



Democracy: In Search of a Strategic Perspective



Werner Weidenfeld
Emeritus Professor of Political Systems
and European Unification, LudwigMaximilians-University Munich

View the lecture >>>

Table of Contents >>>

All liberal democracies are facing great challenges – from without as well as from within. Take the changing power architecture of world politics:

The USA,

China, India, Russia,

the Arab world.

Take the populist movements in almost every democracy, and see the tendency towards autocratic states.

See, for example, Eastern Europe:

They celebrated the birth of their democracy 30 years ago, and now they are distancing themselves from it, in Hungary, in Poland.

The status quo is: Cultural erosion –

Trust erodes.

Distrust grows.

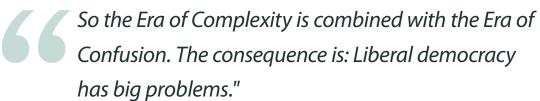
Alienation dominates.

Structural Problems: globalization, internationalization, cyber-developments, digitalization.

I call it "the Era of Complexity"

Cultural developments:

With the development of a growing division of labor,
you need people to trust in the competence of others, but, in reality, more than
70% of the people say that they don't understand anything. →



19

Democracy: In Search of a Strategic Perspective



Werner WeidenfeldEmeritus Professor of Political Systems and European Unification, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich

View the lecture >>>

Table of Contents >>>

I call this cultural development "the Era of Confusion."



The consequence is: Liberal democracy has big problems.

What might the strategic answer be?

One answer that worked for many decades is no longer available:

During the East–West conflict

the western democracies.

when they were challenged, could answer:

Look to the east.

Go to the east.

So, in order to overcome this historic crisis, there must be a reorientation!

This reorientation will require several steps:

(1) Develop a "culture of democracy."

This is more than knowing the legal framework: It is a spirit.

Develop this culture on different levels:

- in schools and educational frameworks,
- at universities,
- in mass media.
- in the social sciences.

(2) Develop the "culture of democracy" wherever power decisions are happening:

- on the village level,
- on the level of the nation state,
- on the international level. \rightarrow





Democracy: In Search of a Strategic Perspective



Werner Weidenfeld
Emeritus Professor of Political Systems
and European Unification, LudwigMaximilians-University Munich

View the lecture >>>

Table of Contents >>>

(3) To develop democracy, a common perspective is needed.

For example: new representative elements or repressible elements; new direct democracy, to learn from the Swiss example of popular referenda.

(4) Develop a practical strategy:

We must overcome our strategic speechlessness.