

The Future of Democracy  
A Roundtable & Planning Workshop  
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**In the scholarly milieu of the Inter-University Centre and against the beautiful setting of Dubrovnik, the roundtable on democracy was alive and animated. The very notion of “democracy” was questioned. I challenged its reified status as if a “type” of government characterized by westernized notions of election and assumed values of freedom, while, in fact, dominating countries exploit this idea as if to be exported to weaker nations disguising the real goal of regime change and control of resources. I proposed that it is best confined to principles for domestic governing having a balance of power among its governing institutions of the executive, legislative and judicial. This is a gradual process. Most important is a transparent, direct participation by the people to determine their needs and the solutions to meet them. Two real life examples were shared: 1) Egypt’s people revolution of “street democracy” without violence, which empowered them directly and led to the fall of two unwanted presidents and the beginning of a democratic process of government on a road to sustainable economic and social change; 2) The incredible South Korean female sea-divers who swim 65ft to the ocean floor and back without breathing apparatus through their life-cycle from youth to old age, for six hours a day. Diving women are the economic providers for their families. What do men do? They are the guardians of heritage, identity and continuity. These concrete examples lead to a reconsideration of the notion of democracy in terms of social power which can be embedded in people’s direct action (Egypt’s Revolution 2011-1013) or in social structures of balance, complementarity and harmony (South Korean diving villages).**