



The Challenge of Democracy

Gustav Von Herten

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The Challenge of Democracy takes the measure of democracy by exploring the past, the present and the prospects of democratic societies, topics touched upon by Francis Fukuyama, Samuel Huntington, Amitai Etzioni, Fareed Zakaria among many others. The authors extensive extramural experience sets the book apart from most academic treatises. Instead of focusing on a few aspects of contemporary civilization, he offers a catholic interpretation of the ways of the world, which subsumes previous attempts to understand the constraints and freedoms of our future. The future of humanity is as ever precarious, dependent on our moral capital which concurs with a virtuous circle of democratic values, institutions and practices. The voluntary cooperation between tens or hundreds of millions of basically egotistical individuals in a democratic society is nothing short of the miraculous, and it should be no surprise that it does not always work. Democracy has failed repeatedly outside its core countries. When we move into the next phase of democratic development, our worst enemy will be complacency. The Challenge of Democracy presents a penetrating analysis of the democratic predicament the historic ties, the driving forces, the threats and opportunities. The personal recollections of the author enliven the text. He combines the different aspects of his subject matter into a coherent worldview, mapping out the dangers ahead. The book proffers both dependable charts and a moral compass for navigating a turbulent future. The outcome is in no way preordained, but depends on every one of us our good will and sense of fair play.

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