

Democracy, Republic, Representation

Jacques Rancière

The democratic scandal consists simply in revealing this: there will never be, under the name of politics, a single principle of community that legitimates the actions of those who govern on the basis of laws inherent in the coming together of human communities. Rousseau was right to denounce the vicious circle of Hobbes, who claimed to prove the *natural* unsociability of men on the basis of court intrigues and the backbiting of the salons. But in describing nature according to the model of society, Hobbes also showed that it is vain to look for the origin of political community in some innate virtue of sociability. If the search for origins freely mixes before and after, it is because it always comes after the fact. The philosophy that looks for the principle of good government or the reasons for which men give themselves governments comes after democracy, which itself comes after, interrupting the ageless logic according to which communities are governed by those who have the right to exercise their authority over those who are predisposed to be subjected to it.

The word democracy, then, properly designates neither a form of society nor a form of government. “Democratic society” is never anything but a fanciful picture intended to support one or another principle of good government. Societies, today as yesterday, are organized by the play of oligarchies. And, properly speaking, there is no democratic government. Government is always practiced by the minority on the majority. The “power of the people” is thus necessarily heterotopic to inequalitarian society as well as to oligarchic government. It is what divides government from itself by dividing society from itself. It is thus also what separates the exercise of government from the representation of society.

People like to simplify the question by returning to the opposition of direct democracy and representative democracy. One can then simply employ the difference between times and the opposition between reality and utopia. Direct democracy, it is said, was good for ancient Greek cities or the Swiss cantons of the Middle Ages, where the whole population of free men could gather in a single place. For our vast countries and modern societies, only representative democracy is suitable. The argument is not as probative as one would like. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, French representatives saw no difficulty in gathering all the electors in the commune’s administrative center. It sufficed that the electors not be too numerous, which was readily achieved by limiting the right to elect representatives to the nation’s best, which is to say to those who could pay a poll tax of 300 francs. “Direct elections,” said Benjamin Constant, “constitute the only true representative government.”¹ And Hannah Arendt could still in 1963 see the true power of the people in the revolutionary form of councils where the only effective political elite is constituted – the elite, self-selected on

the ground, of those who experience happiness taking care of public affairs [*la chose publique*].²

In other words, representation was never a system invented to make up for the growth of populations. It is not democracy's way of adapting to modern times and vast spaces. It is, by rights, an oligarchic form, a representation of minorities who are entitled to concern themselves with common affairs. In the history of representation it is always first of all estates, orders, or possessions that are represented, whether they are regarded as giving a right to exercise power or a sovereign power sometimes gives them a consultative vote. Nor is election in itself a democratic form by which the people makes its voice heard. It is originally the expression of the consent demanded by a superior power, which can really only be unanimous.³ The self-evidence that assimilates democracy to the form of representative government resulting from elections is historically very recent. Originally, representation was the exact opposite of democracy. No one ignored this at the time of the American and French Revolutions. The Founding Fathers and many of their French emulators saw in it precisely the means for the elite to exercise in fact, in the name of the people, the power that the elite is obliged to recognize is theirs but which it could not exercise without ruining the very principle of government.⁴ The disciples of Rousseau, for their part, only admitted it at the price of rejecting what the word signifies, namely the representation of particular interests. The general will cannot be divided and the deputies can only represent the nation in general. Today "representative democracy" may seem to be a pleonasm. But initially it was an oxymoron.

This does not mean that it is necessary to oppose the virtues of direct democracy to the mediations and usurpations of representation, or, pointing to the deceptive appearances of formal democracy, to the effectiveness of a real democracy. It is as wrong to identify democracy and representation as it is to make one the refutation of the other. What democracy means is precisely this: that the juridico-political forms of state constitutions and laws always rest on one and the same logic. What is called "representative democracy," but would be more precisely called the parliamentary system or, with Raymond Aron, the "pluralist constitutional regime," is a mixed form: a form of state functioning initially founded on the privilege of "natural" elites and then gradually turned away from this function by democratic struggles. The bloody history of struggle for electoral reform in Great Britain, complacently erased under the idyll of an English tradition of "liberal" democracy, is no doubt the best witness to this. Universal suffrage is in no way a natural consequence of democracy. Democracy has no natural consequence precisely because it is the division of "nature," the broken link between natural properties and forms of government. Universal suffrage is a mixed form, born of oligarchy, redirected by democratic combat, and perpetually reconquered by oligarchy, which proposes its candidates and sometimes its preferred decisions to the electoral body without ever being able to exclude the risk that the electoral body will behave like a population drawn by lot.

Democracy can never be identified with a juridico-political form. This does not mean that it is indifferent to them. It means that the power of the people is always

below and beyond these forms. Below, because these forms cannot function without referring in the last instance to this power of the incompetent that founds and negates the power of the competent, to this equality that is necessary for the very functioning of the inegalitarian machine. Beyond, because the very forms that inscribe this power are constantly reappropriated, by the play of the governmental machine itself, into the “natural” logic of those entitled to govern, which is a logic of indistinction of the public and the private. As soon as the connection to nature is severed, as soon as governments are obliged to present themselves as instances of the common of the community, separated from the sole logic of relations of authority immanent in the reproduction of the social body, there is a public sphere – a sphere in which the two opposed logics of the police and of politics, of the natural government of social competence and the government of anyone, meet and conflict. The spontaneous practice of all government tends to shrink this public sphere, to make it into its private affair and, for that purpose, to consign the interventions and the places of intervention of non-state actors to the side of private life. Democracy, then, far from being the form of life of individuals dedicated to their private happiness, is the process of struggle against this privatization, the process of enlarging the public sphere. Enlarging the public sphere does not mean, as what is known as liberal discourse claims, demanding the growing encroachment of the state on society. It means struggling against the distribution of public and private that secures the double domination of the oligarchy in the state and in society.

Historically, this enlargement has signified two things: gaining recognition of those whom state law has consigned to the private life of inferior beings as equals and political subjects; and gaining recognition of the public character of types of spaces and relations that have been left to the discretion of the power of wealth. This first of all meant struggles to include all those whom police logic had naturally excluded from the number of the electors and eligibles: all those who were not entitled to participate in public life because they did not belong to “society” but only to domestic and reproductive life, because their work belonged to a master or a husband – salaried workers long assimilated to the dependent servants of their masters and incapable of having their own will; women subjected to their husband’s will and committed to caring for the family and domestic life. It has also meant struggles against the natural logic of the electoral system, which makes representation the representation of dominant interests and election a mechanism bound to consent: official candidacies, electoral fraud, de facto monopolies over candidacies. But this enlargement also includes all the struggles to assert the public character of spaces, relations, and institutions regarded as private. The latter struggles have generally been described as social movements by reason of their places and objects: fights over wages and working conditions; battles over health and retirement systems. But this designation is ambiguous. In fact it presupposes as given a distribution of the political and the social, of public and private, that in reality is a political question of equality or inequality. The fight over wages was first of all a fight to privatize the wage relation, to assert that it is neither a master-servant relation nor a simple contract made on a case-by-case basis between two private individuals,

but a public matter affecting the collectivity and consequently giving rise to forms of collective action, public discussion, and legislative regulation. The “right to work” claimed by the workers’ movement of the nineteenth century first of all meant this: not the demand for assistance from a “welfare state,” to which some sought to assimilate it, but first and foremost the constitution of work as a structure of collective life, wrested from the sole reign of the law of private interests and imposing limits on the naturally unlimited process of the increase of wealth.

For, to the extent that it escapes the first indistinction, domination is exercised through a logic of the distribution of spheres which itself has two sources. On the one hand, it claims to separate the public domain from the private interests of society. To do so it declares that, even where it is recognized, the equality of “men” and “citizens” only concerns their relation to the constituted juridico-political sphere and that even where the people are sovereign, it is only through the acts of their representatives and governors. Domination works through the distinction between the public, which belongs to everyone, and the private, where the freedom of each prevails. But this freedom of each is the freedom – that is, the domination – of those who possess the immanent powers of society. It is the empire of the law of the increase of wealth. As for the public sphere thus allegedly purified of private interests, it is also a limited, privatized public sphere, reserved for the play of institutions and for the monopoly of those who make it work. These two spheres are only separated in principle the better to be united under the law of oligarchy. The American Founding Fathers and the French partisans of the *régime censitaire* [which restricted the franchise after the 1815 Bourbon restoration] indeed saw no harm in identifying the figure of the property-owner with that of the public man who can raise himself above the base interests of economic and social life. The democratic movement is thus in fact a double movement of the transgression of limits: a movement to extend the equality of public man to other domains of common life, in particular all those that govern the capitalist illimitation of wealth; and also a movement to affirm the belonging of everyone and anyone to this incessantly privatized public sphere.

This is where the much-commented-upon duality of man and citizen could be put into play. This duality had been denounced by critics from Burke to Agamben by way of Marx and Hannah Arendt in the name of a simple logic: if two principles instead of just one are necessary to politics, it is owing to some vice or trick. One of the two must be illusory, if not both together. The rights of man are empty or tautological, say Burke and Hannah Arendt. Or else they are the rights of bare or naked man. But naked man, the man who does not belong to a constituted national community, has no rights. The rights of man are thus the empty rights of those who have no rights. Or they are the rights of men who belong to a national community. They are then simply the rights of the citizens of this nation, the rights of those who have rights, and thus a pure tautology. Conversely, Marx saw the rights of the citizen as the constitution of an ideal sphere whose reality consisted in the rights of man, not naked man but proprietary man, who imposes the law of his interests, the law of wealth, behind the mask of the equal rights of all.

These two positions meet on an essential point: the will, inherited from Plato, to reduce the two, man and citizen, to illusion and reality; the concern that the political have one and only one principle. What both refuse is that the one of politics only exists through the an-archic supplement signified by the word democracy. We will freely grant to Hannah Arendt that naked man has no rights that belong to him, that he is not a political subject. But nor is the citizen of the constitutional texts a political subject. Political subjects can be neatly identified neither with "men" or the grouping of populations nor with the identities defined by constitutional texts. They are always defined by an interval between identities, whether these identities are determined by social relations or juridical categories. The "citizen" of the revolutionary clubs is that which denies the constitutional opposition between active citizens (those who are able to pay the poll tax) and passive citizens. The working man or worker as political subject is that which separates itself from the assignation to the private, non-political sphere that these terms imply. Political subjects exist in the interval between different names of subjects. Man and citizen are such names, common names whose extension and understanding are litigious and which, for that reason, lend themselves to political supplementation, to an exercise that tests which subjects these names are applied to and what power they bear.

This is how the duality of man and citizen was able to serve the construction of political subjects who staged and challenged the double logic of domination that separates public man from the private individual the better to guarantee, in both spheres, the same domination. In order to stop this duality from being identified with the opposition of reality and illusion, it must be divided once again. Political action, then, opposes to the police logic of the separation of spheres another use of the same juridical text, another staging of the duality of public man and private man. It overturns the distribution of terms and places by playing man off against citizen and citizen off against man. As a political name, 'citizen' opposes the rule of equality fixed by law and by principle to the inequalities that characterize 'men,' that is, private individuals subjected to the powers of birth and wealth. And, conversely, the reference to 'man' opposes the equal ability of all to all the privatizations of citizenship: those that exclude such and such a part of the population from citizenship or those that exclude such and such a domain of collective life from the reign of civic equality. Each of these terms thus polemically plays the role of the universal that is opposed to the particular. And the opposition of "bare life" to political existence can itself be politicized.

This is what is shown by the famous syllogism introduced by Olympe de Gouges in Article 10 of her *Declaration of the Rights of Women and Citizen*: "Woman has the right to go to the scaffold; she should equally have the right to go to the Assembly." This reasoning is bizarrely inserted into the middle of a declaration of women's right to opinion, traced onto that of men ("No one need be troubled even for their fundamental opinions . . . provided that their expression does not disturb public order established by law"). But this very strangeness marks the twist of the relation between life and citizenship that establishes the claim that women belong to the sphere of political opinion. They have been excluded from the benefits of the rights of citizens in the

name of a division between the public sphere and the private sphere. Belonging to domestic life, and thus to the world of particularity, they are strangers to the universal of the civic sphere. Olympe de Gouges turns the argument around by relying on a thesis that makes punishment the “right” of the guilty: if women “have the right to go to the scaffold,” if the revolutionary authority can condemn them, it is because their bare life is itself political. The equality of the death sentence revokes the self-evidence of the distinction between domestic life and political life. Women can thus claim their rights of women and citizens, identical rights that nevertheless can only be claimed in the form of a supplement.

In so doing, they factually refute the demonstration of Burke or Hannah Arendt. Either, they say, the rights of man are the rights of the citizen, that is, the rights of those who have rights, which is a tautology; or the rights of the citizen are the rights of man. But since bare man has no rights, they are the rights of those who have no rights, which is an absurdity. So, in these presumed logical pincers, Olympe de Gouges and her companions insert a third possibility: the “rights of woman and citizen” are the rights of those who do not have the rights they have and who have the rights they do not have. They are arbitrarily deprived of the rights the Declaration grants without distinction to members of the French nation and the human species. But they also exercise, through their action, the rights of citizens that the law denies them. They thus demonstrate that they indeed have the rights they are denied. “Having” and “not having” are terms that are doubled. And politics is the operation of this doubling. The young black woman who, one day in December 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, decided to remain in her seat on the bus, which was not hers, decided by this very fact that she had, as a citizen of the United States, the right that she did not have as a resident of a state that denied that seat to any individual having one-sixteenth or more “non-Caucasian” blood.⁵ And the blacks of Montgomery, who decided, with regard to this conflict between a private person and a transport company, to boycott the company, acted politically by staging the double relation of exclusion and inclusion inscribed in the duality of human being and citizen.

This is what is implied by the democratic process: the activity of subjects who, by working on the interval between identities, reconfigure the distribution of private and public, universal and particular. Democracy can never be identified with the simple domination of the universal over the particular. For, according to the logic of the police, the universal is incessantly privatized, incessantly brought back to a distribution of power between birth, wealth, and “ability” that plays out in the state as well as in society. This privatization is readily carried out in the name of the purity of public life, which is opposed to the particularities of private life or the social world. But this alleged purity of the political is only the purity of a distribution of terms, of a given state of relations between social forms of the power of wealth and the state privatization of the power of all. The argument confirms only what it presupposes: the separation between those who are and those who are not “destined” to deal with public life and the distribution of public and private. The democratic process must therefore constantly bring the universal into play in a polemical form. The democratic process is the process

of this perpetual bringing into play, this invention of forms of subjectification and cases of verification that counteract the perpetual privatization of public life. Democracy indeed signifies, in this sense, the impurity of politics, the challenge to governments' claims to embody the sole principle of public life and thereby to circumscribe the understanding and extension of this public life. If there is an "illimitation" proper to democracy, this is where it resides: not in the exponential multiplication of the needs or desires emanating from individuals, but in the movement that unceasingly displaces the limits of public and private, of the political and the social.

It is this displacement, inherent in politics itself, that rejects the ideology that is called republican. The latter asserts the strict delimitation of the political and social spheres and identifies the republic with the rule of law, indifferent to all particularities. This is how, in the 1980s, it argued its case for school reform. It propagated the simple doctrine that a republican and secular school distributed the same knowledge to everyone without regard for social differences. It laid down as a republican dogma the separation between instruction, i.e., the transmission of knowledge, which is a public matter, and education, which is a private matter. It then attributed the "crisis of education" to the invasion of academic institutions by society, and accused sociologists of being the instruments of this invasion by proposing reforms that consecrated the confusion of education and instruction. The republic so understood therefore seemed to be established as the rule of equality embodied in the neutrality of state institutions, indifferent to social differences. One might be surprised that the principal theorist of this secular and republican school now presents the law of filiation, embodied in the father who encourages his children to study the sacred texts of a religion, as the sole obstacle to the suicide of democratic humanity. But this apparent paradox correctly shows the equivocation hidden in the simple reference to a republican tradition of the separation of state and society.

For the word republic cannot merely signify the equal rule of law for all. 'Republic' is an equivocal term, wrought by the tension implied by the desire to include the excess of *politics* within the instituted forms of *the political*. Including this excess means two contradictory things: entitling it by fixing it in texts and forms of communal institutions, but also suppressing it by identifying state laws with social morals. On the one hand, the modern republic is identified with the rule of laws that emanate from a popular will that includes the excess of the *demos*. But, on the other hand, the inclusion of this excess requires a regulating principle: the republic requires not only laws but also republican morals. The republic is thus a regime of the homogeneity of state institutions and the morals of society. The republican tradition, in this sense, goes back neither to Rousseau nor to Machiavelli. It goes back properly speaking to the Platonic *politeia*. For the latter is not the rule of equality by law, of "arithmetic" equality among equivalent units. It is rule of geometric equality, which puts those who count more above those who count less. Its principle is not the written law, which is the same for everyone, but education, which endows each person and each class with the virtue proper to their place and function. The republic so understood does not oppose its unity to sociological diversity. For sociology is not properly speaking a chronicle of social diversity. It is, on the contrary, the vision of the homogenous social body, opposing its vital internal principle to the abstraction

of the law. The republic and sociology are, in this sense, two names for the same project: restoring, beyond the democratic rupture, a political order that is homogenous with a society's way of life. This is indeed what Plato suggests: a community whose laws are not dead formulae but the very respiration of society; the counsel of the wise and the movement internalized from birth by the bodies of the citizens, expressed by the city's dancing choruses. This is what modern sociological science would propose in the aftermath of the French Revolution: remedying the "Protestant," individualist rupture in the old social fabric organized by the power of birth, opposing to democratic dispersion the reconstitution of a social body distributed into its natural functions and hierarchies and united by common beliefs.

The republican idea therefore cannot be defined as the limitation of society by the state. It always implies a work of education that establishes or reestablishes the harmony of laws and morals, the system of institutional forms and the disposition of the social body. There are two ways of thinking of this education. Some see it already at work in the social body, from which it need simply be extracted: the logic of birth and wealth produces an elite of the "able" that has the time and the means to enlighten itself and to impose republican measure on democratic anarchy. This is the dominant thinking of the American Founding Fathers. For others, even the system of abilities has been undone and science has to reconstitute the harmony of state and society. This is the thinking that established the educational enterprise of the Third French Republic. But this enterprise could never be brought back to the simple model drawn by the "republicans" of our day. For it had a fight on two fronts. It sought to tear the elites and the people away from the power of the Catholic Church and the monarchy it served. But this program in no way coincided with the project of separating the state and society, instruction and education. The nascent republic in fact subscribed to the sociological program: remaking a homogenous social fabric that would succeed, beyond the revolutionary democratic rupture, the old fabric of the monarchy and religion. This is why the intertwining of instruction and education was essential to it. The sentences that introduce primary school students into the world of reading and writing were indissociable from the moral virtues that fix their usage. And, at the other end of the chain, examples from a Latin literature shorn of useless philological subtleties were counted on to give its virtues to the managerial elite.

This is also why the republican school is from the start divided between two opposed visions. The program of Jules Ferry is based on a postulated equation between the unity of science and the unity of the popular will. Identifying the republic and democracy as an indivisible social and political order, Ferry calls, in the name of Condorcet and the Revolution, for teaching that would be homogenous from top to bottom. As well, his desire to do away with the barriers between primary, secondary, and higher education, his stand in favor of a school that is open to the outside, where primary education rests on fun and practical "*leçons de choses*" rather than austere rules of grammar, and for a modern teaching opening up the same opportunities as the classics, will sound rather bad to many of our "republicans."⁶ In any case, in their day they elicited the hostility of those who saw them as an invasion of the republic by democracy. They militated

for teaching that clearly separated the two functions of the public school: instructing the people in what is useful for them and forming an elite that can elevate itself above the utilitarianism of the men of the people.⁷ For them, the distribution of knowledge must always be at once immersion in a “milieu” and a “body” that equips them for their social destination. The absolute evil is mixing up different milieus. At the root of this confusion is a vice that has two equivalent names: *egalitarianism* and *individualism*. According to them, “false democracy,” “individualist” democracy, leads civilization to an avalanche of evils – which Alfred Fouillée described in 1910, but in which the newspaper reader of 2005 will recognize without difficulty the catastrophic effects of May ’68 – of sexual liberation and the reign of mass consumption:

Absolute individualism, whose principles even socialists often adopt, would want that sons . . . have no solidarity with their families, that each is like an individual X . . . fallen from the sky, ready to do anything, with no other rules than the accidents of his tastes. Everything that can reconnect men to one another is like a servile chain to individualist democracy.

It begins to revolt even against the difference between the sexes and the obligations that follow from this difference: why raise women differently from men, and separately, and for different professions? Let us put them all together with the same regime and the same scientific, historical, and geographical brew, for the same geometry exercises; let us open all careers to everyone and to everyone equally. . . . The anonymous, asexual individual, without ancestors, without tradition, without a milieu, without connections of any kind, here – as Taine had foreseen – is the man of false democracy, he who votes and whose vote counts as *one*, who is called Thiers, Gambetta, Taine, Pasteur, or Vacher. The individual will end up alone with his ego instead of any “collective spirit,” instead of the professional milieus that have, over time, created bonds of solidarity and maintained traditions of common honor. This will be the triumph of atomist individualism, which is to say of force, number, and trickery.⁸

How the atomization of individuals comes to mean the triumph of number and force may remain obscure to the reader. But here is precisely the great subterfuge effected by recourse to the concept of “individualism.” That individualism is in such disfavor with people who otherwise declare their deep disgust at collectivism and totalitarianism is an easy riddle to solve. It is not the collectivity in general that the denouncer of “democratic individualism” defends with such passion. It is a certain collectivity, the well-hierarchized collectivity of bodies, milieus, and “atmospheres” that adapt knowledges to ranks under the wise direction of an elite. And it is not individualism that it rejects but the possibility that anyone at all shares its prerogatives. The denunciation of “democratic individualism” is simply the hatred of equality by which a dominant intelligentsia confirms that it is indeed the elite qualified to manage the blind herd.

It would be wrong to confuse Jules Ferry’s republic with that of Alfred Fouillée. It is only right, on the other hand, to recognize that the “republicans” of our day are closer to the latter than to the former. Much more than the Lumières and the great dream of

the expert and egalitarian education of the people, they are the inheritors of the great obsession with “disaffiliation,” “disconnection,” and the fatal mixing of conditions and sexes produced by the ruin of order and traditional bodies. It is important above all to understand the tension that inhabits the idea of republic. The republic is the idea of a system of institutions, laws, and morals that suppress the democratic excess by homogenizing state and society. The school, through which the state simultaneously distributes the elements for forming men and citizens, quite naturally offers itself as the proper institution to realize this idea. But there is no particular reason that the distribution of knowledges – mathematics or Latin, natural science or philosophy – forms citizens for the republic more than counselors for princes and clerics for the service of God. The distribution of knowledges is socially efficacious only to the extent that it is also a (re)distribution of positions. To gauge the relation between the two distributions, it is therefore necessary to have one more science. This royal science has had a name since Plato. It is called political science. As dreamed of from Plato to Jules Ferry, it would unify the knowledges and, on the basis of this unity, define a common will and direction for the state and society. But this science will always lack the one thing necessary to regulate the constitutive excess of the political: the determination of the right proportion between equality and inequality. There are, to be sure, all sorts of institutional arrangements that allow states and governments to present oligarchs and democrats with the face each wants to see. Aristotle, in the fourth book of his *Politics*, produced the still-unsurpassed theory of this art. But there is no science of the right measure between equality and inequality. And there is one less than ever when conflict erupts between the capitalist illimitation of wealth and the democratic illimitation of politics. The republic wants to be the government of democratic equality by the science of just proportion. But as God lacks the correct distribution of gold, silver, and iron in souls, so too is this science missing. And the government of science is condemned to be the government of “natural elites,” where the social power of expert abilities is combined with the social powers of birth and wealth at the price of eliciting anew the democratic disorder that displaces the frontiers of the political.

To erase this tension inherent in the republican project of a homogeneous state and society, the neo-republican ideology in fact erases politics itself. Its defense of public instruction and political purity then returns to locate politics only in the state sphere, and ends up asking the managers of the state to follow the advice of the enlightened elite. The grand republican proclamations of the return of politics in the 1990s essentially served to support government decisions, even when they signaled the effacement of the political before the exigencies of the global illimitation of Capital, and stigmatized any political combat against this effacement as “populist” juvenility. It then remained to blame, ingenuously or cynically, the illimitation of wealth on the voracious appetite of democratic individuals, and to make this voracious democracy the great catastrophe by which humanity destroys itself.

(Translated by James Ingram)

NOTES

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1. Cited by Pierre Rosanvallon, *Le Sacre du citoyen: histoire du suffrage universel en France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 281.

2. Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin, 1991).

3. Rosanvallon, *Le Sacre du citoyen*; Bernard Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

4. Democracy, said John Adams, signifies nothing other than “the notion of a people that has no government at all.” Cited by Bertlinde Laniel, *Le Mot ‘democracy’ et son histoire aux États-Unis de 1780 à 1856* (Saint-Étienne: Presses de l’Université de Saint-Etienne, 1995), 65.

5. On the race laws of the Southern states, see Pauli Murray, ed., *States Laws on Race and Color* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1997). For those who constantly brandish the straw man of “communitarianism,” this book will give a somewhat more precise idea of what the protection of a community’s identity can mean.

6. See *Discours et opinions de Jules Ferry*, ed. Paul Robiquet (Paris: Armand Colin, 1893–1898), vols. 3 and 4 of which are devoted to the laws on education. In his intervention in *La Cérémonie de la Sorbonne en l’honneur de Jules Ferry du 20 décembre 1905*, Ferdinand Buisson emphasizes the pedagogical radicality of the moderate Ferry, citing especially his declaration to the Pedagogical Congress on April 19, 1881: “From now on there will no longer be an unbridgeable abyss between secondary and primary instruction, neither when it comes to personnel nor when it comes to methods.” One will recall the campaign by “republicans” in the 1980s denouncing the penetration of “general teachers” into the colleges and castigating this “primarization” of secondary education without wanting to examine the material reality of their abilities.

7. See Alfred Fouillée, *Les Études classiques et la démocratie* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1889). To gauge the importance of Fouillée at the time, it must be remembered that his wife was the author of the bestselling work of republican pedagogical literature, *Le Tour de France de deux enfants*.

8. Fouillée, *La Démocratie politique et sociale en France* (Paris: Alcan, 1910), 131–32.

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