

2.2 Democracy Chronology?

Instructions: In 1992, Diane Ravitch and Abigail Thernstrom published *The Democracy Reader: Classic and Modern Speeches, Essays, Poems, Declarations, and Documents on Freedom and Human Rights Worldwide* (New York: HarperCollins). In Section 1, Classical and European Thought, they present what they see as the pathway of democracy from Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War* (c. 400 BC, Athens) through Plato's *The Republic* (c. 347 BC, Athens), Aristotle's *The Politics* (c. 322 BC, Athens) to Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* (c. 1265 AD, Rome) and Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Discourses* (c. 1517 AD, Florence).

Questions

1. Can ideas discussed by Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, and Machiavelli reasonably be considered democratic in the modern sense of the word? When do institutions we would recognize as democratic emerge? Explain.
2. How did "democratic" ideas leap across time from ancient Greece to early modern Europe?
3. Could democracy and democratic institutions develop independently unrelated to other historical events that are taking place? Explain.