater cohesion among members of society*. Such a sharing of interests reinforces deliberation in political decision-making, and makes it possible for decision-making not to be conditional on or suppressed by various groups' particular interests. When participants in the decision-making process share the same interests, albeit with different levels of commitment, their emotional involvement with the issues at stake plays a lesser role, even when they disagree on the decisions to be made. Assuming that your opponents see your point of view and that you know this, you do not need to fervently defend your opinion. That helps in addressing even diffi-

cult issues rationally and dispassionately. The present paper contrasts this view of democracy with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's concept of the general will, which emphasizes the public interest over the private.

From these starting points and based on the classical ideas of democracy, the following definition can be formulated: A democracy is an egalitarian and cooperative system of government where citizens first agree on how decisions in which social issues are dealt with jointly are made. Second, given the distinction between private and public matters, citizens should agree on which problems they will try to solve together. Citizens in a democracy are therefore expected to agree on the form and content of governance. Accordingly, one of the goals of a democracy is to create a jointly agreed-upon view of the society. Thus, it can be said that a democracy works properly if it solves social problems from the point of view of its citizens' interests. Accordingly, a democracy involves not only solving topical problems but also establishing and realizing social values and ideals. The common perspective of citizens is based on the general interests of individuals, including interests related to their economic, social, and physical well-being. This common perspective also includes the value of maintaining a democratic system.

Both tasks – affirming social values and solving political problems – require an understanding of different individual and social points of view. Such an understanding is at the heart of compromise, and compromise is what makes a modern democratic society possible. However, it should also be recognized that understanding different points of view is not the same as agreeing with them. Likewise, compromise is not the same as abandoning one's own interests. Yet it is a fact of life that we must often give something up in order to get or keep something else. Obviously, this is also true of democracy.

Two additional preliminary remarks are necessary. First, democracy ideally offers a form of politics and community life in which there are equitable ways of deliberating about and negotiating values, as well as resolving value disputes. However, democracy does not necessarily presuppose any agreement on diverse values. Rather, it suggests a way of leaving the resolution of value conflicts, whatever they are, open to participants

in a public process. This process is protected by provisions regarding the type and shape of the democratic process itself (Held 2007: 261). The provisions include a written constitution and other legislation as well as a legal system of government.

Second, in a fully functioning democracy people should be equally able to effectively express their will in the deliberations that determine not only the distribution of resources but also the kinds of resources that the society provides. Some of these resources are collective and communal, such as public parks and the like (Christman 2002: 87). Deliberations concerning these require public outlets and mechanisms, such as social media and mass communication that allow for a free flow of information and opinion. It can therefore be said that democracy means a complex network for the exchange of ideas (Christman 2002: 119).

The nature and role of democracy can be discussed from either a historical or systematic point of view. Systematic perspectives on democracy include philosophical, ethical and political research frameworks. This paper focuses on the concept of democracy from the philosophical and social-ethical point of view. Before this view of democracy can be explained and evaluated in greater detail, however, it is necessary to present background information and explore representative examples of the historical ideas of democracy.

## **2 The history of the idea of democracy**

The history of the idea of democracy is curious and the history of democracies puzzling. First, political leaders of extraordinarily diverse views have professed themselves to be democrats, and political regimes of all kinds have described themselves as democracies. Second, while many countries today may be more democratic than in the past, the history of political institutions reveals the fragility and vulnerability of democratic arrangements (Held 2007: 1). Therefore in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of democratic systems and thereby form an adequate view of what ‘this thing called democracy’ is, it is necessary to look at its roots.

According to received opinion, democracy is a polity in which the people rule themselves through representatives elected by the majority of citizens. This system of government, commonly called representative democracy, is the most common governmental system in modern countries generally considered to be democratic.

It goes without saying, perhaps, that the idea of “ruling themselves through representatives” is vague and problematic. One of the leading theorists of social liberalism, British sociologist Leonard Hobhouse, pointed out as early as 1922 that “contemporary criticism of democracy concentrates itself mainly on representative government as the nidus of oligarchy” (Hobhouse 2009: 102). Judging from discussions in the mass media, many commentators today also think that the present model of representative government is a travesty of democracy. The reasons for this critical evaluation include political opportunism demonstrated by politicians, the old boys’ networks of political and economic establishments, and campaign finance scandals. These threats to democracy are also encountered in Finland and other Northern European countries, which according to Transparency International (2013) are among the least corrupt in the world.

From an administrative perspective, democracy is a system of decision-making in which everyone who belongs to the organ making the decision is potentially or actually involved. Basically every member of a democracy therefore has equal power. However, some restrictions always apply in real-life democracies, for example regarding the voting age. It is also worth noting that not only societies but also families, workplaces and many other entities can be, in a sense, democratic. Thus one might say that a necessary condition for democracy is that all members of the group or community concerned are treated equally and have equal rights, including the right to vote and to participate in decision-making either directly or through their representatives. Therefore the right to participate politically is an essential component of citizens’ liberty (Held 2007: 43).

The nature and value of democracy attracts the interest of many scholars including historians, philosophers, sociologists and political scientists. Linguists are particularly interested in the terminology, concepts and linguistic practices related to democracy. Etymologies tell us that the word *democracy* originates from the Greek δημοκρατία

(dēmokratía), which, translated word for word, means *rule by the people* or the *people rule*. The word δῆμος (dêmos) means *people* (or *populace, the masses of the free poor*) and κράτος (kratos), *power* or *rule*. A related term is πολιτεία (politeía), which means *civil regime* or *constitutional government*. Such a polity, where the majority of the people rules, was Aristotle's favourite because it tends to the public interest (*Politics* III, 7, 1279a36–38; Aristotle 1998: 100).

The term *democracy* has been used since the fifth century BCE to denote the political systems that existed in Greek city-states, notably Athens. For those interested in learning more about the classical Greek concept of democracy, an exploration of Aristotle's *Politics*, Book 6, Chapters 1 to 5, is recommended. Suffice it to say that Aristotle criticizes certain forms and aspects of democracy. In short, he regards the fact that the poor largely outnumber the rich as a problem in democracy, one which results in the poor having more power (*Politics* VI, 2, 1317b10, 1317b40; VI, 3, 1318a30–40; VI, 4, 1318b30–40; Aristotle 1998: 231–236). Obviously, Aristotle doubts the competence and administrative skills, among other things, of the poor.

Aristotle is not alone in this concern. In the sixth book of *The Republic*, Plato poetically states that “it is not natural for the master to request the crew to be guided by him (...); the true and natural order is (...) for those in want of guidance to wait on him who can give it, if he's really any use, and not for him to wait on them” (489b–c; Plato 1956: 250). In Plato's view, the ruler must therefore be qualified for his status by nature and nurture. A common objection to democracy has been that it, by seeing everyone's opinions as of equal value, considers those of the ignorant to be as important as those of the knowledgeable. This concern is the basis for the famous phrase, “the tyranny of the majority”. The phrase was used by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* (1835) (1.2.7–8; Tocqueville 2003: 292, 305) and adopted by John Stuart Mill in the Introduction to *On Liberty* (1859) (Mill 2006: 10). Björn Wahlroos is in Finland one of the more recent proponents of the term.

Thus what has been seen as the questionable ability of democratic systems to produce properly informed decisions has raised apprehension. Various models of democracy that

concentrate on deliberation among people representing different interest groups rather than on people just feeding opinions into a voting mechanism have attempted to alleviate this doubt. Such deliberation can also involve information from experts as an important element in laying the foundations for sounder decision-making.

Deliberative or discursive democracy is a recent trend in discussions on the spread and influence of representative government. It is now commonplace to talk about the deliberative turn in democratic theory, or the shift from a mere vote-centred democracy to a more dialogic one (Dryzek 2002). James Bohman highlights deliberative democracy and the related public deliberation of citizens as “the core of legitimate political decision-making and self-governance” (Bohman 1998: 401; see also Held 2007: 237). The heart of the study and practice of deliberative democracy in Finland is the University of Vaasa, where Professor Pirkko Vartiainen and her research team have pioneered the use of citizens’ juries, World Café workshops and other forms of deliberative democracy.

*Democracy* is an antonym of *aristocracy* (Greek ἀριστοκρατία) or *rule by an elite*. Other rivals to democracy include dictatorship, oligarchy and monarchy. It should be remembered that the political system of classical Athens, for example, granted citizenship only to the elite class of free men, thereby excluding slaves and women from political participation. Thus in the city-states of antiquity, democracy for the few was connected to the degradation of the many. One should not therefore hasten to say that deliberative democracy represents a return to democracy’s roots (including face-to-face public meetings of citizens), even if democracy in the city-states of ancient Greece was, in a limited sense, more direct and discursive than the modern representative form. Historically, virtually all democratic governments up until the recent past have limited political rights to an elite class. Only the suffrage movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries succeeded in achieving full enfranchisement for all adult citizens.

Democracy is generally seen to promote liberty and equality, the key values of liberalism. Yet not all democratic movements represent Western liberalism. For example, the “Arab Spring” democracy movement might have set its sights on the present Turkish

model rather than on Western liberal democracy. In this regard, Amartya Sen's *Identity and Violence*, (2007: 51–55) vindicates the non-Western roots of democracy.

I have thus far offered an outline of the concept of democracy, its basic characteristics, some of its history, and the etymology of the term. But what we have arrived at is merely a reactivated pre-understanding of the established concept of democracy. The concepts I am looking for and will develop in what follows involve a more nuanced understanding of the prerequisites for democracy and its different types. In addressing these and other issues, I will use the concept of a 'point of view' as an analytical tool. Therefore, I begin by shedding light on features that are central to this concept.

### **3 Initial remarks on the concept of a point of view**

Although the term *point of view* is used in everyday language and in science, its meaning is vague and unspecific. In its concrete sense, the term refers to the physical, spatial and temporal position from which something is seen or viewed (Currie 2012: 88). Figuratively, it refers to the perspective from which a subject or event is perceived or a story is narrated. This meaning is closely related to another one, for a point of view can also refer to a person's state of mind or opinion (Lehtonen 2011: 244). A collective, such as a parliament or municipal council, can also have an opinion and thus a point of view, at least in the sense of a voting result and majority decision.

Although the meaning of the term is vague, Hautamäki suggests that at least one common feature is evident in the different uses of the expression "from  $x$ 's point of view": namely that it can act as a kind of operator which can be used as a prefix at the beginning of a sentence. The expression "from  $x$ 's point of view" (where  $x$  denotes a subject, "tool", or object of a point of view, i.e., a person, a subject type, an event, an affair, a moral value, etc.) indicates that the grounds for stating the sentence which then follows are somehow restrictive and limiting. Therefore if a statement is made from a certain point of view, then not everything has been taken into account and not all relevant possibilities have been considered; rather, only some of the aspects of an object are selected, depending on interests, aims, values, background assumptions, etc. (Hautamäki

1986: 63, 65, cf. Giere 2006: 81). It is evident that political decision-making, be it democratic or not, is always based on selected information depending on the political interests, aims and values of different parties as well as on selected sources of information. Thus political decision-making always takes place from a certain perspective and for certain purposes.

It is true of everyday life as well as of scientific investigation that the totality of reality can never be addressed. Instead, certain aspects of reality that can be observed and that are considered particularly relevant are “selected”, while others are ignored. Therefore when we consider something from a point of view, we supposedly perceive only part, or some, of the aspects or properties of that thing (Giere 2006: 15, 43, 59; Lehtonen 2011: 239). It is typical of political rhetoric since antiquity to present opinions as if they were self-evident truths considered from a neutral point of view or that of any rational person. However, political opinions are in reality strongly influenced by various value premises.

The following cases exemplify the limitations and perspectivity of our cognitive endeavours. It is a common experience that one may perceive things in ways that another person might not (Currie 2012: 90); for example, a low-income citizen may see economic recession as a threat, whereas a well-off citizen may not be as concerned. Different social classes may thus have different interests, expectations, and background knowledge. Political scientists can also have “blind spots” where they fail to perceive something important in their field of study. Although the theories and conceptual tools used by academics (such as political scientists) can help to clarify many things, they can also prevent perceiving others that are equally noteworthy. This supports the view that scientific study in particular should be multifaceted, and carried out, if possible, from more than one point of view. The same holds true of political considerations. In order to be democratic, political discussion should be many-sided, not only for informational reasons (i.e., in order for politicians and citizens to be as well-informed as possible) but also for making justice and equality a reality.

An important social issue is that different limited and partial perspectives on reality can create abstract boundaries among different people and social groups that may function

as catalysts for political conflict and disagreement. In fact, slanted perspectives are the *sine qua non* of political parties. Perspectival differences and the related promoting of the interests of certain groups only are therefore the bases for political parties. On the other hand, specific perspectives enable understanding, because if we are to consider and understand anything at all, it must be done from a point of view. It is also claimed that a neutral perspective is a conceptual impossibility, and that the notion of understanding presupposes understanding from a certain point of view (MacIntyre 2003: 367). There is no view from nowhere, as Thomas Nagel aptly puts it (Nagel 1986: 6–7, 14–15, 25–26, 67, 70). Hence, it is necessary to consider more closely the constituent elements of the concept of a point of view, because these effectively contribute to understanding different political ideas and practices. The possibility of changing a point of view also depends on those constituent elements. Identifying the elements in question is therefore crucial for an adequate understanding of the possibilities for a democratic society. In such a society, the different perspectives and interests of citizens are adequately taken into account.

#### **4 The constituent elements of a point of view**

We have already observed that points of view are limited. So even if we think we see a material object in its entirety, for example, we actually see only the properties of the object that our sense perception and actual observational conditions allow us to see. Our “resolution power” and analytic capacity are limited (and more limited for some than for others); hence our point of view is limited by partial or incomplete information (Giere 2006: 35–36). A point of view, then, represents the capacity to observe and understand reality and, at the same time, a certain kind of limited or partial perspective (Nagel 1986: 6, 26; Currie 2012: 89). This perspectivity is not limited only to perceptual observation and political consideration but is also met in abstract thinking and rational deduction, such as arithmetic and conceptual analysis.

The “location” or vantage point, of the observer is one of the elements of a point of view. A vantage point is a concrete spatial location, but it can also be metaphorical – a cultural, historical or ideological location (or situatedness). Other main aspects of a

point of view include its range and focus. If we borrow optical terms, it can be said that insofar as a point of view has a clear focal point, everything else in its range (i.e., that which is not focused on) is part of the more or less fuzzy environment surrounding the focal point (cf. *Truth and Method* II.4.1.B.iv; Gadamer 2006: 301). For example, it is typical to criticize one's political opponents for focusing on what is insignificant or untrue.

We can also distinguish between observer-oriented and object- or focus-oriented points of view. This distinction can be illustrated by imagining a tube through which we look at our surroundings. At one end of the tube is the eye of the observer. At the other end is a view. When a point of view is seen as someone's, or as belonging to someone, we have an observer-oriented concept of a point of view. When a point of view is seen to be directed toward something, we have an object- or focus-oriented concept of a point of view.

The tube itself can also be part of what we see when we look through it at our surroundings. Similarly, the "limits" of a point of view can appear in the view we get when we consider something from a specific point of view. Therefore a point of view can discern factors and features (e.g., needs, interests, concerns, concepts) that would not appear if reality were seen from a different point of view. To put it another way, the structure and properties of a tube (or of a point of view itself) form new constellations (and "colourations") together with the view that opens from the tube – constellations that would not appear if the tube were not there (or if the point of view were different). This also explains people's suspicion that politicians live in a kind of other reality. They use different terms and concepts, and have, due to their status and need to be re-elected, different interests than the electorate. Thus their point of view is at least partly different from that of the populace at large. Politicians of various ideological persuasions are therefore often said to "wear different-coloured glasses".

Points of view are not neutral or impartial – they do not leave everything as it is. Instead, they are constructive because they actively contribute to what is, or can be seen or considered. A related fact is that a person's opinions correlate with his or her point of

view. On the one hand, a person's opinion and attitude can change if the person changes the point of view from which she or he observes or considers something. It can therefore be said that a leftist and a right-winger have different points of view concerning the same reality (inasmuch as they speak about the same reality in the first place). On the other hand, changes of opinion and attitude are apt to lead to a shift in points of view. For example, if someone who earlier exhibited a consumerist lifestyle becomes an environmentalist, then she or he would supposedly pay much more attention to environmental issues than before, and the person's point of view with respect to reality would have changed. Hence, a change in our point of view may include a reconfiguration of conceptual and moral commitments that enables us to see things in a new way (cf. Gendler 2010: 36).

We have already distinguished different meanings of the term *point of view*. Yet another definition can be given based on the above key elements of it: the concept of a point of view, in a figurative sense, refers to perception and linguistic thinking (e.g., epistemic and ethical considerations), which consist of many factors, some of which relate to the observing subject, some to the tools of observation, and some to the object of observation. These constituent elements and their ability to be substituted for other elements of the same type are presented in Table 1 (cf. Lehtonen 2011: 250–251). The substitutability of the elements of a point of view is important for democracy, because a well-functioning democracy requires citizens' cooperation and an all-round discussion of social issues. The ability to change points of view is necessary for such a discussion.

**Table 1.** The constituent elements of a point of view and the possibilities for their replacement

<i>Observer-related factors</i>	<i>Is it possible to substitute other elements of the same type</i>	
	<i>from one's own tradition?</i>	<i>from another tradition?</i>
The subject (observer, viewer, possessor) or the type of subject	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes (if present and reachable)</i>
The interests, aims and values of the subject	<i>maybe</i>	<i>maybe</i>
The mental attitude or state of mind of the subject (the "colour" of viewing)	<i>maybe</i>	<i>maybe</i>
The relevant background knowledge and expectations of the subject, including the political commitments and ontological premises that direct the subject's modes of thinking and understanding	<i>yes (to some extent)</i>	<i>maybe</i>
The spatial and temporal location (i.e., the vantage point) of the subject	<i>yes</i>	<i>maybe</i>
The subject's cultural, historical and economic context, including the culturally determined standards of truth, rationality and consistency	<i>maybe (through imagination)</i>	<i>maybe (through imagination)</i>
<i>Tools-related factors</i>		
Observational instruments (e.g., binoculars, telescope, microscope), the tools of the trade	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
The conceptual apparatus (concepts, metaphors, models, theories, frameworks, etc.) used by the subject	<i>yes (to some extent)</i>	<i>maybe</i>
The method or approach to viewing	<i>yes</i>	<i>maybe</i>
The basis of viewing, the data (i.e., source material)	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
<i>Object-related factors</i>		
The object, subject matter or focus of a point of view	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
The features or properties of the object	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes</i>
The environment or the thematic context in which the object appears, the domain of the discourse	<i>yes</i>	<i>yes (to some extent)</i>

Table 1 expresses my conviction that the constituent elements of a point of view, or at least most of them, can be switched step by step either by using the available resources (i.e., concepts, background assumptions, empirical knowledge, etc.) of one's own tradition, interest group, or political party, or by borrowing elements from another tradition (i.e., culture, background, social surroundings, etc.). This requires a good knowledge of one's own and the other tradition as well as an ability to imagine and to feel empathy (i.e., an ability to address "what if" questions and to recognize other persons' interests). To acquire such knowledge, mutual discussion and becoming acquainted with different

people are necessary. The obstacles to a changing point of view are thus practical rather than principled (see Giere 2006: 32–33, 83–84).

Based on the above distinction, a point of view can basically be changed by changing 1) the “vantage point”, 2) the “tools” of viewing, or 3) the object of “viewing”. These different aspects of a point of view are often closely interrelated and can change at the same time. The “vantage point” can be changed, for example, by altering the starting points, background assumptions, or focus of examination as well as by changing the mood or way of thinking. Changing the “tools” of viewing can involve not only material tools (e.g., machines, instruments, software and production space) but also conceptual tools such as concepts, theories, models and frameworks (Giere 2006: 43, 59–60).

Observer-related factors such as the interests, aims and values (including political ones) of the subject as well as his or her attitudes are usually very resistant to change; so are the subject’s cultural and historical context, including the culturally determined standards of truth, rationality and consistency. Therefore the subject is said to carry his or her cultural and historical background within him- or herself. However, if the person in question is to a relevant extent creative and acquainted with another tradition (or political conviction) as well as another person’s perspective, she or he may also be able to change these factors, at least partly and temporarily. Obviously, people’s background knowledge and ability to feel empathy differ, and for this reason different persons are differently capable of changing their points of view.

## **5 Requirements for democracy**

After determining the requirements for changing a point of view, let us return to the prerequisites for democracy. Democracy is, as defined above, a system of government in which citizens develop a jointly agreed-upon perspective on social reality and an ideal society. From a legal and procedural point of view, such agreement requires neither a consensus of all citizens nor agreement on all decisions. Instead, it requires (simple or qualified) majority decisions and a consensus about the legitimate procedure for decision-making.

Drawing from the above component analysis of the concept of a point of view, democracy first requires the ability of citizens to identify different points of view. Second, democracy requires the ability to change a point of view from one's own thoughts and feelings to those of others. This ability is necessary because otherwise a genuine discussion, including the possibility of changing one's opinion, is impossible. (This is, in fact, something that political debates are often criticized for: they do not involve a genuine exchange of views, but rather show fixed opinions.) Third, democracy requires something that can be called, for lack of a better term, the general citizens' point of view. Another pertinent name for it is the *we-perspective*.

The 'we-perspective' is a concept that Raimo Tuomela has examined and explained. Tuomela distinguishes between thinking and acting as a private person and as a group member. People may view things from their own personal viewpoints and base their thinking and acting on this 'I-perspective'. In that case, they can be said to operate as private persons, in the I-mode, even when they are engaged in social action with others. Alternatively, they may adopt the perspective of their social group and view things from the 'we-perspective', that is to say, from the group's point of view that is shared by its members. Then they can be said to operate in a we-mode. According to Tuomela, the collective intentionality of the we-mode is a conceptual prerequisite for understanding basic social notions, and in several contexts we-mode intentionality is preferable to 'pro-group' I-mode intentionality. Consequently, social life and social institutions cannot be properly understood or explained in terms of I-mode concepts only, and in certain respects, the we-mode supersedes the I-mode. Tuomela thus argues that the we-mode is irreducible to the I-mode because the 'we' as a social group is a mereological whole that is not constructed as the sum of its parts (Tuomela 2007: 3–12). Therefore the 'we-perspective' cannot be reduced to the sum of 'I-perspectives'. In Tuomela's view, this is the case because such reduction would require an infinite regress or circularity of, for example, my knowledge about your knowledge (i.e., I know that you know that I know that you know, and so on, *ad infinitum*), which is impossible (Tuomela 2007: 73–79, 268, fn. 32).

This argument may sound far-fetched, and it is possible to explain the irreducibility of the ‘we-perspective’ to ‘I-perspectives’ less abstractly: the ‘we-perspective’ requires a group of people that acts intentionally as a collective, such as a parliament or municipal council, whereas the sum of ‘I-perspectives’ can be formed by any accidental aggregate of people who need not have anything in common. Accordingly, the ‘we-perspective’ is irreducible to ‘I-perspectives’. This discussion obviously leads to the conclusion that the ‘we-perspective’ is essential to a democracy, insofar as a democracy involves citizens’ efforts to act collectively. According to a long tradition extending from Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* (1762), such a perspective should be understood as the point of view of citizens in general, not as the point of view of group interests. We will return to this view later.

However, it is first worth noting that the creation of a ‘we-perspective’ for a democracy requires rational and balanced deliberation among citizens. It may also require the advice and assistance of experts, as is the case with citizens’ juries (Held 2007: 249). Furthermore, a democratic ‘we-perspective’ requires something that can be called, following Jürgen Habermas (1985), an ideal speech situation, meaning that it is free from oppression and inequality. In such a speech situation the best argument will win, and does so only because it is the best argument rationally, morally and emotionally. A ‘we-perspective’, in which the requirements for an ideal speech situation are fulfilled, can be said to equal what Rousseau calls the general will of the people (*la volonté générale*). Such a will arises when each and every citizen puts his or her person and all of his or her power at the disposal of the whole community (*The Social Contract* I.6; Rousseau 1977: 175).

In his book, Rousseau presents a comprehensive theory of the legitimacy of the state and government that revolves around the concept of the general will. The starting point for Rousseau is the conviction that people ought to be able to influence the laws under which they live. This influence must take place on the basis of the general will that benefits the public interest of all citizens. Following the general will guarantees that individuals do not need to submit to the will of others.

The concept of the general will is thus a plea for a perfect democracy and people's equality. What general will means is members of a political community sharing a public or general interest that is placed above private interests. When the members put the public good first, they follow the general will of their community. For Rousseau, a society is just and free only when governed by a social contract that embodies the general will of the people (Christman 2002: 49). Therefore one must completely divorce one's own interests from the general will in matters concerning society (*The Social Contract* IV.1; Rousseau 1977: 247–248).

According to Rousseau, the general will is the highest political power or sovereign the decisions of which cannot be questioned or challenged. He validates this concept by stating that the real advantage of each individual is equivalent to the advantage of the whole community, as constituted by its individuals. However, individuals also have their private will that differs from the general will, when striving only towards their immediate goals. If the private will and the general will conflict, the state can, according to Rousseau, compel the individual to obey the dictates of the general will (*The Social Contract* IV.2; Rousseau 1977: 250). However, this demand is not ultimately harmful to the individual because individuals participate in the general will. Additionally, Rousseau assumes that the real freedom of individuals is realized in actions that are in accordance with the general will. Citizens can therefore be compelled to freedom without limiting their freedom in the most fundamental sense. Thus the real interest of every individual is the same as the interest of the whole society. In a Rousseauian democracy then, the state is permitted to coerce its citizens into pursuing the general good (Christman 2002: 106).

According to Rousseau, there is often a great deal of difference between the will of all (*la volonté de tout*) and the general will (cf. Tuomela's I- and we-perspectives). The latter considers only the common interest, while the former takes private interest into account, and is, in a sense, the sum of particular wills (*The Social Contract* II.3; Rousseau 1977: 185). If a common decision of citizens is made to the detriment of the collectivity or one of its parts, it is an expression of the will of all, not the general will. Rousseau

believes, however, that various opposite interests can offset each other and that the general will can ultimately “win”.

In view of the aforesaid, the general will represents “reasoning from the point of view of others” or from the ‘we-perspective’ (Benhabib 1992: 8–10, 121–147). Thus the concept of the general will involves a concern over reaching an impartial social standpoint from which to assess particular forms of political reasoning. This objective can be thought of as unrealistic and overdemanding for various reasons. First, it assumes that people can transcend their particularities when engaging in political decision-making. Second, the concept of the general will reduces a multiplicity of possible standpoints in a society to one viewpoint that allegedly all citizens or rational subjects can adopt (Young 1990: 100–101; Held 2007: 244). Thus the concept of the general will involves the idea that social views should be considered and collective judgements should be arrived at through deliberation guided by impartiality. In this way, the general will represents a “court of appeal” in which no particular individual, group or country has special standing (Held 2007: 239). However, as we have seen, points of view are not neutral or impartial but both limited and partial. The general will can consequently be criticized for paternalism and for invalidating a multi-voiced society.

Not surprisingly, Rousseau thinks that the people do not always decide in a way that coincides with the common good. He attributes such failures mainly to factors such as social inequality and a low sense of community (*A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*; Rousseau 1977: 63, 87, 99). The lawgiver, by designing good social institutions and instilling a sense of collective purpose and virtue, helps to overcome this. Rousseau dreamt, then, that the lawgiver could instil a sense of the ‘we-perspective’ in citizens. Based on this view, one might claim that Rousseau’s general will dovetails with the citizen’s point of view when understood as the legislator’s view of what benefits citizens. Accordingly, Rousseau’s view of society is paternalistic rather than liberal. He seems to assume that the lawgiver tries (or should try) to maintain the ideals of joint responsibility and an inclusive society that attempts to take care of everyone. Thus the state as advocated by Rousseau seeks to safeguard the well-being of all its citizens.

Rousseau meant for his view of society to be put into practice in small states such as the city of Geneva, because only in a sufficiently compact community could democracy be put into practice directly, without representation (*The Social Contract* II.9, III.3–4, III.15; see also I.6, IV.3; Rousseau 1977: 175, 199, 216–217, 242, 252; Held 2007: 44). For this reason, among others, opinions differ regarding whether citizens are able to express the general will by themselves, or whether they are, without expert assistance, only able to form the sum of the individual wills.

These considerations might lead to the pessimistic conclusion that only a “shallow” democracy or a democracy of the majority is possible in modern countries. However, with certain conditions and important limitations, it is reasonable to defend the possibility of a “deep” democracy consisting of the ‘we-perspective’, as presented in Table 2. These conditions are discussed in greater detail in the next section.

**Table 2.** “Shallow” and “deep” democracy

	“Shallow” democracy	“Deep” democracy
The target of discussion and deliberation	Majority decisions, a balance of interest groups	The general interest of citizens, the human good
The type of will and perspective	The will of all, a sum of particular wills, the ‘pro-group’ I-perspective	The general will of the people, the ‘we-perspective’

Contemporary followers of Rousseau stress the need for citizen participation in democratic institutions. They also emphasize the connection between such institutions and individual freedom (Christman 2002: 49). In the same vein, deliberative democracy can be seen as a means to express the general will and to create the ‘we-perspective’. This ultimately relies on the ability to change and enrich a point of view step by step, as observed above.

Another counterbalance to the shortcomings of representative democracy is possible. Modern transnational movements, agencies and corporations (including big business and civil organizations) are creating new opportunities for the development of so-called cosmopolitan democracy (Held 2007: 309). Basically, the discussion of cosmopolitan democracy addresses the challenge of globalization and the related lack of democracy

(Held 2007: 292–293). However, the realization of cosmopolitan democracy also faces challenges related to representativeness and generalizability – issues that Rousseau was already concerned about.

## **6 A contractarian approach to democracy**

Based on the above discussion, there are at least two different concepts of democracy. One is that it is a balancing of interest groups. The other focuses on the general interest. Despite the differences, both concepts share many ideological and procedural presuppositions.

The ideological basis of democracy, or the democratic ethos, is the idea that sovereign power resides in the people as a whole. The procedural basis of democracy, in turn, is a jointly agreed-upon decision-making procedure exercised either directly by the people, as in the small republics of antiquity, or by officers elected by the people. These ideological and procedural fundamentals are broad and ambiguous. They can therefore be combined with a number of specific political ideologies such as liberalism and conservatism. (Thus, liberalism, albeit popular in many established democracies, is not the only possible background philosophy of democracy.)

Democracy has other requirements in addition to the ideological and procedural. A central ethical requirement is that decision-making be based on a just and equal consideration of the interests of all citizens and the public good as a whole. In his *A Theory of Justice* (1971), John Rawls sets out to discover the principles which any society must embrace if it is to be just. According to Rawls, the question of justice arises in circumstances where a scarcity of resources exists – thus practically in all circumstances (*A Theory of Justice*, section 22; Rawls 1999: 110; on Rawls’s view, see Gutting 2009: 175–176). Hence, for a democracy to be just, it cannot be merely a disinterested administrative system but must attend to the fair division of resources between the citizens. Therefore the concept of democracy essentially includes social-ethical values and ideals such as justice, equality and human dignity.

Furthermore, an implicit or explicit consensus regarding general goals and objectives for a desirable social life (such as peace, liberty and dignity) is necessary for a democracy to function properly. Such agreement does not necessarily need to be detailed. As suggested above, it may suffice that a consensus only on the broader framework of human and environmental good exists, including values such as justice, freedom and security. This issue is related to the question of whether the policy and governmental perspective represented and promoted by the liberal state is neutral, meaning that it carries no particular person's point of view, or whether the point of view in question has at least some particular bias. Although the next chapter discusses this issue in greater detail, we can already answer affirmatively: the liberal state is not neutral or impartial, but committed to the general values of liberty and equality, and to the value of its self-preservation.

According to contractarians (i.e., the developers of "social contract theory") such as Hobbes, Locke and Rawls, legitimate social life consists of voluntary agreements between autonomous individuals on the basis of a rational utility calculation. Based on such a calculation, social stability and security are supposed to be among the overriding benefits that compensate for individuals' disadvantages resulting from the voluntary limitation of their freedoms. However, citizens must submit to this limitation in line with their mutual social contract. Thus for social stability and security, the private interest and public interest are expected to meet and amalgamate.

In a contractarian approach, it might be appealing to interpret the citizen's point of view as the citizen's own will and choice, not as the legislator's view of what is beneficial for citizens. However, the situation is different in a Rousseauian social contract. According to Rousseau, if the private will and general will conflict, the state can compel the individual to obey the general will or the highest political power, whose decisions cannot be questioned or challenged (*The Social Contract* IV.2; Rousseau 1977: 250). This view clearly illustrates that Rousseau's theory is not liberalistic. Rather, it is, in a sense, a precursor to leftist (Marxist) thinking. Classical liberal (Lockean) contract theory, for its part, forms the beginning of present liberal thinking where the central virtue of democ-

racy is that it provides the possibility to change rulers through elections and thus prevents a concentration of power.

Various social contract theories have been considered as a rational basis for representative democracy. Such democracy includes the following essential characteristics. First, political decision-makers have been chosen by free elections to speak for and act on behalf of the people. Thus there is a clear division of labour between representatives and voters – a fact highlighted by such authors as Joseph Schumpeter (1976: 295; see also Held 2007: 150). Based on this division, the people periodically hand decision-making power over to their representatives. Therefore governmental power is still authorized by the people. Second, balanced and well-informed negotiations and agreements between representatives of different interest groups are necessary in political decision-making in order to guarantee a fair and just consideration of different opinions.

## **7 Utilitarianism and liberal theory as fundamentals of democracy**

Owing greatly to Rawls's work, justice and fairness have become the major social-ethical concepts in recent Anglo-American philosophy. However, their detailed content greatly varies according to the related ethical and political theory. The implicit (and often explicit) presuppositions of modern Western discussions of democracy include a neo-liberal polity and free market economy, which are based on the fundamental tenets of utilitarianism and liberalism. Economists in northern European countries often emphasize that a functioning market economy is a prerequisite for a welfare state, which in turn is the basis for the legitimacy of a market economy.

In capitalist economies, business, banks and investors have a great deal of social and political power, which many citizens and civic organizations consider problematic in terms of democracy. This concern is relevant, particularly regarding large corporations and major investors. For this reason, utilitarianism and neo-liberalism have been heavily criticized by various political blocks, including neo-Marxists, environmentalists, communitarians, and egalitarians (see, e.g. Christman 2002: 208–209). As we have seen, other models of democracy with different historical and ideological backgrounds also

exist. A recent example is the “Arab Spring” democracy movement, which owes less to utilitarian and liberal tenets and arose from people’s increasing dissatisfaction with the oligarchic political and military establishment in many North African and Middle Eastern countries.

The liberal theory of democracy, however, is dominant in the West. According to it, every citizen is autonomous and of equal standing and value. Thus the liberal state is committed to a kind of neutrality regarding its citizens’ pursuit of their own good (Christman 2002: 7). Given that citizens hold diverse values, the state violates the respect citizens deserve if it is not neutral with respect to these values. This is why the liberal state is also committed to the principle of tolerance for any value system and set of beliefs that citizens may ascribe to. According to this principle, anything is tolerated as long as it does not inhibit similar pursuits on the part of others. The principle may sound clear and simple, but it is in fact ambiguous and open to many interpretations.

The protection of individual liberty, in particular the freedom to formulate and revise one’s own conception of the good life, is fundamental to the liberal democratic paradigm. From this follows that freedom of association, speech and privacy (also mentioned in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948) is of fundamental importance. These liberties and the ideals of the liberal state, including liberty, equality and justice, however ambiguous and controversial, are not insubstantial. Therefore the point of view represented and promoted by the liberal state is not, strictly speaking, no one’s point of view (the meaning of this term will be discussed below). Instead, it is related to broader interests, commitments and conceptions of the human good.

In liberal theory, individual liberty is regarded as the highest political good. Aristotle already posited the foundation of democracy to be liberty (*Politics* VI, 2, 1317a40; Aristotle 1998: 231). The priority of individual liberty is based on the equal status that all citizens enjoy in regimes organized on liberal principles. This equality of status is attributed to all persons because they are rational, autonomous agents – an idea most famously advocated by Kant. Thus the substantial concept of the person or citizen as-

sumed in liberal theory is that of an independent rational agent. Such an agent has the capacity to reflect upon and alter her choices by way of rational reasoning. She also has the capacity to form commitments with others and with traditions, religions, families, nations, and so on (Christman 2002: 7).

One might be willing to highlight the neutrality of the liberal state by saying that such a state organizes itself from no one's point of view. However, we have already considered the problems related to the no one's point of view idea. This idea is problematic for both logical-conceptual and political reasons. First, 'no one's point of view' can be said to be an oxymoron. There is no such thing as 'no one' in this sense. Similarly, the concept of an average or ordinary citizen is problematic. One might nevertheless suggest that the term *no one's point of view* means something like the average or ordinary citizen's point of view, whatever that is. But do ordinary or average citizens exist? Or are they just figures whose opinions, interests, likes and dislikes approximate the mean of all answers in opinion polls? Perhaps the best we can make of these concepts is that 'ordinary' or 'average' citizens are useful idealizations and simplifications, possibly created on the basis of statistical data or information gathered by straw polls. Obviously, the concept of ordinary citizen differs from that of the general will, which is basically not an average or median, but rather an informed and benevolent force promoting the public interest.

The present paper has emphasized that a democracy requires negotiation between, consensus among and amalgamation of the different points of view. A democracy also requires the forming of opinions and choosing standpoints that the majority can accept and commit to, or about which broad consensus can be reached. However, according to Rousseau decisions made by the majority do not suffice, at least not with the most important matters, to guarantee that the decision represents the general will. If a decision is made against the interest of the whole community, it is an expression of private will, or at best the will of all, and not the general will.

## 8 Subjective global multi-attractedness

In what follows, I am proposing a new concept of *subjective global multi-attractedness*, which is contrasted with the Rousseauian concepts of the general will and the will of all. This new concept may sound cumbersome but is, I believe, reasonable. The concept of *subjective global multi-attractedness* is required for defending the possibility of having a “deep” democracy (see Table 2 above) against criticism directed towards the general will. The idea is based on John Irving’s novel *In One Person* (2012), which deals with bisexuality and transgenderism. The term *multi-attractedness* denotes the ability and propensity to be attracted to opposite and conflicting views, be they political, economic, social, religious, artistic and so on. Such opposites include both left-wing and right-wing positions, both industrial expansionism and environmentalism, and both religiousness and secularism.

The term *global* refers here to the fact that the above-mentioned propensity is not necessarily restricted to any particular domain of life but can basically be all-embracing. *Subjective global multi-attractedness* is therefore a liberal view in more than one sense. However, here there is a risk of misunderstanding that I would like to remove. The use of the term *global* does not mean that “anything goes” or that everything is accepted. *Subjective global multi-attracted* must also commit to the moral principles that apply to all people.

The term *subjective* refers to the view that this way of thinking is personal, not “evangelizing”. Hence, *subjective global multi-attracted* individuals shun propagandism, and can become similarly attracted, for example, to both left-wing and right-wing ideas, both environmentalism and industrial growth, and so on. However, they do not impose this diversity of interests on others.

One might argue that *subjective global multi-attractedness* is a form of political and intellectual spinelessness. Those who can be described as *subjective global multi-attracted* could answer that they only endorse opinions that can be rationally and ethically defended, and not everything. And the fact that the *subjective global multi-*

*attracted* may be attracted to opposites does not mean they pursue everything that entices them. Those who are *subjective global multi-attracted* may therefore be characterized as political hybrids as regards their interests but not necessarily as regards the realization of those interests. In other words, *subjective global multi-attractedness* does not mean promiscuity or a lack of control, even if it is liberal. Further, the *subjective global multi-attracted* are generally faithful to what they commit themselves; thus their standpoint avoids the relativism that considers comparing and evaluating different views to be impossible.

Accordingly, the following two main types of *multi-attractedness* should be distinguished. Those who are faltering in their opinions represent uncritical or undisciplined *multi-attractedness*. Those who are cautious and disciplined remain faithful to their core values and are consistent in their decisions, despite being attracted to a diversity of views. The latter type is preferable, if for no other reason, then for the ability to make considered decisions among alternatives. Thus the group of those who are *subjective global multi-attracted* is heterogeneous and different persons among them can have different core values, and can disagree on what views and factors should be emphasized in different situations.

*Subjective global multi-attractedness* is an alternative to the concept of the general will because the proponents of the former suggest that a true democracy is possible only because of, and not in spite of (as the opponents say), the fact that conflicting political, economic, religious, etc. views exist. In fact, a democratic system presupposes the possibility of conflicting political interests. Similarly, *multi-attractedness* presumes different, non-*multi-attracted* ways of thinking. Therefore the *subjective global multi-attracted* would say that a true democracy is possible insofar as we can tolerate, accept and even share different interests, if these interests are not detrimental to the community, humanity or nature, and particularly if they are constructive.

It has become evident that the *subjective global multi-attracted* do not attempt to form the general will. Instead, they tell us that we can tolerate, accept and share different, even conflicting interests. Here the term *conflicting* does not mean logically contradicto-

ry or exclusionary. Rather, it refers to the fact that our individual “house of ideas and commitments” is and can be furnished with different kinds of furniture, from “Ikea” to “period” pieces. This is where we “live in our head”, and the external social reality is multi-ingredient as well.

Despite the diversity of their interests, the *subjective global multi-attracted* can have a politically clear and self-critical vision. Their strength lies in their ability to see different views “from the inside”. They understand opposites and are interested in them. This makes it possible to calmly deal with social issues without losing multi-voicedness, a benefit when sitting down at the negotiating table to seek optimal solutions to complex problems.

As we have seen, democracy as an attempt to establish the general interest or point of view of citizens corresponds to what Jean-Jacques Rousseau called the authority of the general will of the people. A consensus, in turn, equates to the will of all. The latter, as it were, is but a sum of particular interests, while the former is an organic concept transcending the private interests of each individual and yet expressing the well-informed will of any one person. Ideally, such well-informed will is based on the best available information as well as discussion that aims at a just and equal consideration of different views (cf. Habermas 1985). What the best possible information consists of is, to some extent, an open issue. According to some, such information is derived from scientific knowledge. This obviously evokes, *pace* Plato, the model of expert governance.

*Subjective global multi-attractedness* is a third way. It does not fancy an enlightened general will, or necessarily try to balance different interest groups. Rather, it is a view that recommends realizing everyone’s interests as optimally as possible. In this respect, *subjective global multi-attractedness* is a form of preference utilitarianism that defines a morally right action as one which fulfils the beneficial and well-informed interests of the people involved. Pursuing this goal requires public deliberation and a reflective equilibrium based on relevant information about what is morally, ecologically and economically possible when all is considered. Thus for preference utilitarians, it is not a matter of “anything goes”.

Majority decisions more often do not go against the interests of those who are *subjective global multi-attracted* compared to those who can be called, for lack of a better term, mono-attracted. This is an advantage of *subjective global multi-attractedness*, and it reinforces the acceptance of and commitment to majority decisions. On the other hand, *subjective global multi-attractedness* may suffer from the fact that it is a personal view. Understanding and adopting other democratic notions or democratic notions in general might of course be difficult for uncompromising individuals. *Subjective global multi-attractedness* may thus require long-term education and deliberative dialogue to develop, without any guarantee of success. Accordingly, deliberative dialogue is important not only for making democracy real (and more direct), but also because it increases the possibility of more people being able to understand opponents' interests and concerns, as well as being able to compromise. Thus deliberative dialogue can strengthen democracy in many ways.

Rapid political change caused by *multi-attractedness* is not on the horizon. Nevertheless, *subjective global multi-attractedness* is socially important because it reinforces the understanding and respecting of opponents' views. Therefore, recognizing and involving those who are *subjective global multi-attracted* can support decision-making in diverse organizations and in society as a whole.

## **9 Democracy reconsidered**

The present article has argued that determining a common domain of discussion is necessary for democracies. This means the creation of a jointly agreed-upon perspective on social reality. However, a democracy does not necessarily require a unanimous consensus on how problems should be solved. Consensus is needed first and foremost on the decision-making process and the scope of governmental control. Within these limits, majority decisions are necessary in order to maintain the decision-making ability of the society. If the majority cannot decide, then the decision-making is in danger of being paralysed.

Based on this characterization, a fundamental task of any democracy is first to enable citizens, at different times and in different forums, to jointly discuss and determine, the characteristics of a good society. Another major task is to empower all citizens to strive together to improve the society.

In view of this, democracy, then, is a system of government in which attention is paid to the interests of all members of society. Democracy can also be usefully characterized as the people having power and control over societal matters. The people rule themselves in a democracy, and this often takes place through their representatives and requires majority decisions. Thus a democracy is a kind of self-controlling collective which endeavours to attain and maintain internal (“relating to domestic affairs”) and external (“relating to foreign policy”) harmony.

This paper has argued that in the making of majority decisions the ethos be preferably that of the *subjective global multi-attracted* or those who have the propensity and ability to become attracted to opposite views. The utility of *subjective global multi-attractiveness* naturally follows from a better understanding of opponents’ interests and concerns, a better ability to compromise, and a better ability to adapt to majority decisions. The *subjective global multi-attracted* are more ready to compromise, because for them, making concessions does not mean letting go of their own interests.

At best, a democracy makes well-deliberated, well-informed decisions that are faithful to the most fundamental human ideals. In identifying such ideals, gaining a sympathetic understanding of all discussants is the way to proceed. *Subjective global multi-attractiveness*, therefore, and the ability to change points of view in deliberative dialogue, are required for a democracy to succeed.

## References

- Aristotle (1998). *Politics*. Transl. by Ernest Barker, revised with an introduction by R. F. Stalley. Oxford World’s Classics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Benhabib, Seyla (1992). *Situating the Self: Gender, Community, and Postmodernism in Contemporary*

*What is this thing called democracy?*  
*A discussion from the perspective of subjective global multi-attractiveness*

- Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Bohman, James (1998). "The coming of age of deliberative democracy." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 6: 4, 400–425.
- Christman, John (2002). *Social and Political Philosophy: A Contemporary Introduction*. Routledge Contemporary Introductions to Philosophy. London: Routledge.
- Currie, Gregory (2012). *Narratives and Narrators: A Philosophy of Stories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dryzek, John S. (2002). *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, Contestations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gadamer, Hans-George (2006). *Truth and Method*. Transl. by Joel Weinsheimer & Donald G. Marshall. 2nd rev. ed. London: Continuum.
- Gendler, Tamar Szabó (2010). *Intuition, Imagination, and Philosophical Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Giere, Ronald N. (2006). *Scientific Perspectivism*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gutting, Gary (2009). *What Philosophers Know: Case Studies in Recent Analytic Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1985). *The Theory of Communicative Action: Volume 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Transl. by Thomas McCarthy. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Hautamäki, Antti (1986). *Points of View and their Logical Analysis*. Acta Philosophica Fennica 41. Helsinki: The Philosophical Society of Finland.
- Heidegger, Martin (2000). *Introduction to Metaphysics*. Transl. by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. Yale Nota Bene. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Held, David (2007). *Models of Democracy*. Third edition. Cambridge: Polity.
- Hobhouse, Leonard Trelawny (2009). *The Elements of Social Justice*. Routledge Revivals. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Irving, John (2012). *In One Person: A Novel*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Lehtonen, Tommi (2011). "The concept of a point of view". *SATS: Northern European Journal of Philosophy* 12: 2, 237–252.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair (2003). *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Mill, John Stuart (2006). *On Liberty and The Subjection of Women*. Ed. Alan Ryan. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin Books.
- Nagel, Thomas (1986). *The View from Nowhere*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich (1968). *The Will to Power*. Transl. by Walter Kaufmann & R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage.
- Plato (1956). *The Republic*. Transl. with an introduction by H. D. P. Lee. Penguin Classics. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- Rawls, John (1999). *A Theory of Justice*. Revised edition. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1977). *The Social Contract and Discourses*. Transl. and introd. by G. D. H. Cole, rev. and augm. by J. H. Brumfitt & John C. Hall. Everyman's Library. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.
- Schumpeter, Joseph (1976). *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Sen, Amartya (2007). *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. *Issues of Our Time*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Tocqueville, Alexis de (2003). *Democracy in America*. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin Books.
- Transparency International (2013). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2013*. [online]. [cited 19.3.2014]. Available at: [http://issuu.com/transparencyinternational/docs/cpi2013\\_brochure\\_single\\_pages](http://issuu.com/transparencyinternational/docs/cpi2013_brochure_single_pages)
- Tuomela, Raimo (2007). *The Philosophy of Sociality: The Shared Point of View*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Young, Iris Marion (1990). *Justice and Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.