
Contents

Introduction: Democracy as Self-Subverting 1

- 1 "More than Kings yet Less than Men":
Tocqueville on the New Extremes of Democratic Society 28
 - I. *The Dualism of Democratic Society* 28
 - II. *Democratic Degradation: Equality, Mediocrity, Domestication* 39
 - III. *Democratic Grandeur: Openness and the Absence of Hierarchy* 48

 - 2 Civilization without the Discontents:
Tocqueville on Democracy as the Social State of Nature 74
 - I. *Freedom, Equality, Power* 74
 - II. *The Freedom of Openness* 81
 - III. *Norms of Association in Democracy* 98

 - 3 The Regime of Revolution: Claude Lefort on History, Nature,
and Convention after the Democratic Revolution 125
 - I. *Democracy as Natural* 125
 - II. *The Revolutionary Phenomenon of Opening* 138
 - III. *Democracy as the Historical Society par Excellence* 150

 - 4 Political Phoenix: Sheldon Wolin on the Limits and
Limitlessness of Democracy 175
 - I. *The Economic Polity* 175
 - II. *Liberal Democracy: The Abstract "We"* 185
 - III. *Archaic Democracy: The Communal "We"* 193
 - IV. *Fugitive Democracy: The Revolutionary "We"* 204
- Conclusion: Despotism and Democratic Silence 219
- Notes 239
Acknowledgments 295
Index 297