

Chapter 1 : Imposition of democracy: Can, and should, democracy ever be imposed on countries? | blog.q

It is a contradiction in terms to argue that democracy can successfully be imposed. Democracy relies on the rule of law (undermined by military imposition), freedom of choice and independence (destroyed by external determination), and on accountability (impossible when a foreign power chooses one's rulers).

Democratisation is a process. Democracy is a transplant. By democracy I mean the concept of bourgeois liberal democracy imposed by the West on the Rest. Christopher Columbus landed in Hispaniola modern day Haiti and Dominican Republic also in planting the seeds of first genocide of the original inhabitants of the Americas, the so-called Red Indians, and the most gruesome trade: The triangular, Atlantic slave trade. Thus began the next five centuries of the development of the world capitalist system and Western civilisation, with accumulation in the centre and dispossession in the periphery. The stories we tell our children and the history we teach them and the values we preach at the altar are spurned by the hegemonic West. This is called civilisation, progress, universal human rights, development, modernisation and now globalisation. The process of resistance against dispossession is called barbarism, cannibalism, nativism, witchcraft, juju, tribalism and terrorism. Thus goes on the story of the West and the Rest to this day as we meet here to discuss the liberal model of democracy, good governance, human rights, transparency, accountability, humanitarianism etc. This grossly oversimplified introduction is meant to drive home the point that concepts and paradigms in our discourse on democracy cannot and ought not to be taken for granted. The discourse is contentious and that contention cannot be unravelled unless we locate it historically in social struggles. The liberal model of democracy which is the dominant political discourse in Africa today is an abstraction from the particular history of the struggles of the European peoples. That it is presented and accepted as universal is because the hegemony of the West over the Rest. And that hegemony premised on the capitalist system was attained through war and violence and continues to be maintained through the same means. In this short presentation, I want to paint in broad strokes three themes which run through the discourse on democracy. First, the construction of models of democracy – liberal democracy and its variants like social democracy – in imperial centres and its historical context and socio-economic basis. Second, I will address the post-colonial period in Africa. Given the limited time available, I will skip the details and elaborate argumentation. Those who are interested may wish to refer to the selected bibliography I append at the end of the paper. Economically, it marked the rise of the bourgeoisie and its eventual triumph following successful industrialisation. The feudal state was a decentralised parochial state. Rulers derived their legitimacy from religious ideology, that is, the metaphysical instance was dominant. The feudal order was based on status and therefore on inherent inequality since statuses were hierarchically organised. Some of the fundamental building blocks of the bourgeois order and liberal democracy were constructed in opposition to the premises of the feudal order. Some of the other central concepts of the liberal order were similarly constructed in opposition to feudalism. Equality of individuals translates into equality before law, which in turn translates into equal rights. Thus all human beings are equal because they possess equal rights. Needless to say though that this political and legal equality is superimposed on fundamental social and economic inequality, which is inherent in the capitalist system.

Chapter 2 : Champions Of Democracy: From Fake News To Imposed Insanity | Dissident Voice

If democracy is considered a human right, then perhaps it might be justifiable according to international law. I would argue, however, that democracy is not a human right, but, rather, it provides the best defence of human rights for individuals.

He served as spokesperson for Iran in its nuclear negotiations with the European Union from to Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. We begin with a look at escalating tensions between the United States and Iran. On Sunday, the U. The sanctions increase tensions between the U. President Donald Trump to show that he genuinely wants to engage in negotiations to solve a problem. Just last month, President Trump said he would meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani whenever Rouhani wants, without preconditions. This is Trump speaking at a White House conference just two weeks ago. I do believe that they will probably end up wanting to meet. Do you have preconditions for that meeting? Any time they want. Only hours later, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced a slew of preconditions for a possible meeting, including Iran being willing to enter into a new nuclear deal. From to , he served as spokesperson for Iran in its nuclear negotiations with the European Union. A Memoir and, most recently, Iran and the United States: Ambassador, welcome back to Democracy Now! Thank you for joining us from Princeton University. You have the U. As you know, the Iranian nuclear deal was the result of 13 years of negotiation between Iran and the world powers. Ultimately, Iran and the U. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution approving the deal. And two years after deal, Iran has fully complied with all its commitments. Security Council member withdrew from the deal, violated the deal. This is a big mistake. This is a violation of international law and regulations by the United States of America. However, what you mentioned, the U. And this is really something very strange and perhaps unprecedented. The United States is the most powerful country in the world and the most powerful member of the United Nations Security Council, which all five permanent members are responsible for full implementation of the U. Security Council resolutions passed by themselves. Now, not only the U. This is really something unprecedented and very, very strange, and at the same time very dangerous for international peace, order and security. And can you talk about the effects of the sanctions reimposed last week by President Trump against Iran? I would say there would be an effect on Iranian economy. Iranians definitely would be harmed. I have no doubt about it. Already we have seen some negative consequences on the Iranian economy. However, I need to mention perhaps three points. The first point is the fact that Iran has been under U. Therefore, I can say Iranians are the most experienced country and nation on the U. They have been able to handle the U. The second point is that during the first term of President Obama, the U. Security Council sanctioning Iran. It means it was international consensus. It was because there were six U. However, this time, while the deal has been achieved, while Iran has signed, the U. Therefore, I believe President Trump would not be able to create international consensus reimposing the new sanctions. This is the second issue. The third issue, which is, I believe, is more important, Iranian economy is under many, many difficulties, like corruption, like dysfunctionality, like smuggling, like inflation, and they have a lot of problems. This has been problem since , when Saddam invaded Iran. However, I believe at least 50 percent of Iranian domestic economic problem is not because of the sanctions. They are because of the domestic dysfunctionality of different system, whether this is the government or other system. Therefore, if Iran is going to resist the sanctions, they would need to address the dysfunctions of their own system. Therefore, this is one reality about dysfunctionality of Iranian domestic economic system. The other reality is that the U. Well, let me ask you about President Trump and his increasing threats against Iran. This comes after, in May, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo using his first policy address as secretary of state to threaten Iran with the strongest sanctions in history. This is what he said. We will apply unprecedented financial pressure on the Iranian regime. The leaders in Tehran will have no doubt about our seriousness. Thanks to our colleagues at the Department of Treasury, sanctions are going back in full effect, and new ones are coming. They were also providing money to Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations. Ambassador Seyed Hossein Mousavian, talk about what this means and also the possibility that President Trump might meet with Rouhani

in a kind of side meeting in New York at the U. General Assembly when world leaders come. Let me respond to your questions. You have two questions. The first one is about threatening. I believe threatening is really bad, is against the United Nation Charter. Whether Iran is threatening the U. However, the fact is that President Trump started to threaten Iran. The second threat came by President Trump administration was the official statement by John Bolton and Pompeo for regime change in Iran. They frequently mention that they are after regime change in Iran. The third threat from the U. Therefore, I think already President Trump started, clicked the trend of threatening by regime change strategy, by all options on the table, including literally a strike on Iran, by sanctioning Iran, by violating the nuclear deal, and by for the first time, it was a statement from the United States of America to say that they are going to bring Iranian oil export to zero. President Trump publicly has announced economic war, political war with Iran, short of military war. Therefore, Iranians also they would respond, and they would threaten the U. Now, about your second question, whether any negotiation would be possible or not, my first response is that while Iran and the U. Who can guarantee the next U. It was not bilateral agreement; it was international agreement. This is the first question. Second, what is the base? President Trump, if he really wants a normal relation with Iran, then we have three criteria. The first criteria is a Treaty of Amity between Iran and the U. Yes, Iran and the U. Yes, President Trump is willing to have a share of the nuclear deal, to have economic share, to have some share for the U. Iran recently has filed a lawsuit against the new sanctions imposed by the U. When Iran is filing a lawsuit against the U. Now, this can be a criteria number one for President Trump to go back to the Treaty of Amity between Iran and the U. The second is accord between Iran and the U. After 25 years of U. Iranians took some Americans as hostages in Iran. There was a big problem. This accord was signed between Iran and the U. Right after the signature, Iran freed the hostages, and the U. The third criteria is the nuclear deal, signed by the U. President Trump should tell Iranian which of these treaties, agreements, accords are going to be criteria for the future of Iran and the U. I think Iran and the U. But President Trump should assure Iran about the basis, about the foundation, about the criteria. What about President Trump threatening any country that does business with Iran, saying the U. This is exactly what I said, a new and unprecedented phenomenon in international relations, because the nuclear deal has clearly states in the nuclear I mean, you would see in the nuclear deal stating that all member, all signatories are committed to facilitate normal economic relation with Iran.

Chapter 3 : George W. Bush was wrong to impose democracy on Iraq, Rumsfeld says - Middle East - Jerus

Imposed Democracy? Surely the idea of imposing Democracy on countries in the Middle East is in itself undemocratic. Revolution is the only legitimate way for a country's people to change their form of government.

I know you understand, but due to exams, my arguments cannot be as comprehensive as I would have liked them to be. Pro I thank my opponent. Democracy is a system for the people. But to fix problems within the country, those problems must be known by the public and the solution as well. Then, surely, the answer to this problem lies with education. Depriving these people of democracy is not the answer. You are generalising the people in oppressed countries by saying that they are all intellectually inadequate, but by giving them the information they need, they can then go on to make an informed decision. The popular mentality leads to believe a variety of things, which can affect politics drastically. Once again, we can only hope to remove this ignorance through education. You assume that the democracy imposed will be purely democratic, but I did not state this once. An authoritarian regime does not require any political knowledge or interest. In an authoritarian regime the people have no power. In democracy they are given freedom of choice about those who govern them, which can be based on knowledge if they are given the right treatment. My opponent thinks that we are going to enter the country, set up a democratic system overnight, then leave them with whatever shell of a government remains. This is not the case. We will aid them for as long as they need. This map shows us some low intelligence countries. My opponent assumes that this means that democracy will fail. However, we can see from this map that democracies in Africa, which are considered "most at risk" are actually doing rather well. Therefore, this shows that even "low intelligence" countries can have a working democratic system. Also, my opponent says that these people have low intelligence, but in what areas? I am sure that they would have more intellectual prowess in certain areas than we would in the west, so to deny them this freedom because of "lack of intelligence" would be fundamentally immoral. I would love to make these arguments more developed but I am under the stress of revision. Con Rebuttal "Democracy is a system for the people. You are generalising the people in oppressed countries by saying that they are all intellectually inadequate, but by giving them the information they need, they can then go on to make an informed decision. It is that they are not politically informed. From tax systems, to the way the government works, these people do not know, and being intellectually inadequate is part of the problem. But as I showed with the shocking statistics about the ignorance of people in the U. K politically, it is not all of the problem. That is the lack of political knowledge. Stating that you can just teach them simply is fallacious. Politics is about the way the country runs. The immigration system, the tax system to the ins and out of benefits and trade. The politics of a country is a complicated issue. This is an issue with democracy itself, the way the country runs is in the end run by experts and the country runs like a republic. The people themselves in any country are too uninformed, but we are not simply going to hold political classes for those who are over 18, and make it mandatory. You could try putting politics as a key part of the curriculum, but these things are too complicated unless taught seriously and extensively. Unless you make this mandatory, then people will not choose politics for the simple reason that interest is low as people had been distant from politics for years. Without information, people will get knowledge, they will get information as it will be thrust upon them, but as seen in the aforementioned statistics, their knowledge will be skewed and it will take a very active government and a while for interest to be gained, for people to want to get involved and for politics to be something which people in general are interested in. This length of time is enough for the country to fail. Go back to my previous paragraph. You are not going to teach people on how many Muslims there are, or how much crime is falling by. There cannot possibly be classes on the amount of immigration or foreign aid. These things are learnt through individuals, and as I said, if people do not then democracy is not perfect. It is a serious issue with democracy no matter the country. For people to be informed, they have to have an interest, which they have no reason to because they did not instigate their democracy and they had no reason to do before. Or classes will have to be compulsory and in great quantity, which in an LEDC where countries are more oppressive, is not something of high priority. I was simply stating why there is no need for interest. This is a straw-man. Next was your map, which

was a red herring to be perfectly honest. This map does not show the success of democracies. Only whether they have democracies which are full. Also, I did not state that low intelligence fails. Low intelligence is a factor in the lack of political intellect, which is the issue. This means the government is more free to be corrupt, and abide more by his biddings. Your map to be honest only helped my point. Look at the "full democracy" box. The colour is a vivid green. No country on your map has that colour, other than Mauritius. The more successful ones only "flawed democracies". Africa, a continent where many democracies have been imposed, where intellect and political infirmity is not as high, according to your map, does not have countries with a full successful democracy. A new democracy suffers from a lack of interest and a lack of infirmity. This I have shown above cannot be fixed easily, thus a new democracy will fail, and as I have also shown above, it does. In short, your whole contention is false.

Chapter 4 : Democracy in the Middle East - Wikipedia

Democracy imposed would be definition have to continue to be imposed to last. And that hybrid sort of government would not seem to conform to any definition of democracy in my way of thinking. It might be a benevolent dictatorship but I don't think it could be a democracy.

He is a laureate professor in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Arizona and professor emeritus at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he taught for more than 50 years. Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. More than of the children have parents who have already been deported from the United States. Well, on Thursday, I spoke with world-renowned political dissident, author and linguist Noam Chomsky. His recent books include *Global Discontents*: There are groups that set up camps in the desert to try to help people fleeing. But the immigration policy altogether is a grotesque moral scandal here, and in Europe, I should say. I want to turn to President Trump speaking earlier this month. Well, I have a solution: Tell people not to come to our country illegally. Come like other people do. We were on the border recently in Brownsville, going back and forth over the bridge to Matamoros, Mexico. We saw a Guatemalan mother with her child, a Guatemalan father with his child. The Guatemalan mother had been at the legal port of entry at the bridge for days, on two different bridges, told that America is full, told this by the U. What about what the U. If you can talk about the history of U. Well, actually, these people are fleeing from the wreckage and horrors of U. No need to go through the whole history, but back in , the U. Since then, the country has been a complete horror storyâ€”hundreds of thousands of people killed, all kinds of atrocities, every imaginable sort of torture. It peaked in the s under Reagan. In fact, some of the places where people are fleeing from, the Mayan areas, there was literal genocide going on, carried out by the man who Reagan called a stellar exponent of democracy, a really good guy. When Congress imposed some limits on direct U. Unfortunately, they were overthrown. They had the good news, Argentina. The people are still fleeing from the destruction there. Same with El Salvador, where about 70, people were killed during the s, almost all by the security forces, armed, trained, directed by the United States. Again, horror story since. In Honduras, which not long ago had the plurality of refugees, the refugee flow started to peak after a military coup threw out the elected government, the Zelaya government, condemned by the entire hemisphere and the world, with the usual exception of President Obama. Hillary Clinton refused to call it a military coup, because that would have meant terminating military aid to the junta, which the U. There had always been a severe repression and atrocities. Honduras became maybe the homicide capital of the world, and refugees started fleeing. There were so-called elections, which were mocked by almost everyone except the United States. One is Costa Rica, which happens to be the one country that sort of functions, and not by accident, the one country that the United States has notâ€”in which the United States does not intervene militarily to overthrow the government and run a military regime. But Nicaragua was unlike the other countries of the region: It had an army to defend it. In the other countries, the army were the terrorists. Please attribute legal copies of this work to democracynow. Some of the work s that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us. Next story from this daily show.

Chapter 5 : Democracy and democratisation in Africa | Pambazuka News

Democracy Imposed: U.S. Occupation Policy and the German Public, [Richard L. Merritt] on blog.quintoapp.com
**FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. How successful was the United States in attempting to impose a democratic system on Germany after the Second World War?*

One might expect the term "demarchy" to have been adopted, by analogy, for the new form of government introduced by Athenian democrats. In present-day use, the term "demarchy" has acquired a new meaning. It is unknown whether the word "democracy" was in existence when systems that came to be called democratic were first instituted. The word is attested in the works of Herodotus Histories 6. Around BC an individual is known with the name of Democrates, [2] a name possibly coined as a gesture of democratic loyalty; the name can also be found in Aeolian Temnus. Aristotle points to other cities that adopted governments in the democratic style. However, accounts of the rise of democratic institutions are in reference to Athens, since only this city-state had sufficient historical records to speculate on the rise and nature of Greek democracy. The members of these institutions were generally aristocrats who ruled the polis for their own advantage. In BC, Draco codified a set of notoriously harsh laws designed to reinforce aristocratic power over the populace. What soon followed was a system of chattel slavery involving foreign slaves. Athenian citizens had the right to participate in assembly meetings. By granting the formerly aristocratic role to every free citizen of Athens who owned property, Saloni reshaped the social framework of the city-state. Cleisthenes Not long afterwards, the nascent democracy was overthrown by the tyrant Peisistratos, but was reinstated after the expulsion of his son, Hippias, in This sort of aristocratic takeover "was ended by the appeal by one contender, Cleisthenes, for the support of the populace. It was this registration which confirmed his citizenship. While his opponents were away attempting to assist the Spartans, Ephialtes persuaded the Assembly to reduce the powers of the Areopagus: Their efforts, initially conducted through constitutional channels, culminated in the establishment of an oligarchy, the Council of, in the Athenian coup of BCE. The oligarchy endured for only four months before it was replaced by a more democratic government. Democratic regimes governed until Athens surrendered to Sparta in BCE, when government was placed in the hands of the so-called Thirty Tyrants, pro-Spartan oligarchs. His relations with Athens were already strained when he returned to Babylon in BC; after his death, Athens and Sparta led several Greek states to war with Macedon and lost. However, the governors, like Demetrius of Phalerum, appointed by Cassander, kept some of the traditional institutions in formal existence, although the Athenian public would consider them to be nothing more than Macedonian puppet dictators. However, by now Athens had become "politically impotent". However, when Rome fought Macedonia in, the Athenians abolished the first two new tribes and created a twelfth tribe in honour of the Pergamene king. They were elected, and even foreigners such as Domitian and Hadrian held the office as a mark of honour. Four presided over the judicial administration. The Council whose numbers varied at different times from three hundred to seven hundred and fifty was appointed by lot. It was superseded in importance by the Areopagus, which, recruited from the elected archons, had an aristocratic character and was entrusted with wide powers. From the time of Hadrian an imperial curator superintended the finances. The shadow of the old constitution lingered on and Archons and Areopagus survived the fall of the Roman Empire. Athenion allied with Mithridates of Pontus, and went to war with Rome; he was killed during the war, and was replaced by Aristion. The victorious Roman general, Publius Cornelius Sulla, left the Athenians their lives and did not sell them into slavery; he also restored the previous government, in 86 BC. During the 4th century BC, there might well have been some "â€", people in Attica. In the mid-5th century the number of adult male citizens was perhaps as high as 60,000, but this number fell precipitously during the Peloponnesian War. From a modern perspective these figures may seem small, but among Greek city-states Athens was huge: Around BC the orator Hyperides fragment 13 claimed that there were, slaves in Attica, but this figure is probably no more than an impression: Given the exclusive and ancestral concept of citizenship held by Greek city-states, a relatively large portion of the population took part in the government of Athens and of other radical democracies like it, compared to oligarchies and aristocracies. Plateans in BC and Samians in BC but,

by the 4th century, only to individuals and by a special vote with a quorum of . This was generally done as a reward for some service to the state. In the course of a century, the number of citizenships so granted was in the hundreds rather than thousands. These are the assembly in some cases with a quorum of , the council of boule and the courts a minimum of people, on some occasions up to . Of these three bodies, the assembly and the courts were the true sites of power – although courts, unlike the assembly, were never simply called the demos the People as they were manned by a subset of the citizen body, those over thirty. But crucially citizens voting in both were not subject to review and prosecution as were council members and all other officeholders. In the 5th century BC we often hear of the assembly sitting as a court of judgment itself for trials of political importance and it is not a coincidence that is the number both for the full quorum for the assembly and for the annual pool from which jurors were picked for particular trials. Greek democracy created at Athens was direct , rather than representative: The officials of the democracy were in part elected by the Assembly and in large part chosen by lottery in a process called sortition. The assembly had four main functions: As the system evolved, the last function was shifted to the law courts. The standard format was that of speakers making speeches for and against a position followed by a general vote usually by show of hands of yes or no. Though there might be blocs of opinion, sometimes enduring, on important matters, there were no political parties and likewise no government or opposition as in the Westminster system. Voting was by simple majority. In the 5th century at least there were scarcely any limits on the power exercised by the assembly. If the assembly broke the law, the only thing that might happen is that it would punish those who had made the proposal that it had agreed to. Military service or simple distance prevented the exercise of citizenship. This could cause problems when it became too dark to see properly. However, "any member of the Assembly could demand a recount". At the end of the session, each voter tossed one of these into a large clay jar which was afterwards cracked open for the counting of the ballots. In the 5th century BC, there were 10 fixed assembly meetings per year, one in each of the ten state months , with other meetings called as needed. In the following century the meetings were set to forty a year, with four in each state month. One of these was now called the main meeting, kyria ekklesia. Additional meetings might still be called, especially as up until BC there were still political trials that were conducted in the assembly rather than in court. The assembly meetings did not occur at fixed intervals, as they had to avoid clashing with the annual festivals that followed the lunar calendar. There was also a tendency for the four meetings to be aggregated toward the end of each state month. In the 5th century public slaves forming a cordon with a red-stained rope herded citizens from the agora into the assembly meeting place Pnyx , with a fine being imposed on those who got the red on their clothes. This promoted a new enthusiasm for assembly meetings. Only the first to arrive were admitted and paid, with the red rope now used to keep latecomers at bay. The most important task of the Athenian Boule was to draft the deliberations probouleumata for discussion and approval in the Ecclesia. Cleisthenes restricted its membership, "to those of zeugitai status and above, probably arguing that these classes had a financial interest in good government". A member had to be approved by his deme, "and one can well imagine that demes were careful to select only those of known good sense who also had experience of local politics, and who were actually available to do the time-consuming job which demanded frequent attendance in Athens; and they probably favoured those who were well past 30". All fifty members of the prytaneis on duty were housed and fed in the tholos of the Prytaneion , a building adjacent to the bouleuterion , where the boule met. The chairman for the day presided over any meeting of the Boule held that day, and if there was a meeting of the Assembly that day The boule coordinated the activities of the various boards and magistrates that carried out the administrative functions of Athens and provided from its own membership randomly selected boards of ten responsible for areas ranging from naval affairs to religious observances. The age limit of 30 or older, the same as that for office holders but ten years older than that required for participation in the assembly, gave the courts a certain standing in relation to the assembly. Jurors were required to be under oath, which was not required for attendance at the assembly. The authority exercised by the courts had the same basis as that of the assembly: Unlike office holders magistrates , who could be impeached and prosecuted for misconduct, the jurors could not be censured, for they, in effect, were the people and no authority could be higher than that. A corollary of this was that, at least acclaimed by defendants, if a court had made an unjust decision, it must

have been because it had been misled by a litigant. For private suits the minimum jury size was increased to if a sum of over drachmas was at issue , for public suits The cases were put by the litigants themselves in the form of an exchange of single speeches timed by a water clock or clepsydra, first prosecutor then defendant. In a public suit the litigants each had three hours to speak, much less in private suits though here it was in proportion to the amount of money at stake. Decisions were made by voting without any time set aside for deliberation. Jurors did talk informally amongst themselves during the voting procedure and juries could be rowdy, shouting out their disapproval or disbelief of things said by the litigants. This may have had some role in building a consensus. There was however a mechanism for prosecuting the witnesses of a successful prosecutor, which it appears could lead to the undoing of the earlier verdict. Payment for jurors was introduced around BC and is ascribed to Pericles , a feature described by Aristotle as fundamental to radical democracy Politics a Pay was raised from 2 to 3 obols by Cleon early in the Peloponnesian war and there it stayed; the original amount is not known. Notably, this was introduced more than fifty years before payment for attendance at assembly meetings. Running the courts was one of the major expenses of the Athenian state and there were moments of financial crisis in the 4th century when the courts, at least for private suits, had to be suspended. No judges presided over the courts nor did anyone give legal direction to the jurors; magistrates had only an administrative function and were laymen. Most of the annual magistracies at Athens could only be held once in a lifetime. There were no lawyers as such; litigants acted solely in their capacity as citizens. Whatever professionalism there was tended to disguise itself; it was possible to pay for the services of a speechwriter or logographer logographos , but this may not have been advertised in court. Probably jurors would be more impressed if it seemed as though the litigant were speaking for themselves. From BC political trials were no longer held in the assembly, but only in a court. Under this, anything passed by the assembly or even proposed but not yet voted on, could be put on hold for review before a jury “ which might annul it and perhaps punish the proposer as well. Remarkably, it seems that a measure blocked before the assembly voted on it did not need to go back to the assembly if it survived the court challenge: To give a schematic scenario by way of illustration: The quantity of these suits was enormous: In the 5th century there was in effect no procedural difference between an executive decree and a law: But from BC they were set sharply apart.

Chapter 6 : Democracy (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

In the post-9/11 era, the Bush administration's new project of spreading freedom and democracy in the dictators-ruled countries became one of the most discussed and closely followed topics in the.

History has shown that democratic regimes are the best form of government. Countries have not only the right but also the duty to intervene to liberate others to enjoy their human rights. Furthermore, as war between two true democracies is rare, world peace is enhanced by the removal of repressive regimes. It is a contradiction in terms to argue that democracy can successfully be imposed. Merely seeking to influence dictatorships in the direction of democracy is not enough, and internal opposition is often too weak to gain freedom for itself. Countries shrouding themselves in the pretence of elections in order to prevent invasion or to gain international funding must not be allowed to play the system. It is acceptable to encourage the pursuit of democracy, but this is not the same as imposing it. The desire for, and fight for, democracy must come from within; otherwise the system created will be unable to withstand pressures for long. During the Cold War, Western powers often supported illiberal regimes for reasons of realpolitik. After 9/11, there can no longer be an excuse for this. It could be argued that past western complicity in dictatorship requires us to make amends by promoting democracy more aggressively in future. The hypocrisy of turning on a regime once maintained is morally reprehensible. The new world order cannot be accepted as necessarily a safer place; stability may be safer than universal democracy bought with many lives and a great deal of resentment. The concept of democracy itself may be degraded in the eyes of many if it comes to be associated with invasions undertaken for suspect ends. The worldwide threat from terrorism would be reduced by limiting those states willing to harbour and trade with terrorist groups, as the Hart-Rudman Commission on National Security argued. Pre-emptive attacks on illiberal regimes serve to prevent later threats and act as a deterrent against bad behaviour. The doctrine of pre-emption depends on analysing unclear evidence, and undertaking potentially unjustified invasions. Terrorist groups will merely find greater levels of popular support, and receive funding from citizens in democratic nations. It is a fallacy to suggest that the rule of law, or protection for civil rights, is unacceptable in different regions. There are enough types of democracy to allow for social and historical variations – illiberal political parties can always stand for election. To impose democracy is to foist a set of Western values onto populations with different cultural backgrounds. Cultural imperialism must not be armed. To permit the election of former dictators leaves dangerous loopholes for the future. When a country is already engaged in conflict or civil war, to bring international power to bear is a way of conflict-resolution. To wait, as occurred in Rwanda, will only do more damage. To intervene may mean that conflict escalates. Democracy may be encouraged after a war has ended; or dictatorships undermined by economic and cultural sanctions without military action, which is costly in terms of money and lives on all sides. To rely on multilateral action is utopian. The UN doctrine of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of independent nations means that unilateral or bi-lateral actions are the only realistic possibilities. This is especially important given that China has a veto on the Security Council and other SC regular members are not themselves democracies. Unilateral action is burdensome, and dangerously dependent upon the political whim of foreign electorates – often unwilling to commit the troops and money for long-term rebuilding of nations. The worst of all scenarios may be a bloody invasion and regime change, followed by anarchy when the external power swiftly withdraws. Even when invaders remain to oversee the installation of a new regime, they may choose pliant appointees rather than risk the uncertainty of true democracy.

Chapter 7 : Imposed Democracy? | Yahoo Answers

This comprehensive study is in part a survey of the policies the American military government pursued in the American zone of occupation in order to deNazify it, to punish the guilty, and to inculcate democratic practices into the German body politic (Merritt rightly emphasizes the importance of the.

Four aspects of this definition should be noted. First, democracy concerns collective decision making, by which I mean decisions that are made for groups and that are binding on all the members of the group. Second, this definition means to cover a lot of different kinds of groups that may be called democratic. So there can be democracy in families, voluntary organizations, economic firms, as well as states and transnational and global organizations. Third, the definition is not intended to carry any normative weight to it. It is quite compatible with this definition of democracy that it is not desirable to have democracy in some particular context. So the definition of democracy does not settle any normative questions. Fourth, the equality required by the definition of democracy may be more or less deep. It may be the mere formal equality of one-person one-vote in an election for representatives to an assembly where there is competition among candidates for the position. Or it may be more robust, including equality in the processes of deliberation and coalition building. It may involve direct participation of the members of a society in deciding on the laws and policies of the society or it may involve the participation of those members in selecting representatives to make the decisions. The function of normative democratic theory is not to settle questions of definition but to determine which, if any, of the forms democracy may take are morally desirable and when and how. For instance, Joseph Schumpeter argues, chap. XXI, with some force, that only a highly formal kind of democracy in which citizens vote in an electoral process for the purpose of selecting competing elites is highly desirable while a conception of democracy that draws on a more ambitious conception of equality is dangerous. Others have argued that democracy is not desirable at all. To evaluate their arguments we must decide on the merits of the different principles and conceptions of humanity and society from which they proceed. The Justification of Democracy We can evaluate democracy along at least two different dimensions: John Stuart Mill argued that a democratic method of making legislation is better than non-democratic methods in three ways: Strategically, democracy has an advantage because it forces decision-makers to take into account the interests, rights and opinions of most people in society. Since democracy gives some political power to each, more people are taken into account than under aristocracy or monarchy. The basis of this argument is that politicians in a multiparty democracy with free elections and a free press have incentives to respond to the expressions of needs of the poor. Epistemologically, democracy is thought to be the best decision-making method on the grounds that it is generally more reliable in helping participants discover the right decisions. Since democracy brings a lot of people into the process of decision making, it can take advantage of many sources of information and critical assessment of laws and policies. Democratic decision-making tends to be more informed than other forms about the interests of citizens and the causal mechanisms necessary to advance those interests. Furthermore, the broad based discussion typical of democracy enhances the critical assessment of the different moral ideas that guide decision-makers. Many have endorsed democracy on the basis of the proposition that democracy has beneficial effects on character. Many have noted with Mill and Rousseau that democracy tends to make people stand up for themselves more than other forms of rule do because it makes collective decisions depend on them more than monarchy or aristocracy do. Hence, in democratic societies individuals are encouraged to be more autonomous. In addition, democracy tends to get people to think carefully and rationally more than other forms of rule because it makes a difference whether they do or not. Finally, some have argued that democracy tends to enhance the moral qualities of citizens. When they participate in making decisions, they have to listen to others, they are called upon to justify themselves to others and they are forced to think in part in terms of the interests of others. Some have argued that when people find themselves in this kind of circumstance, they come genuinely to think in terms of the common good and justice. Hence, some have argued that democratic processes tend to enhance the autonomy, rationality and morality of participants. Since these beneficial effects are thought to be worthwhile in themselves, they count in favor of democracy and

against other forms of rule Mill , p. Some argue in addition that the above effects on character tend to enhance the quality of legislation as well. A society of autonomous, rational, and moral decision-makers is more likely to produce good legislation than a society ruled by a self-centered person or small group of persons who rule over slavish and unreflective subjects. More detailed knowledge of the effects of political institutions can be used to discriminate in favor of particular kinds of democratic institutions or modifications of them. For instance in the United States, James Madison argued in favor of a fairly strong federal government on the grounds that local governments are more likely to be oppressive to minorities Madison, Hamilton and Jay , n. Of course the soundness of any of the above arguments depends on the truth or validity of the associated substantive views about justice and the common good as well as the causal theories of the consequences of different institutions. Plato Republic, Book VI argues that democracy is inferior to various forms of monarchy, aristocracy and even oligarchy on the grounds that democracy tends to undermine the expertise necessary to properly governed societies. In a democracy, he argues, those who are expert at winning elections and nothing else will eventually dominate democratic politics. Democracy tends to emphasize this expertise at the expense of the expertise that is necessary to properly governed societies. The reason for this is that most people do not have the kinds of talents that enable them to think well about the difficult issues that politics involves. Hence, the state will be guided by very poorly worked out ideas that experts in manipulation and mass appeal use to help themselves win office. XIX argues that democracy is inferior to monarchy because democracy fosters destabilizing dissension among subjects. But his skepticism is not based in a conception that most people are not intellectually fit for politics. On his view, individual citizens and even politicians are apt not to have a sense of responsibility for the quality of legislation because no one makes a significant difference to the outcomes of decision making. For Hobbes, then, democracy has deleterious effects on subjects and politicians and consequently on the quality of the outcomes of collective decision making. Many public choice theorists in contemporary economic thought expand on these Hobbesian criticisms. They argue that citizens are not informed about politics and that they are often apathetic, which makes room for special interests to control the behavior of politicians and use the state for their own limited purposes all the while spreading the costs to everyone else. Some of them argue for giving over near complete control over society to the market, on the grounds that more extensive democracy tends to produce serious economic inefficiencies. More modest versions of these arguments have been used to justify modification of democratic institutions. There are a number of different kinds of argument for instrumentalism. One kind of argument proceeds from a certain kind of moral theory. For example classical utilitarianism simply has no room in its fundamental value theory for the ideas of intrinsic fairness, liberty or the intrinsic importance of an egalitarian distribution of political power. Its sole concern with maximizing utility understood as pleasure or desire satisfaction guarantees that it can provide only instrumental arguments for and against democracy. And there are many moral theories of this sort. But one need not be a thoroughgoing consequentialist to argue for instrumentalism in democratic theory. There are arguments in favor of instrumentalism that pertain directly to the question of democracy and collective decision making generally. One argument states that political power involves the exercise of power of some over others. And it argues that the exercise of power of one person over another can only be justified by reference to the protection of the interests or rights of the person over whom power is exercised. Thus no distribution of political power could ever be justified except by reference to the quality of outcomes of the decision making process Arneson , pp. Other arguments question the coherence of the idea of intrinsically fair collective decision making processes. For instance, social choice theory questions the idea that there can be a fair decision making function that transforms a set of individual preferences into a rational collective preference. No general rule satisfying reasonable constraints can be devised that can transform any set of individual preferences into a rational social preference. And this is taken to show that democratic procedures cannot be intrinsically fair Riker , p. Dworkin argues that the idea of equality, which is for him at the root of social justice, cannot be given a coherent and plausible interpretation when it comes to the distribution of political power among members of the society. The relation of politicians to citizens inevitably gives rise to inequality, so it cannot be intrinsically fair or just Dworkin , ch. In later work, Dworkin has pulled back from this originally thoroughgoing instrumentalism Dworkin , ch. Some argue in addition, that some forms of

decision making are morally desirable independent of the consequences of having them. A variety of different approaches have been used to show that democracy has this kind of intrinsic value. The most common of these come broadly under the rubrics of liberty and equality. Democracy, it is said, extends the idea that each ought to be master of his or her life to the domain of collective decision making. Second, only when each person has an equal voice and vote in the process of collective decision-making will each have control over this larger environment. Thinkers such as Carol Gould , pp. Since individuals have a right of self-government, they have a right to democratic participation. This right is established at least partly independently of the worth of the outcomes of democratic decision making. The idea is that the right of self-government gives one a right, within limits, to do wrong. Just as an individual has a right to make some bad decisions for himself or herself, so a group of individuals have a right to make bad or unjust decisions for themselves regarding those activities they share. Here we can see the makings of an argument against instrumentalism. But if the liberty argument is correct our right to control our lives is violated by this. One major difficulty with this line of argument is that it appears to require that the basic rule of decision making be consensus or unanimity. If each person must freely choose the outcomes that bind him or her then those who oppose the decision are not self-governing. They live in an environment imposed on them by others. So only when all agree to a decision are they freely adopting the decision. The trouble is that there is rarely agreement on major issues in politics. Indeed, it appears that one of the main reasons for having political decision making procedures is that they can settle matters despite disagreement. The idea behind this approach is that laws and policies are legitimate to the extent that they are publicly justified to the citizens of the community. Public justification is justification to each citizen as a result of free and reasoned debate among equals. Citizens justify laws and policies to each other on the basis of mutually acceptable reasons. Democracy, properly understood, is the context in which individuals freely engage in a process of reasoned discussion and deliberation on an equal footing. The ideas of freedom and equality provide guidelines for structuring democratic institutions. The aim of democracy as public justification is reasoned consensus among citizens. But a serious problem arises when we ask about what happens when disagreement remains. Two possible replies have been suggested to this kind of worry. It has been urged that forms of consensus weaker than full consensus are sufficient for public justification and that the weaker varieties are achievable in many societies. For instance, there may be consensus on the list of reasons that are acceptable publicly but disagreement on the weight of the different reasons. Or there may be agreement on general reasons abstractly understood but disagreement about particular interpretations of those reasons. What would have to be shown here is that such weak consensus is achievable in many societies and that the disagreements that remain are not incompatible with the ideal of public justification.

Chapter 8 : Democracy Should Be Imposed On Countries - DebateWise

Champions Of Democracy: From Fake News To Imposed Insanity by Media Lens / February 2nd, Open a corporate media website on any given day and you will find someone, somewhere blaming social media for something.

A version of this article first appeared in Islam Online www. It is published here with permission. Is democracy promotion an exception to the rule? This question is at the heart of many current debates in the international system, not least of which is the war in Iraq. My answer is no, although I find this position problematic because I believe that democracy is the best political system of all those in existence. According to most political theorists, democracy at its most basic is rule by the people, which usually includes competitive elections, a constitution that protects individual rights, and a separation of powers. Democratic governance provides the best chance for individual citizens to achieve their interests in relation to their fellow citizens. Those interests can include security, wealth, and even happiness. Democracy also provides some assurance that no single powerful individual or faction will be able to dominate the political system. Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant in the late 18th century argued that democracies, or what he called republics, are more peaceful than other forms of government. While democracies certainly use military force—the United States today, Great Britain and France in the first half of the 20th century being perfect examples—evidence compiled through various studies suggests that they rarely if ever go to war with one another. While democratic states tend to protect their own citizens and tend to be more peaceful, does it follow that democratic systems ought to be imposed on communities by the use of military force? The quote from J. Mill suggests that while some liberal theory might support the use of force to promote democracy, other traditions within liberalism are more opposed. The just war tradition, a body of thought that has developed over time to evaluate the use of military force, does not support the use of force to promote democracy. The established reasons for using force in the tradition are three: These do not include promoting democracy. Justifications for using force in international law get closer to promoting democracy, but they also do not allow it. International law allows war for self-defence and has, over the past 20 years, begun to develop a justification for using force to protect human rights. If democracy is considered a human right, then perhaps it might be justifiable according to international law. I would argue, however, that democracy is not a human right, but, rather, it provides the best defence of human rights for individuals. We have, thus, something of a dilemma. On the one hand, we see that democracy can be argued to be the best political system. On the other hand, we have a strong resistance to using force to promote democracy in liberal theory, the just war tradition, and international law. Is there any way out? One possible avenue to escape this dilemma comes from the writings of the former Secretary General of the United Nations Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In , as he was being forced out of office by the United States, Boutros-Ghali published the last of his three Agenda documents, Agenda for Democratisation. During his tenure, the United Nations did exactly this, by helping to run elections in Cambodia. But, importantly, Boutros-Ghali also argued that democracy is not something that occurs only inside states. Rather, democratization should take place among states at the international level as well. In other words, until the international community as a whole becomes democratic. One possible way to do this is through greater inclusion of NGOs in various international conferences—a strategy initiated by Boutros-Ghali during his tenure, when he invited various groups to Conventions in Cairo on women and Vienna on human rights. While including NGOs does not ensure that democracy will flourish around the world, by giving these groups more of a role in international governance, they might have more of a role in domestic governance. The current conflict in Iraq demonstrates the dangers of promoting democracy in an undemocratic international system. Until the international community appreciates the point made by Boutros-Ghali, promoting democracy by war or otherwise will continue to generate resistance.

Opponents of the act have, however, criticised that democracy cannot be imposed from outside. The two countries have since had relatively successful elections, but have also experienced serious security and development problems.

Current state[edit] There are a number of pro-democracy movements in the Middle East. A prominent figure in this movement is Saad Eddin Ibrahim who advocates and campaigns for democracy in Egypt and the wider region, working with the Ibn Khaldun Centre for Development Studies [15] and serving on the Board of Advisors for the Project on Middle East Democracy. When asked about his thoughts regarding the current state of democracy in the region he said: The Cold War made the United States and other western democracies look the other way when it came to political oppression and allowed them to deal with tyrants and dictators. The results showed very little progress from The report even states that this pattern may be counter-productive to US interests, with Islamism being the only viable opposition to regimes in many Middle Eastern countries. As an additional measure of US attitudes towards the issue of Middle Eastern democratization, on 14 December , the US Secretary of state Condoleezza Rice stated that democracy in the Middle East was "non-negotiable. A few countries, such as Saudi Arabia, do not claim to be democracies; however, most of the larger states claim to be democracies[citation needed], although this claim is in most cases disputed[citation needed]. Presidential republic A number of republics embracing Arab Socialism , such as Syria and Egypt , regularly hold elections , but critics assert that these are not full multi-party systems. Most importantly they do not allow citizens to choose between lots of different candidates for presidency election. Absolute monarchy[edit] Absolute monarchy is common in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia and a few other kingdoms on the Arabian Peninsula are considered absolute monarchies. The endurance of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East is notable in comparison to the rest of the world. While such regimes have fallen throughout sub-Saharan Africa, for example, they have persisted in the Middle East. Yet Middle Eastern history also includes significant episodes of conflict between rulers and proponents of change. This form of government differs from absolute monarchy in which an absolute monarch serves as the source of power in the state and is not legally bound by any constitution and has the powers to regulate his or her respective government. Most constitutional monarchies employ a parliamentary system in which the monarch may have strictly ceremonial duties or may have reserve powers, depending on the constitution. Under most modern constitutional monarchies there is also a prime minister who is the head of government and exercises effective political power. The Middle Eastern countries with Constitutional monarchies are generally considered democratic. Jordan , Kuwait , Morocco , and Bahrain are considered constitutional monarchies. Islamic governments[edit] The Iranian Revolution of resulted in an electoral system an Islamic Republic with a constitution , but the system has a limited democracy in practice. Another main problem is the closed loop in the electoral system, the elected Assembly of Experts elect the Supreme Leader of Iran , who appoints the members of the Guardian Council , who in turn vet the candidates for all elections including the elections for Assembly of Experts. However some elections in Iran, as the election of city councils satisfies free and democratic election criteria to some extent. In other countries, the ideology usually out of power has fostered both pro-democratic and anti-democratic sentiments. The Justice and Development Party is a moderate democratic Islamist party that has come to power in traditionally secular Turkey. Its moderate ideology has been compared to Christian Democracy in Europe. The United Iraqi Alliance , the winner of the recent elections in Iraq, is a coalition including many religious parties. Iran[edit] History of political systems[edit] Historically Iranians were ruled by an absolute monarchy for several thousand years , at least since the time of the Achaemenid Empire B. The Constitutional Revolution in replaced the absolute monarchy with a constitutional monarchy. The constitution went under several revisions during the following decades. These and other policies contributed to alienating nationalists, leftists, and religious groups. The monarchy was overthrown in by the Iranian Revolution. The constitution was modeled on the constitution of the French Fifth Republic by the Assembly of Experts for Constitution who were elected by direct popular vote and Khomeini made himself the new Supreme Leader of Iran. Iran holds regular national elections by universal suffrage for

all citizens regardless of race, religion, or sex, who are of voting age for electing the President, members of Parliament, Assembly of Experts, City and Village Councils where political parties support candidates. Issues with the current political system[edit] The current political system in Iran was designed to allow Iranians to decide their future by themselves without being oppressed by authorities, but in practice only allows a limited democracy. This combined with the view that he is the representative of God held by some religious groups, being the head of the security and armed forces, and controlling the official state media the radio and television are restricted to state radio and television makes him immune from any kind of criticism and unchallengeable. Critics of the system or the Supreme Leader are punished severely. Critical newspapers and political parties are closed, social and political activists like writers, journalists, human right activists, university students, union leaders, lawyers, and politicians are jailed for unreasonably long periods for making simple criticism against the Supreme Leader, the Islamic Republic system, Islam and Shia doctrines, the government, and other officials. They have been even threatened by death sentence though all such verdict in recent years have been dropped in higher courts in recent years and some have been assassinated by the Ministry of Intelligence and militias in the past no such case has been reported in recent years. Another main problem is the closed loop in the electoral system, the elected Assembly of Experts elects the Supreme Leader, so in theory he is elected indirectly by popular vote, but in practice the system does not satisfy the criteria for a free election since the Supreme Leader appoints the members of the Guardian Council who in turn vet the candidates for all elections including the elections for Assembly of Experts. This loop limits the possible candidates to those agreeing with the views held by Supreme Leader and he has the final say over all important issues. Also the fourth unchangeable article of constitution states that all other articles of the constitution and all other laws are void if they violate Islamic rules, and the Guardian Council is given the duty of interpreting the constitution and verifying that all laws passed the parliament are not against Islamic laws. Many articles of constitution about political freedoms and minority rights e. Other problems include the issues with the rights of racial and religious minorities, influence and involvement of armed forces specially the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Basij in political activities, widespread corruption in the ruling elite, problems with security forces like police and militias like Ansar-e Hezbollah, and corruption in Judiciary. Public opinion of Iranians regarding the current political system[edit] One should note that against all short-comings of the current system as a democracy mentioned above some recent polls [26] [27] [28] in Iran by a number of respected Western polling organizations show that a considerable majority of Iranians support the system including and the religious institutions and trust it about the elections even the disputed presidential elections in Some Iranians and political activists dispute the results of these polls arguing that the results of these polls cannot be trusted because people fear to express their real opinion and the limitations on the follow of information allows the state to control the opinion of people living in more traditional parts of the country. Some of these polling organizations have responded to these claims and defended their results as correctly showing the current opinion of Iranians. The polls also show a divide between the population living in large modern cities like Tehran and people living in other more traditional and conservative parts of the country like rural areas and smaller cities. Lebanon[edit] Lebanon has traditionally enjoyed a confessional democratic system. A large number of political parties with very different ideologies, are active in Lebanon, but most of them form political alliances with other groups of similar interests. Even though certain high-profile positions in the government and the seats in the parliament are reserved for specified sects, intense competition is usually expected of political parties and candidates. In January, the Economist Intelligence Unit, released a report stating that Lebanon ranked the 2nd in Middle East and 98th out of countries worldwide for Democracy Index, which ranks countries according to election processes, pluralism, government functions, political participation, political cultures and fundamental freedoms. Israel[edit] Israel is a parliamentary democracy represented by a very large number of parties, with universal suffrage for all citizens, regardless of race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation, who are of voting age. However, no national elections have been held since the Fatah-Hamas conflict erupted into violence in Arab Spring The protests, uprisings and revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa, beginning on 18 December, brought about the overthrow of the Tunisian and Egyptian governments. Bahrain and Yemen are experiencing uprisings. The

uprising in Syria led to full-scale civil war. Tunisia and Egypt have held elections that were considered fair by observers. Many other countries in the region are also calling for democracy and freedom, including: Research confirms that in general people in Islamic societies support democracy. Arab Socialism has also fostered secularism, though sometimes in what has been seen as a less democratic context. Secularism is not the same as freedom of religion, and secular governments have at times denied the rights of Islamists and other religious parties. A trend of a more liberal secularism supporting broader freedom of religion has developed recently in Turkey, while some Arab Socialist states have moved away from secularism to some extent, increasingly embracing religion, though many say without really increasing the rights of religious parties. Lebanon also is a secular state. The state, democratization and the Middle East[edit] The reasons for the lack of democratization in the Middle East are outlined by analysts such as Albrecht Schnabel, who says that a strong civil society is required to produce leaders and mobilize the public around democratic duties, but in order for such a civil society to flourish, a democratic environment and process allowing freedom of expression and order is required in the first place. This theory therefore supports the intervention of outside countries, such as the U. Externally supported creation of fragile, yet somewhat functioning institutions is meant to trigger the momentum needed to encourage the evolution of a functioning civil society. The latter will, after a few years of consolidation and post-conflict stability, produce the first wholly internally crafted government. At that time, external involvement, if still provided at that point, can cede. Drawing from the work of Alexis de Tocqueville and Robert Putnam, these researchers suggest that independent, nongovernmental associations help foster a participatory form of governance. They cite the lack of horizontal voluntary association as a reason for the persistence of authoritarianism in the region. Authoritarianism has been exceptionally robust in the MENA region because many of the states have proven willing and able to crush reform initiatives. Moreover, almost every Arab state has been directly involved in some form of international conflict over the past decades.