

Preface

In 1993, Gene Sharp, Professor of Political Science, published his extended essay “From Dictatorship to Democracy” as “A Conceptual Framework for Liberation”. His widely translated book could be read as a kind of manual to build up a better future from eras of violence and suppression.

The volume at hand takes a closer look at the history of such transitions. It gathers the presentations given at the symposium “From Dictatorship to Democracy” that was held at the Memorial and Educational Site House of the Wannsee Conference on September 13th and 14th, 2021, by invitation of the Research Project “The Berlin Administration of Justice after 1945”. Renowned speakers from Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, and Germany discussed various paths from dictatorship to democracy that have worldwide been taken in the second half of the 20th century. The volume is completed by an account from South Africa. Thus, the volume covers legal and historical developments on four continents. According to this wide scope, no less than four different languages are represented. Although most of the papers are written in, or translated into, English, the editors respected the wish of some authors to stick to their native language. In order to make the contributions more broadly accessible, the majority of the proceedings at the symposium are available at the website of the Research Project “The Berlin Administration of Justice after 1945” (<https://www.im-nordsternhaus.de>).

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