




OPEN PEER REVIEW

Citizens' Obedience to the Democratic Government

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Democracy has consistently been regarded as one of the most complex and contested social concepts throughout history” is too broad and lacks citation. Please support this foundational claim with a reputable academic source on democratic theory.

The statement “Aristotle was the first to systematically defend democracy...” should be revised for accuracy. Aristotle classified democracy as a deviant form of government in Politics, though he analyzed its features. Please clarify or cite appropriately.

You introduce the minimalist vs. maximalist definitions of democracy but don't provide sufficient comparative examples. Consider adding one empirical or historical example for each model.

The claim that civil society “intervenes in political, cultural, economic, and social affairs as pluralistic agents of influence” is conceptually strong, but the article should differentiate between civil society in liberal democracies versus hybrid regimes.

The phrase “history has shown that democratic governments can, over time, degenerate into authoritarian regimes” is critical yet underdeveloped. Cite at least one historical example, such as interwar Germany or modern Hungary.

When discussing the features of the modern state, the authors list four elements. Consider integrating these into a comparative framework with pre-modern or absolutist states to emphasize their evolution.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

You mention “pluralism emerges, democracy evolves, and the democratic state is reconstituted...” This assertion is rich but underdeveloped. Elaborate on how pluralism reconstitutes democracy in different socio-political contexts.

The sentence “Civil societies rooted in democracy are not only home to civilized individuals but also serve as the breeding grounds for scientific and artistic advancement” is highly idealistic and should be qualified. Not all democracies yield these outcomes uniformly.

The mention of “tyranny of the majority” needs more contextual framing. Consider discussing how modern democratic constitutions mitigate this risk through institutional checks.

The article refers to ancient Athenian democracy but lacks critical reflection on its exclusivity (slavery, patriarchy). Consider adding a sentence recognizing these historical limitations.

You write, “Democratization does not hinge solely on levels of public education or healthcare...” This important caveat should be further developed by discussing other crucial factors such as independent judiciary, party pluralism, or media freedom.

The authors assert that “human rights have become the only universally recognized and codified normative system at the international level,” which is a strong claim. This needs qualification and citation from a human rights scholar such as Jack Donnelly or James Nickel.

The comparison between the German and Italian constitutional treatment of human rights is mentioned but remains superficial. Include a brief example of what makes Germany’s approach more explicit.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.