

EXPORT OF DEMOCRACY



WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

- *No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government — except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.* Winston “Bulldog” Churchill, 1947
- 1947, the new independent **democratic** India demonstrated that democracy is not a luxury that poorer non-Western nations could not afford and might not even desire, a system only feasible under certain economic and cultural conditions. Muslim democracies, Buddhist democracies. Example of Mali.

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

- Free and fair elections; accountability; openness; tolerance; practical legal mechanisms for getting rid of ineffective leaders; independent and powerful judiciary; pluralism (e.g., multi-partyism); de-centralization of power; freedoms of expression, conscience, assembly, press, etc.
- The government is a product of constitution, not vice-versa

«MANIFEST DESTINY»

- **Founding Fathers:** “City on a Hill”
- **Roman Empire:** double standards; powerful legal system – inclination toward exporting Roman system



Philosophers on the Issue

- Adam Smith: free trade, economic liberalism – gain for all
- Immanuel Kant: “Perpetual Peace” – republicanism
- Woodrow Wilson: League of Nations, United Nations



Politics in America

- Want to become a president? Go ahead – speak about spreading democracy abroad!
- Neo-con phenomenon: spread of democracy as disguise for geopolitical gain?

Funding for democracy

- ▶ From 2003 onwards, funding for democracy in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union has been cut by half, while it has increased toward those in the Middle East → a by-product of the post-Sep.11 world (Lorne Craner)
- ▶ Most of the funds promised to Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, had to be diverted to Iraq and Afghanistan → much promise, no money.

Distinct Voices Inside America

- Victor Davis Hanson (Stanford University): The United States is not trying to promote “one system or the other of democracy – there are many – but simply the general idea of legitimate voting, independent courts, free expression, and the infrastructure of constitutional government.” He suggests that freedom “is natural to the Arab world as it is natural to man.”
- Noam Chomsky (MIT): The United States is creating chaos.
- Howard Zinn: We judge ourselves by our ideals, others by their actions.