Democracy: power by the people. But which people? Which peoples? Not all peoples are alike. Therefore, would they choose to have the same type of power? Could they? Would they? Western countries in Europe and North America suggest they devised democracy, it being understood that Ancient Athens and Ancient Rome were already well provided as regards thoughts and practices relating to the field of democracy. If democracy extended to all continents it was only because it had to go through some adjustments.

Is it really possible to adopt a typology in which the category called "democracy" can include a set of very different government systems? Is this evidence of the totalitarian success of democracy or on the contrary a debasement of a catchall notion? In order to move forward in this reflection, we need to characterize the minimal basic values, the essential requirements without which there is no talking about democracy. They have to be sought in two ways: law and the rule of law on the one hand, and on the other hand politics, the effectiveness of the freedoms of speech, association, political controversy and guarantees for (political) minorities, checks and balances and the common determination of public policies geared to the general interest.

We will analyze a certain number of countries which are characterized by their geographical location poles apart from the cradle of democracy and by the diversity of their territories, and such countries are related not only on the geographical level but also on the ethnic and historical levels. This group is Melanesia. Melanesia is made up of five very different countries but all are inhabited by Melanesian peoples—Fiji, New Caledonia, PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. These five countries, each in its own way, institute the rule of law and political pluralism. To be sure, they are democratic, but diversely so.