

# Why Democracy is its Own Worst Enemy?

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## **Abstract**

The challenges that lay ahead for democracy are so serious that few political scientists have the courage to risk their reputation and pin down with relative accuracy what will happen on a five/ten/fifteen year basis. As a matter of fact, when the term "democracy" and "enemy" is used in the same sentence there's a natural and immediate tendency – for those who are lucky enough to live in electoral democracies – to look over the fence and not to our own backyard. That is to say, democracy's enemies, our enemies, are some sort of mythological creatures that live far far away from our perfect democratic bubble. This reasoning can be in part seen in the on-going debate about democracy's struggle against its external enemies. During the cold war period democracy was at "war" with communism and, before that, with national-socialism and fascism. Currently, democracy faces new enemies: global authoritarianism, international terrorism, religious extremism and Islamic fundamentalism. This thoughtfulness is only partly true. At least it's not the only reason why we are debating this matter today. According to this paper – and that's precisely part of the problem – democracy is to some extent its own worst enemy. Why? Because most of the issues that we're debating today are a result of a certain apathy and disentanglement of liberal democracies around the world in the last decade.

## **Resumo**

***Porque é que a Democracia é a sua Pior Inimiga?***

*Os desafios futuros que se colocam à democracia são tão graves que os cientistas políticos têm dificuldade (e coragem) em identificar com clareza o que vai acontecer nas próximas décadas. De facto, quando os termos "democracia" e "inimigo" são utilizados na mesma frase existe uma tendência natural, por parte daqueles que vivem nas sociedades democráticas do Ocidente, em procurar a fonte de todos os problemas fora da chamada "bolha democrática" ocidental. Ou seja, os "inimigos democráticos" – os nossos próprios inimigos – são criaturas mitológicas que vivem num horizonte longínquo. Na atualidade, esta linha de pensamento tem sido visível em torno do debate sobre a luta da democracia contra os seus "inimigos externos". Esta asserção não é inédita, nem recente. Durante o período da Guerra-Fria fomentou-se a ideia de que a democracia estava em "guerra" com o comunismo e, antes disso, com o nacional-socialismo e fascismo. Recentemente, estes "inimigos externos" ganharam uma nova dimensão com a emergência do autoritarismo mundial, do terrorismo internacional, do extremismo religioso e do fundamentalismo islâmico. O problema é que esta asserção está errada. Ou, pelo menos, não está totalmente correta. Concretamente, segundo o argumento explanado neste artigo, a democracia é, em certa medida, a sua pior inimiga. Porque? Porque a maioria das questões que estão hoje em dia a ser debatidas resultam de um elevado grau de inépcia, apatia, alheamento e desinteresse por parte das democracias liberais.*