

A dictionary

Politics

in

40

Words

General editor

Evgenii DAINOV

Citizen Conflict, War and Peace
Politics
Governance
Society
Liberty
Defiance
In the end it is defiance that gives our lives value it is only our defiance that redeems us.
Revolution
Political party
Sovereignty
Democracy
Oppression is the worst form of government except for all those who have been tried from

Ideology
Culture is the sanctity of the intellect.
Individual
Human Rights
Justice
State
Culture
Ideology
Leadership
Nation
Politics
Citizen
Culture
People with power understand exactly one Democracy

Totalitarianism
War is Peace. Freedom is Slavery. Ignorance is Strength
Rule of Law
Conflict, Rights
War and Peace
Society
Ideology
Governance
Oppression
Nation
Rights
Conflict, Ideology
War and Peace
Liberty
Sovereignty
Religion
Institution
Morality
Violence
Communication
Communication leads to community, that is understanding, intimacy and mutual valuation.
Community
We are needy creatures, and our only way of survival is to help one another. We achieve this home through



NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY

erty
Culture is the sanctity of the intellect.
with power understand exactly one thing: violence.
Violence
People with power understand exactly one thing: violence.
Society
Oppression

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Evgenii Dainov, General editor

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I NTRODUCTION

It has become a truism that “you may not be interested in politics, but politics is interested in you”. Politics is inescapable because the term denotes, in its widest sense, the way in which relations of power are constructed in a given society. And there is no escaping power in the relations between human beings.

Every major thing in our lives—from quality of life to whether peace or war prevails—is a product of the way relations of power are constructed. Poorly constructed, such relations are capable of producing violence and poverty even in countries otherwise richly endowed with minerals and raw materials. Conversely, well-constructed relations of power can produce peace and plenty in countries entirely bereft of such natural endowments.

The outcome of this is obvious: if you want to improve your life as a society—first get your politics right. Conversely, if there is something dramatically wrong going on—first take a look at your politics. For there you are likely to find the origin of your difficulties.

Peace and plenty are in retreat throughout the world. There must be, therefore, something wrong with the politics operating within it. In order to find a solution to the current difficulties, involvement in politics is a must. And such involvement requires, at the outset, a familiarity with the terms with which we describe, analyse, reform and construct relations of power.

In this volume we have attempted to unveil the origins, evolution and meaning of key political terms, as well as to outline the debates around each one. It is our conviction that this effort will help not only our students but also the general public to become fruitfully involved in current politics—in the effort to cure our ills.

Who are “we”? We are lecturers in those BA and MA programmes of the Political Science Department of the New Bulgarian University which are taught exclusively in English. These programmes attract students from, literally, all over the world—a welcome fact that continually enriches our discussions and helps us evolve the science (if that is what it is) of politics in new and more fruitful (we hope) directions. It is one thing to teach a student group composed exclusively of members of one nation, with students sharing common assumptions, historical landscapes and cultural presuppositions. It is quite another thing to teach a class in which you have representatives of a dozen nations and of at least three different religions. This experience makes it obligatory for us to continually re-examine and redefine our own assumptions and knowledge, as well as to draw the students into the common process of discovery of knowledge.

There is no mystery behind the number “40”. We aimed for more; 40 is what we managed to produce.

The accumulation of knowledge, wrote the German philosopher Schopenhauer, is not for its own sake, because knowledge should lead to understanding. Understanding, we add, should lead to an enhanced capacity of acting in the real world.

These “40 words” are our modest contribution to this effort.

Evgenii DAINOV
General editor

AUTHORITY

Blind belief in authority is the greatest enemy of truth.

Albert Einstein

In our everyday life we are constantly subjected to a voluntary (or at least accepted as normal) coercion. We obey rules that regulate how we treat others, how we drive, what taxes we pay, what constitutes our property and so on.

These rules are not of our own making, but if we do not abide by them we face sanctions for deviating. The rules are enforced by people who follow the instructions of those who create the rules. Being ruled means that you are not only “subjugated, but (also) coerced”, as pointed out by Jean Hampton in *Political Philosophy* (1998). That is to say, we are subjects of a constant threat.

What, if anything, makes this coercion morally permissible and/or just? How is state coercion different from that of a gunman forcing you to sign away your inheritance, for example?

These questions are central to understanding the problematic of political authority. The list can be extended. When is political authority legitimate? What is the extent of this authority—in what areas are its rules permissible? Are there constraints or limits on the control over us? Are the rules bound to have moral content in order to be considered authoritative, or we are subject to them simply because certain people have authority over us?

There is an intuitive division between good and bad forms of control. We are used to thinking of some forms of control as being not only permissible but also morally required. The control of parents over their child is an example. This means we do accept that something *entitles* the parent to control the child—in this case, the good outcomes for the child. These good

outcomes arise out of some kind of authority that the parent rightfully has over the child. The same can be said about a teacher and her students and so on. “Hence a person’s rightful control over others in certain areas seems to arise from that person’s authority in that area,” concludes Hampton.

In order to understand what entitles a person or an entity to rule, we need to distinguish the concept of *political power* from the notion of *authority*. Then we will introduce the historical and normative notions that discuss the source of political authority with regard to the concept of political legitimacy.

Robert Dahl’s classic definition states that power is the ability of subject A to make subject B do something that she would not otherwise do. The understanding that power in itself is a sufficient basis for political control can be found in many political systems that have been governed by tyrannical, authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. The difference between these regimes and those that support the idea of a legitimate political power is in the fact that authority requires *entitlement* to rule (i.e. the obligation to obey the ruler does not arise from the fact that he is stronger, smarter, and wields power that I am fearful of, but from the fact that I believe I have the moral obligation to obey.) If we paraphrase Dahl’s definition of power, political authority is to be defined as the *ability of person A to cause B to do something that he would otherwise not do, because he has the right to do so.*

Jean Hampton’s definition goes further:

“Person *X* has political authority over person *Y* if and only if the fact that *X* requires *Y* to perform some action *p* gives *Y* a reason to do *p*, regardless of what *p* is, where this reason purports to override all reasons (or almost all) he may have not to do *p*.”

That is to say that the obligation we feel to obey the authoritative command of a ruler pre-empts and overrules all other reasons we might have not to obey—a feeling that goes beyond the simple coercion of the state. This is what makes any authority politically legitimate.

The nature, the scope and the sources of political authority have been a subject of intensive debate through history. For Thomas Hobbes, political authority is unlimited in scope, covering all aspects of human life, and is largely unconstrained. John Locke, on the contrary, argues that political

authority is constrained both in scope and content. Even the greatest proponents of limited political authority have to recognize that it is a “very substantial kind of authority, involving, among other things, authority over the life and death of those subject to it”.

For these reasons, anarchists claim that there is no authority that can be morally justified, hence no authority that is backed by coercion can be legitimate. Generally, though, we can identify “...four theories that attempt to legitimate and define the extent and nature of political authority. These are: the divine authority theory; the natural subordination theory; the perfectionist theory; and the consent based theory.” (Hampton)

Divine authority, according to Hampton, is one in which the ruler has legitimate authority only when it is derived from the authority of God, thereby being unchallengeable. Historically, we can generally identify three ways in which a ruler’s authority has been justified through God: the ruler is God in human form; the ruler is somehow related to God; or the ruler has divine status. In Egypt, it was claimed that rulers were sons of a God, for example. As time went on, rulers started to acknowledge their humanity, but would argue that they had been given authority to rule by God.

In his work *Patriarcha*, 17th century thinker Robert Filmer explained that only God’s authority over Adam was direct, thereafter descending from Adam to his heirs. Claiming that the kings of the time could trace back their origins to Adam, Filmer believed that their authority was bequeathed to one ruler from the previous ruler. This was based on a larger theory, claiming that the monarch acts as a father to his people. So, in this case, authority is given indirectly.

There were obvious problems with that theory, given the fact that in Europe most of the monarchs at that time were not rightful rulers, having come to power after an act of war or simply by overthrowing previous monarchs. To solve this issue, the concept of divine right developed the idea that God can withdraw his authority from one ruler and bestow it upon a new one. Thus the idea of direct delegation of authority for each king came into existence. In any case, the political authority of monarchs was considered to be absolute and unlimited in scope and substance, replicating the divine qualities of “*omnipotence and omniscience*”.

Since it is almost impossible to prove God's intervention (anyone can make that claim) judgment on who has legitimate political authority was unsatisfactorily answered by that theory.

In his work *Politics*, Aristotle offers a different approach to legitimizing political authority. Hampton called his explanation a "natural subordination theory". For Aristotle, natural subordination exists; therefore, it is justifiable that slaves "by nature" are those whose reasoning is deficient: they can only obey commands and cannot rule themselves. Thus, the rule of master over slave is justified by virtue of its good consequences for all concerned—for the person herself and for the community. The slave needs the master, because her own reason is insufficient to develop a life plan; the master gains a "living tool" that he can use to achieve his ends.

This argument can also be seen in perceptions in the American South before the abolishment of slavery. Slavery was deemed beneficial to the master not only in practical terms, but morally as well, fostering the sense of obligation of masters to their slaves and thereby to the community as a whole. A system that encouraged the wrong type of people to think that they were able to govern would be, it was believed, disastrous economically, militarily, culturally and legally for everyone.

For Aristotle, there was another group of people whose reasoning was dominated by passion and emotion, and who were, therefore, unable to govern themselves—women. So it was for the good of the community and for all involved that the *freeborn males* were the ones who could participate in the political life of the *polis* and be entitled to rule.

Modern theory of political authority does not accept that there are such differences between people that are relevant to establishing political domination, let alone a politically legitimate authority. Even if we acknowledge that there are substantial differences in physical or mental abilities among human beings, none of these has political significance. Thus, ideas of natural subordination as a source of authority have been largely abandoned but for a few followers of xenophobic and racist ideologies.

The perfectionist theory of political authority Hampton discovers in the argument used by Plato is that each human soul is composed of three parts: *reasonable*, *spirited* and *appetitive*. The *reasonable part* of a human

soul has authority to rule to the extent that it knows or understands what is Good. In *Republic*, Plato compares the soul and the state, arguing that the community is also composed of these three parts. The rational part is the one from which the rulers/guardians are recruited; the spirited part provides warriors; and the appetitive part—the general population of craftsmen or farmers, for example.

Since for Plato political authority was to be exercised for the Good as such, the people entitled to rule were those who could understand the Good. It is questionable to what extent anyone can be regarded as having achieved sufficient knowledge of the Good; but from this idea of Plato's has arisen the general thesis that a person has authority over another if and only if that person has *greater knowledge or expertise* than the other in this arena.

In Aristotle's work, however, we do find some consent-based ideas about the source of political authority. Unlike Plato, who dismisses the idea that Bad political authority can exist (since it is derived from the Good itself), Aristotle accepts the idea that there can be such a thing as bad political authority. Furthermore, he recognizes that it is unlikely that a human being that is close to divine will suddenly become available to act as ruler. This in turn leads to the notion that we should explain political authority as something that is created by the people as they are. Aristotle recognises a number of different ways to structure political authority within a state: if one person rules, then it is a monarchy if he rules well and tyranny if he rules badly; a few people in power means aristocracy, if just, and oligarchy, if unjust; and if all the free men rule, then it is a polity (if it operates well) and a democracy if it does not.

It is evident, from Aristotle's work, that many men acting together make better decisions than even the best man acting alone; and that the many are less easily corrupted than the few or the one. Thus, polity was considered to be the best form of political authority—derived from the consent of free men.

This idea that political authority is derived from the consent of those who are going to live under it had a tremendous impact on modern theories of political authority, most significantly on the social contract argument.

Bases for it can be found in Plato's dialogue *Crito*, in which Socrates refuses to leave the state to avoid punishment on the grounds that he has benefited from living in Athens and has entered into an agreement with it to abide by its laws in exchange.

But the modern notion of a contract theory has been most prominently developed in the writings of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. The major difference between the two is the actual method by which the contract is to result in political legitimacy. In the first instance (Hobbes), people agree among themselves on the nature of the political authority and then they *give it away to the ruler*, so that, no matter what happens, they cannot take it back. Locke's view is based on the premise that the contract is between the ruler and those who are ruled, in which case the authority is conditionally *lent* to the ruler, and the people reserve the right to take it away if necessary.

Thomas Hobbes imagines an ideal pre-state situation that he calls *the state of nature*. In this situation, he argues, since there is no authority, life would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short". Self-interested individuals led by the desire for personal gain would inevitably enter into conflict, leading to total insecurity in which survival is paramount. As a result, a state of total war in which everyone would claim the right to all things would be inevitable.

To protect their lives, Hobbes goes on, people create political societies to secure peace and the conditions for commerce. The only viable form of political society to achieve these ends is one ruled by a sovereign with absolute power over the people. So, the argument goes on, to assure the cooperation and compliance of all people to the contract, we need one judge with the power to settle any quarrel about anything. This sovereign has both the political authority to resolve conflict and the coercive power to enforce these decisions. This sovereign, the "Leviathan", may take the form of a collective ruling body, or may be a single individual. The absolute character of the authority is visible in Hobbes's understanding that monarchy is the best form of government. The other forms that he recognizes are aristocracy and democracy.

Hobbes is convinced that if people enter into a direct contract with the ruler, this will cause instability and a conflict between ruler and ruled not only over the dimensions of the contract but also over whether to keep to the clauses of it. Since there will be no judge on that argument, there will be no way to find a resolution to it. This is why he dismisses such a possibility.

John Locke takes a very different approach. In *Two Treatises of Government* he advances an *agency social contract* theory. The ruler possesses delegated authority and is subject to accountability and control. This authority can be withdrawn if the rule becomes unjust or immoral.

Locke's state of nature is a much nicer place than Hobbes's: humans are more cooperative and less egoistic because they abide by the "Fundamental Law of Nature", which directs them to preserve the life and the property of others as long as theirs is not threatened. All rational persons would recognize and obey this law. However, deviant cases—such as individuals who break the peace either for individual gain or due to misinterpretation of the law—do exist. That is why people need a Judge with the authority to uphold the law, to resolve the conflicts that result from the breaking of the peace. This is also Hobbes's argument, but for Locke the authority need not be absolute; and limits on that authority are necessary. These limits are set by the "threat of rebellion unless the ruler's behaviour is consistent with the terms that people set when they invested him with power" (Hampton). As with Hobbes, the source of political consent is individual consent.

Locke imagines this to be a two-stage process:

1. We need a state to secure the peace. Since, unlike Aristotle, Locke does not find any reason for the existence of natural subordination, then subordination must come about because people consent to it. Thus, the first step is that people enter into an agreement with other people to create a "civil" (political) society.
2. After this step, society is a fact. Then, through a majority decision, the society decides in its own name what form of government is to be created. Locke recognizes three possible choices: democracy, oligarchy or monarchy.

Legitimate political authority requires not only consent and majority decisions but also a carefully worked out set of procedures that guarantee against misuse and subterfuge. In this sense, populist authoritarian regimes are not legitimate, even though most of them stage (unfair) elections. Not least, a careful construction of procedure is needed to defend minority opinions from being oppressed by majorities. Last but not least, a political authority needs to be seen to be based on justice and fairness to all, otherwise it will be, sooner or later, revealed as illegitimate and will face opposition or rebellion.

Hristo PANCHUGOV

CITIZEN

The citizen is an artificial construct. He is not man as such.

Ernest Gellner

Gellner's observation tells us two important things:

1. We cannot expect that citizens will appear everywhere, at a certain point of development, by some kind of "natural" process of maturation. There are preconditions that need to be in place before citizens become possible.
2. Like anything constructed artificially, the condition of "citizenship" requires a constant effort of maintenance. If this effort is discontinued, then the construct "citizen" will gradually disintegrate.

Not every adult human being has the capacity to be a citizen, as noted by Aristotle some 2,300 years ago. For him, the status of "citizen" could only be enjoyed by men who lead independent lives, meaning that:

- They are "free men", not slaves or servants.
- They are heads of families and businesses.

Such men could be citizens because they had the capacity of seeing beyond their (and their family's) immediate needs and interests. They had the capacity to view the wider horizon (i.e. the needs and interests of the whole political community, the *polis*). Furthermore, of such men was required that at any time, when called to duty by their fellow citizens, they were prepared to abandon their own businesses for a number of years in order to serve the common good of the *polis*. Indeed, Aristotle defines the state as the sum of public offices held by citizens.

From this it follows that, at the time of Aristotle, only a minority of males could qualify as citizens (i.e. could take part in the formulation and achievement of the common good and in serving the public). This was the

case until the end of the 18th century, when, under the impact of the French Revolution, there were strong calls for everybody—“the people”—to be able to enjoy the rights of citizenship, to take part in elections and to be elected to office. These demands were impossible to ignore, because by the beginning of the 19th century it was increasingly believed that state sovereignty (a term unknown at the time of Aristotle) rested not with the Crown, but with The People. Thus, everyone who was of The People should be a citizen, so as to be able to exercise this sovereignty.

As a result of these developments, a major problem arose: how to ensure that all citizens had the capacity to be such, that is, to be able to see beyond their daily lives and grasp the larger topic of the common good? And also: how to get around Aristotle’s demand that citizens be only those who lead independent lives at a time when increasing numbers of people were becoming more dependent because of working as hired day-workers in the new industrial establishments which rapidly supplemented the old agricultural economy?

The solution was quickly found: education. Even a worker, it was argued, although not independent in his daily working life, could evolve an independent mind if he had been educated in the right way. “We must educate our masters”, declared British parliamentarian Robert Lowe during the debate on the Second Reform Act (1867), which extended citizenship status to two out of the seven million adult males in England and Wales. What Lowe meant was that the day was coming when everybody would have the right to vote; and that by that day everyone, even the poorest and most dependent, should have had the kind of education that would enable him to be a responsible citizen.

In Europe and the USA, a great expansion of state-funded schools followed, strongly supported by the philosopher J. S. Mill, who argued that through education even women would, one day, be capable of becoming citizens. He also argued that education should not be seen simply as the transfer of knowledge to the pupil, but as a comprehensive process of “cultivation” of the pupils’ character and moral foundations.

With the spread of education and the growth of the civil rights movement, after the end of the First World War most countries gradually extended the status of citizen to all adult individuals, both men and women.

Citizens can function only under conditions which ensure an independent life and the capacity for independent judgment:

- a) an education system focused on developing the skills necessary for independent living and critical judgment, rather than on imparting strictly professional knowledge;
- b) separation between state and economy, thus freeing an economic space for independent individual achievement;
- c) rule of law, so that the individual citizen cannot be coerced (made dependent) by the state or by strong private interests;
- d) a large and stable middle class, characterized by independent attitudes, independent achievements and an aversion to destabilizing political ideas;
- e) freedom of speech, publication and assembly.

Anyone who wants to turn people from independent citizens into dependent subjects will always start by destroying these conditions, thereby making independent living and independent judgment impossible. In the 21st century, a good example of this is that of the policies of Vladimir Putin, President of Russia.

Evgenii DAINOV

COMMUNICATION

Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing.

Rollo May

Communication can be defined as an exchange of information, ideas, emotions, values and attitudes between individuals or subjects. Sometimes, more generally, it is seen as a process of exchange of meanings between individuals through a common system of symbols (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

The word has its origins in the Latin *communis*, literally “(made) common”. In 1924, the English literary critic and author I. A. Richards offered a simple yet essential definition:

“Communication takes place when one mind so acts upon its environment that another mind is influenced, and in that other mind an experience occurs which is like the experience in the first mind, and is caused in part by that experience.”

The major contribution of Richards’s definition is that it separated the contents of messages from the processes in human affairs by which these messages are transmitted. However, it is highly arguable whether a single, solid definition is possible at all. As far back as 1951, American psychiatrist and scholar Jurgen Ruesch identified some 40 varieties of disciplinary approaches to the subject, including architectural, anthropological, psychological and political, among many others. In this regard, given the complexity of human life and society, we may claim that the very act of speech is a political act, transmitting and demonstrating basic ideological implications.

The idea of Canadian educator McLuhan from the 1960s that “the medium is the message” will basically mark the beginning of the process

of transformation of human communication form printed to visual. This observation will point to the increasing influence which channels of communication will gain and how they use it to attain, if not a dominant position, then certainly a leading position within society.

Naturally, more aspects became important in this regard: how mass communication media evolve into industries; who the people are who own and/or control them; how media affect and interact with their audiences, for example. New approaches arise in order to fully grasp the enormous role of media following the boom of TV in the 1960s, which focused on the dynamics of verbal and nonverbal communication between individuals and on the various applications of communication technology for social and artistic purposes.

Communication has changed significantly since the time when the great orators of Antiquity, Cicero, Caesar or Pericles spoke in front of people in a public setting. The invention of the printing press, for example, transformed Europe and the world in less than 100 years, undermining the dominant position of the Catholic Church and clearing the way for the Enlightenment and the American and French Revolutions.

As the channels and means of communication evolved over time, especially with the launch of air TV and radio, evolution of speeches and content also followed. It was over the radio that the world was shocked by the brutality and atrocities of the First and Second World Wars, that Hitler and Stalin filled the airways with totally unprecedented propaganda, that the US declared its use of the nuclear bomb. Later, thanks to their TV sets, citizens around the world were able to enjoy the drama of the Apollo 13 mission, to shudder at the assassination of John F. Kennedy, to bear witness to the addresses of Martin Luther King Jr., Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama, to watch the Olympics, to observe the fall of the Berlin Wall, the assault on the World Trade Centre in New York and the subsequently launched War on Terror. Because of the "Silicon Valley" revolution in computer micro-processing that boosted the production of cheap "smart" devices, and due to the inexhaustible opportunities of the Internet, the world has become smaller than ever.

What are media?

Producing a clear-cut definition of what exactly media are or do is a rather challenging task, especially today. It was not so in the not so distant past where newspapers, magazines, radio and television were the mainstream media enterprises. Today, in the Age of the Internet all of them must compete on a daily basis with the likes of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube to attract the attention of the general public. Still, a broader, looser approach would define media as both gatekeepers and providers of information and at the same time as the channels over which they are delivered.

Media therefore could also be defined by their means of communication as both conventional (TV, radio, newspapers, magazines) and modern (Internet-based platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube). The physical nature of their broadcasts also separates them into print, and over the air and cable, respectively. A classification of media with regard to their ownership is also an option for differentiation. Media in most of the democratic polities are almost exclusively privately owned either as family businesses or publicly listed entities. Unlike their democratic counterparts, in most of the non-democratic or hybrid regime polities media are fully or partially controlled and run either by the state or its close associates.

When it comes to the mission of the media, there is a general understanding that they should be servants to none but the public interest which they inform, enrich and educate for the common good. Perfectly aligned with this is the perception of influential organizations such as American Public Media, which, for example, sees its mission as “to enrich the mind and nourish the spirit, thereby assisting our audiences to enhance their lives, expand perspectives and strengthen their communities” (<https://www.americanpublicmedia.org/about/mission/>).

In democratic political systems of governance, the mass media deliver information and messages on a daily basis on a wide range of topics from local, regional, national and international news to sports and entertainment. Advertising, of course, of various types, is part of the news flow as media in those democratic states depend predominantly on income from other privately held entities which in turn depend on mass media for their unique reach and penetration to deliver specific messages to as many of their consumers as possible. That is why media are considered to play a

quintessential role in shaping the intellectual and cultural environment in which citizens live. On the back of the popular saying that if something was not shown on TV, it never happened, one must not forget that media are just as much a channel as they are an actor of enormous influence over the daily agenda of the general public, especially in the 21st century.

The extent to which media influence both the quality and content of contemporary life is tremendous, given the fact that people are thought to switch off their brains when they switch on their TV sets. The culture of consumerism, imposed since the late 1970s, has played an important role in this regard, encouraging people to stop being actively engaged citizens and become simply customers buying goods. On a political level, this translates into cheering for the most vocal and visible leaders who are most frequently shown on TV rather than supporting those who actually offer something noteworthy. The process, kicked off by the famous Kennedy-Nixon TV bout in 1960, has now become more of a show rather than an actual contest between political concepts and is perfectly demonstrated by the “post-truth” environment, by no means a sub-product of the activities and policies of all modern media.

In this deceitful and complicated environment, “news” has become difficult to define. The lines between “hard” news on the one hand—delivering facts and specifics—and entertainment on the other, have become almost indistinguishable during the past three decades or so. Facing growing pressure for profit from their shareholders, conventional media gradually leaned instead toward “soft” news coverage, focusing mainly, but not exclusively, on entertainment, crime, health, social issues and any and all problems faced by mankind. The rapid growth of media channels, mainly on the back of the Internet, has profoundly affected the profile of mass media audiences. The “bubble effect” of Internet-based media next to the niche-character of conventional media has resulted in the creation of a multitude of audiences addressed by many, quite often contradictory media channels. The outcome is absolute confusion about whom and what to trust or rely upon when in need of information.

This is perfectly epitomized by the role which media hold in contemporary politics, especially in the US where, as noted above, there is a strong tradition of setting the electoral agenda by the media. Not only do media

determine the issues to be discussed in the public debates they arrange but they also determine how much coverage a given candidate will receive in the news. For example, during presidential elections it is common for leading national news outlets like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* to deliver a heavy dose of political news explicitly siding in their coverage and editorials with one of the candidates. Though controversial, mainly across European democracies this practice is actually seen not as a betrayal of the mission of the media but as an ultimate act of trust for the general public—viewers and readers are left in no doubt who the preferred candidate of “their” news channel is.

The extremely competitive nature of the US media environment requires huge efforts from politicians to attract the attention of the general public in order to facilitate any attempt to promote policy issue or change. This differs dramatically from the likes of Russia, China or North Korea. In those states, where political power is concentrated ultimately in the hands of a few, if not one man, media are far from being mediators or actors in the news flow. Instead, they are nothing but mere propaganda tools which lack any independency, but not for the reasons in the US or Europe, where media choose to pledge their allegiance and are not forced or created to support a certain person or regime.

Overall, it would not be an exaggeration to conclude that flowing communication is a hallmark of civilization as only civilized individuals voluntarily and freely exchange meaning and opinion, recognizing readily the right of others to do so to an equal extent without necessarily agreeing with them. Therefore, broken communication channels and discourse could be seen as a benchmark of a society that is either on the road to the disintegration of its sociopolitical fabric or on the way to radical political change. Through this perspective, the populism marching across Europe looks more like a failure of democratic elites to hear and deliver on the demands of its citizens, forgetting or completely ignoring the fact that democracy is all about communication of meaning—ideas, ideologies, beliefs, principles and values.

Lyubomir STEFANOV

C COMMUNITY

We are needy creatures, and our greatest need is for home—the place where we are, where we find protection and love.

We achieve this home through representations of our own belonging, not alone but in conjunction with others.

Roger Scruton

Human beings are not lone wolves. They live in groups and always have done.

When human groups reach the stage of self-reflection, being able to reflect objectively on their aims, intentions and procedures—they become *communities*. Indeed, the classical philosopher Aristotle wrote that no human being could really exist outside the (political) community; if such a person were to appear, said Aristotle, he would be “beast or god”, but in any case, not human.

The word community is usually seen as derived from the Latin *communitas* (“fellowship, friendly intercourse; courtesy, condescension, affability”) and from *communis* (“common, public, general, shared by all or many”).

In the course of our lives, we are members of a multiplicity of communities. Indeed, at any given second we are part of more than one community. While writing this, I am: European, Bulgarian; residing in a village but Professor at the New Bulgarian University in the capital Sofia; member of a rock band, of the Green Party, of the Bulgarian Musical Association; and an army officer of the reserve. I am also part of my family, of my extended family, of my circle of friends and, whether I like it or not (and I do not), of that elusive category of people identified by others as “intellectuals”.

Sociologists speak of “warm” (a.k.a. traditional) and “cold” (a.k.a. modern) groups. Warm groups—tribes, villages, ethnicities—consider themselves to be a part of nature. They do not reflect on their aims, do not

evolve procedures, nor are they capable of changing procedures in line with changing aims and intentions. “Cold”, modern, reflective groups are usually identified with the impersonal modern institutions of the state.

Communities seem to fall somewhere in between these two. Like “warm” groups, their members are linked with ties that go beyond procedure—ties of affection, shared values, empathy. Like “cold” groups (institutions), communities have the capacity to reflect on themselves, to produce and change procedures. States are such communities, as are political parties, sports clubs, non-governmental organizations, neighbourhood associations, professional guilds and unions.

Seeing human beings in terms of the communities they inhabit was prevalent in political thought until the second half of the 19th century. Then, under the impact of the “liberal consensus”, the picture changed. Human beings were increasingly seen as self-contained, independent individuals, competing against each other within the limits of justice and legality upheld by the state. National and political communities (states) were increasingly seen as morally neutral (neither for good, nor for evil) frameworks, helping individuals to get along.

This view, while helpful in depicting people’s economic behaviour, ran counter to the very foundations of political thinking in Europe. The words used by the Classical Greeks and Romans for what we today call “state”—*polis* for the Greeks and *civitas* for the Romans—did not denote a neutral framework. Both depicted a true political community in which rules and procedures coexist with shared values, commitments, empathy and affection. Both the Greeks and the Romans saw the role of the political community—the “state”—as not only to provide law and order but also to encourage citizens to lead a “good” life. The “good” life, in turn, was assumed to be not only a life of prosperity but also a life of morality. In this sense, the political community was said to exist, not least, in order to educate their citizens how to be good people—a role for the state that the “liberal consensus” most emphatically denied.

By the early 20th century, with the advent of mass society and mass industry, a number of thinkers began to find this situation troubling. The Frenchman Émile Durkheim and the German Ferdinand Tönnies both warned of the dangers of “anomie” (normlessness, resulting in helpless isolation of the individual) and alienation in modern society, “composed of atomized individuals who had gained their liberty but lost their social moorings”. In

the 1960s, alienation and the loss of community became major themes in American writing.

Concerns about community were on the rise again during the closing years of the 20th century, particularly under the impact of a (mis)quote from Margaret Thatcher that “there is no such thing as society; there are only individuals and their families”. Philosophers such as Charles Taylor and Shlomo Avineri explicitly criticized the liberal view of the individual as a loner, existing apart from society, rather than embedded within it, shaped by it and in turn shaping it (and, therefore, also impacting on the lives of other individuals).

This approach was fortified by a strong revival of *civil society*—of that public space in between the private (family) and the official (institutional) sphere, in which people get together in order to achieve something for the common, rather than the individual or sectional, good. Civic groups are mostly classic communities—brought together by a shared goal, held together by shared values and affection.

Renewed thinking about community has impacted on the concept of *identity*. The answer to the question “Who am I?” can no longer be something along the lines of: “I am a civil engineer with two children and a Toyota Yaris”. Rather, the answer involves an awareness of the communities of which the individual is part and with whom she shares affection, values and objectives.

There are several crucially important political perspectives that follow on from this. One is to be found in the question “How big can a true community be?”. Can “Europe” be a community: a collectivity not only with shared procedures and rules but also with shared affection and values? The answer seems to be “No”, given “Europe’s” own redefinition, in the early 1990s, from “European Community” to “European Union”.

The other perspective is a clear and present danger. If, in thinking about identity, the individual is totally erased and everything becomes “community”, then modern civilization is in danger. Without the individual, the answer to the question “Who am I?” becomes: “All I am is a member of this or that community; I exist only as a part of it”. Such an approach to identity results in aggressive military nationalism (modern Russia) or in fundamentalist quasi-military movements, such as the death cult “Islamic State”.

A third perspective concerns the way we conceptualise the role of the modern state in society. In the opening years of the 21st century we have

seen that various crises, in the developed world at least, have outlined two groups of countries. In the first are countries where communities remain strong, with a resilient tradition of self-help and local self-government, such as Britain, the USA or northern European countries. These countries tend to cope best with crises, addressing them at the local and the national (and international) level at the same time.

In the second group we find countries with weak communities and little tradition of self-help and local self-government, such as the countries of southern Europe and the Balkans. They do not handle crises well. In order to survive and prosper, these countries face the contradictory task of both relying heavily on the mechanisms of central power (the state) to address present crises while, at the same time, having to develop true communities in the immediate future.

Finally, the true worth of communities is seen in situations where states suddenly fall apart. With the state disappearing, if there are no communities in place to uphold order and peace—and ultimately to reconstitute the state—then civil war is the result, as “warm” (religious) groups fight each other, as they do in Libya, Syria and elsewhere. Communities have held the peace in places like Tunisia and, most instructively, in the Kurdish-populated areas of Iraq and Syria. With little evidence of communities existing in Russia, for example, we must fear a sudden collapse of the Russian state, which would lead to a series of civil wars.

It seems that, in order to remain part of modernity, we must follow the contemporary philosopher Bogdan Bogdanov and imagine ourselves as neither isolated individuals nor parts of only one community (Muslim, or Russian, for example). Rather, we should see our identity as an ongoing “situation”, constantly interacting with the multiplicity of communities that we are members of, while preserving the autonomy-of-judgment characteristic of the individual.

It is crucially important to be able to enter and exit different communities by our own free will, without being enslaved by any one of them. It is also crucially important to be able to contribute to the communities of which we are part in order to make them resilient and conducive to the good life.

Evgenii DAINOV

C ONFLICT, WAR AND PEACE

Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.

Ronald Reagan

People are by nature political animals. To fulfill our desires, we need to interact with other humans on a daily basis.

Observing this basic truth, Aristotle semi-jokingly added that “he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god.” But living in a society, interaction with other people who have their own desires, goals and interests creates conflict. The goals of one person contradict those of another.

Moreover, people, being social, tend to create groups to defend common interests. But these common interests contradict the common interests of other groups. Thus, conflict is perpetual, inside of societies, and also between societies.

Given this, it is no surprise that the very first major history ever written, the *History of the Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides, was the story of a war. Thucydides, who served in the army as a General, wisely observed that “the growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Sparta, made war inevitable.”

This first well-documented war in the history of mankind had a very simple cause. Athens’s interest in accumulating wealth and power contradicted that of Sparta in protecting the status quo. This basic reason seems to be at the heart of most major conflicts throughout history. One group of people wants change, while another wants to keep things as they are.

As there are always people who want change, and people who prefer the current status quo, Ronald Reagan’s observation about peace becomes important. The only way to secure peace is not to eliminate conflict—con-

flict is, by its very nature, perpetual. Peace can only be achieved through the ability to resolve conflict without war.

Given that wars between states start when states have failed to resolve conflicts through peaceful means and that internal wars (civil wars) start when societies have failed to do the same, wars naturally become the last possible way of conflict resolution. Thus, it is no surprise that historians have generally put great emphasis on the histories of wars.

A student of history, reading through the shelves of his field in a library, might very well be left with the impression that wars are inevitable and that the important questions are when and how they start. A student of political science or philosophy, however, would be able to formulate a more nuanced view about war and conflict.

For example, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant proposed a set of steps to eliminate all war in his essay of 1795, *Perpetual Peace*. Kant argued that if certain conditions were fulfilled, including those of governments being representative and no secret treaties being allowed, societies would naturally avoid wars as their cost would always be higher than the costs of peaceful conflict resolution. While Kant's essay was philosophically influential at the time, a little more than a century later the world faced the two biggest wars in history. Interestingly, the First World War was seen by many as "the war to end all wars", but in reality it led directly to the Second World War. After that, the main reason why a third world war did not follow was that the invention of nuclear weapons meant that such a war would be so destructive that it might even lead to the extermination of the entire human race.

At this point, Ronald Reagan's quote about peace being the ability to handle conflict without war becomes extremely useful. The reason why the Cold War never heated up enough to plunge the West and the East into a world war was because means were found to handle conflict without getting into a full-blown war. These means, somewhat paradoxically, were economic and ideological confrontation, an arms race and the propensity to participate in relatively small and contained conflicts across the globe in the fear that a direct war might lead to "mutually assured destruction" (MAD).

Kant's essay failed to provide perpetual peace because it did not take into account the unwillingness of societies, even democratic ones, to fol-

low his recommendations. After the Second World War, political scientists began using the scientific method of establishing a hypothesis and then either confirming or denying it by empirical observation. In 1964, the sociologist Dean Babst published a paper called *Elective Government—A Force for Peace*, in which he argued, by using a large collection of empirical data, that fully democratic governments were unlikely to start wars with each other. This paper started the modern inquiry of political scientists into the field of conflict, war and peace studies.

The contemporary student of political science can easily be equipped with the tools necessary to understand the nature of conflict, war and peace. Knowing that conflict is perpetual, and that war is the inability to manage conflict through peaceful means, the study of the multidisciplinary field of conflict management becomes important and poignant.

Conflicts amongst States

One type of conflict is conflict between states. States usually consist of people with a shared culture who also have common economic interests. If another state has a different economic interest, there may be conflict. If the conflict cannot be resolved peacefully, it is likely that the states will go to war.

Wars amongst states are much more frequent than wars within states, though different social classes, or different peoples within a single state, also have differing interests. The main reason for that is because there is a political hierarchy within the state, while there is no political rule amongst states. The political philosopher Thomas Hobbes understood this status quo as the so-called “state of nature”—a state in which the lack of hierarchy means that peaceful resolution of conflict is very unlikely.

Modern scholars of International Relations use a different term—they call relations between states “a state of anarchy” as no state has political power over any other. Throughout history states have generally tried to avoid wars. Very importantly, so far history has shown us three ways to avoid conflicts escalating to the point of major wars:

1. If *hegemony* is established by one state, either locally or globally. In this case, the likeliness of war is dramatically decreased because the

hegemon possesses some amount of coercive power over others. Historical examples of local hegemonies include the hegemony of Sparta in the 6th and 5th Centuries BC and of Athens in the 4th century BC. Later, from the 7th century, the Caliphate was a hegemon over the Middle East, and from the 9th century the Carolingian Empire over Europe. The latest (to date) global hegemon was the USA, for one or two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In all instances of local hegemony, local peace existed at the expense of wider conflict. Most local hegemonies ended after a defeat of the hegemon by an external power. The global *hegemony* of the US was short-lived but was the closest mankind has got to a state of international relations which is not an anarchy.

The two main reasons why this global *hegemony* finally failed was, first, that the US was practically unable to diffuse all conflicts, and second, that other states, such as China, Russia and others, realized that their economic power was sufficient to be considered equal or close to equal to that of the US.

2. If a careful and flexible balance of power is established between global or local powers. One such historical example is the so-called “Age of Metternich” between 1815, when the Napoleonic wars ended, and 1914, when the First World War erupted. For almost a hundred years, no wars between major powers were fought in the heart of Europe. The reason for that was that a balance of power was established between the different states and alliances. This balance was kept in times when war seemed likely by meetings between the major powers in the so-called “Congresses”. The “congress system” ultimately failed when the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires overestimated their power and started the First World War.
3. When mutual destruction is assured. During the Cold War and to some extent today, global peace between superpowers is secured because the cost of a major military conflict is too high. NATO and the Soviet Union never entered into a direct war because of their nuclear arsenals, which assured that a war would result in the complete destruction of both sides, and probably even of mankind itself. Global peace today is secured via a combination between

such mutually assured destruction and the existence of global institutions, very much like the Congresses of Europe, or such as the Security Council of the United Nations.

None of these three ways has been able to secure absolute peace. Minor wars did and do take place.

Modern and Hybrid Warfare

As the contemporary world generally succeeds in avoiding major conflicts, but conflict still exists, a new type of warfare has recently come into being. *Hybrid warfare* is a combination of regular warfare, guerilla warfare, cyber and propaganda wars. Generally, in hybrid wars one of the sides involved is not a state, but a state-sponsored organization that pursues both its goals and the goals of the state sponsor. Such wars include those fought by Hezbollah, the Syrian Civil War and War in Donbass (Eastern Ukraine).

In the first case, Hezbollah, a Lebanese terrorist organization sponsored by Iran, is involved in many small-scale wars against Israel. By using terrorist, propaganda and conventional warfare tactics, Hezbollah aims at destabilizing Israel's security. The Syrian Civil War is also an excellent example. The war is fought between many different militant groups, with fluid alliances based on strategic as well as tactical considerations. The War in Donbass was fought between the state of Ukraine on the one hand, and the rebels unofficially supported by Russia on the other. The war resulted in the destabilization of Ukraine and Russia's annexation of Crimea. At no point were Russia and Ukraine officially in a state of war with each other.

Modern warfare has the tendency to be militarily limited in scope, though politically extremely destabilizing.

Peter STURM

CULTURE

For without culture or holiness, which are always the gift of a very few, a man may renounce wealth or any other external thing, but he cannot renounce hatred, envy, jealousy, revenge. Culture is the sanctity of the intellect.

William Butler Yeats

Culture has its roots in the Latin *cultura*, “a cultivating, agriculture”, figuratively “care, culture, an honouring”. Around the beginning of the 1500s, the term came to be applied to people, meaning “cultivation through education”. By the beginning of the 19th century, culture was understood to mean something like “the intellectual side of civilization”. By the mid-19th century, with the birth of the social sciences, the term broadened its meaning to cover “collective customs and achievements of a people”.

Today, we see at least two meanings of the term *culture*. In the broader sense, it is usually used to describe the knowledge, experience, beliefs, values and attitudes common to a large group of people, all of which have been acquired through group experience or social learning, or have been inherited from past generations. In this case, we usually speak about national or ethnic culture. Important elements of national or ethnic culture might be traditional crafts, national cuisine, music, dances and storytelling.

Within this broader sense, there is also the anthropological concept of *culture*. This concept holds that every human activity is culture, falling under the broad opposition of Culture versus Nature. Very often, such human activities are regarded as an attempt to control and “cultivate” nature, seen as chaos, and to transform it into order—in other words, into “culture”. In this sense, the term is almost identical in meaning with the term *civilization*.

In the narrow sense, *culture* is most often used to describe *oeuvres d'art* (works of art): painting, music, literature. For example, nowadays there exist numerous TV shows specializing in “problems of culture” which, in fact, mainly present and discuss “problems of the arts”. The best accomplishments of art and architecture, for example, form the world’s cultural heritage. On the other hand, as early as 45 BC, Cicero spoke about the duty of every man to “cultivate his spiritual qualities”—*cultura animi*—using the agricultural metaphor for the development of a philosophical soul, this being seen as the highest ideal for human development.

In everyday speech, the term is very often used to describe a specific human behaviour, manners, ways of gesturing or clothing. In this sense, the expression “he lacks culture” usually means either that the person behaves in contrast with the accepted social norms of behaviour (“bad manners”) or that he cannot match the social expectations of the group—he has not read the “obligatory” corpus of books, nor listened to works of classical music.

In the 18th century, the philosopher Kant was one of the first to formulate a definition of “Enlightenment” similar to our modern concept of *culture*—“Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity”—with the help of his reason. Later, this notion came to be rephrased as “Culture is the intellectual side of civilization.”

A generation after Kant, Herder, another German philosopher, built on this by arguing that human creativity in the “artistic” meaning of culture is as important as human rationality. In 1795, the Prussian linguist and philosopher von Humboldt declared that the anthropology point of view (see above) is the proper one to synthesize Kant’s and Herder’s views on culture.

The continuation of this line of thinking reveals some of the dangers which arise when the problematic of culture is inserted into political activity. By the end of the 19th century, most German philosophers had come up with an opposition between culture and civilization. “Culture”, in this perspective, was seen to embody a mystical national “self”, whereas civilization was deemed to be artificial and degenerate. Ultimately, it began to be argued that “culture” was something superior, possessed by the Germans; and that “civilization” was inferior and French. It was not long before populist German politicians started calling for (German) culture to

eradicate (French) civilization, which was part of the explanation for the start of the Second World War.

Culture is often divided into “material” and “non-material” culture. Although somewhat artificial and old-fashioned, this point of view is still dominant, especially in the popular mind. “Material” usually refers to artefacts which can be “touched”, such as paintings, sculptures, pottery or architectural achievements. In contrast, the term “non-material culture” usually comprises the performing arts: theatrical drama, concerts, or storytelling as a special part of the folk culture.

Such cultural accomplishments can be divided into two large groups: those who have legal and known authorship; and pieces belonging to folk culture and which have been transmitted from generation to generation, having a “collective authorship”. Folk culture itself has two spheres: traditional (and very often decorative) crafts, such as carpet or pottery production, embroidery, wood or stone carving. The other sphere of traditional folk culture comprises the three types of performing arts: singing, dancing and storytelling.

Another very popular yet not entirely correct opposition is between “high” and “low” culture. In everyday life, every piece of culture which can be termed “classical” is seen to belong to “high” culture: literature, music or drama. In contrast, popular song and dance is seen as “low culture”. This is how we end up with the conviction, for example, that contemporary pop music is “low culture”, whereas theatre, symphonic pieces and opera are “high culture”. There is a historical irony here, because both opera and theatre started out as popular entertainment, as “low culture”, in contrast to, for example, chamber music.

Subculture

Subculture usually describes a group of people smaller than a nation or a society, with similar values, norms and behaviour which, taken together, differentiate that group from the representatives of the dominant culture in the society.

It is important to distinguish a subculture group from a group of people who are merely united by having the same tastes, hobbies or membership

in a certain society. Belonging to subcultures influences your life so deeply that one does not have to be a specialist in semiotics to be able to immediately “read” your affiliation from your physical appearance, social behaviour and speech, or from the places where you meet with other members of that subculture, the music you listen to and so forth.

There are multitudes of subcultures, based on different elements of culture. Here are but some examples:

- professional—such as the subcultures of medical doctors, lawyers or taxi drivers, characterized by their specific jargon, sense of humour and taste;
- age-based—since the 1950s, teenagers have very often expressed rebellion against the values and norms of the world of older people in terms of their taste in certain music or sports, their slang and behaviour patterns;
- musical—almost every musical genre has its subculture. Most visible of these are the subcultures structured around rock music (and its many varieties, such as rock and roll, rockabilly, rhythm and blues), heavy metal, jazz, pop and progressive; but there are also subcultures that permeate classical music, such as the followers of the annual Wagner festival in Germany;
- LGBT—this is the term used to indicate the subculture of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people. This subculture is distinguished not only by its way of dress and its manners but also by a large corpus of works of art such as special films, books or music;
- New Age—a spiritual movement which started in the early 1950s and whose values are based on parapsychology and holistic health.

Counterculture

While individuals and groups can easily move from a subculture to counterculture and back again, these two cultures are different in major ways. Both defy the culture of the majority (mainstream), but subcultures mostly form shelters in which groups of people can lead lives based on values, assumptions, attitudes and manners different from the majority of society. Counterculture, on the other hand, is a political phenomenon,

challenging prevailing politics and culture across the board. Its intention is not to provide a safe refuge but to attain major or revolutionary changes involving the whole of society—what it believes in, how it produces things or how power is structured and implemented, for example.

It is usually understood that counterculture involves disagreement, opposition, disobedience or rebellion. This rebellion, however, is usually not an open armed uprising or a violent street action. People involved in counterculture usually assume that victory will come not when political power is overturned, but when the entire set of a society's cultural assumptions is overturned and replaced with other assumptions. In this sense, counterculture follows Antonio Gramsci's concept of "cultural hegemony", namely, that once you establish your views as dominant in a society, then it begins to behave in the way you want it to.

People began speaking of counterculture in the second half of the 1960s, when various forms of (artistic) rebellion, dating from the post-war period, fused with various new subcultures (beatniks, hippies) to produce a wide-ranging challenge against "the establishment" ("the system"). Individual freedom and creativity were to supersede obedience to social norms; peace was to succeed war; love was to replace violence; and communal living was to replace greed in the marketplace. Psychedelic drugs were to be used as instruments to "free the mind", while rock (and folk) music developed the basic message of the counterculture of the 1960s.

By 1968 counterculture fused with other protest movements to produce the historic student (and youth) rebellions in France, the USA, Poland, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere. In 1969 came the high point, when, during the Woodstock music and art festival, held in New York state, counterculture was confident that it was winning society's "hearts and minds" (establishing cultural hegemony).

At its height, counterculture attempted to demonstrate that its members could live their lives without any involvement with the institutions and structures of the state. Housing, healthcare, education, security—all of these services, it was claimed, could be provided by "the people" themselves, with no state intervention. This idea crashed rather spectacularly at the Altamont music festival (December 1969), where security was provided by the Hell's

Angels, rather than by the police. The result was one person in the audience being killed by a Hell's Angel and the entire festival collapsing into chaos.

The drive to establish a countercultural society continued, especially in the USA, but by 1971–2, the high point had passed. Most societies reasserted their traditional beliefs against the counterculture, which itself lost its pretensions to be a new way of human life and assumed, rather, the posture of dissidence against the status quo.

By then, not only were major countercultural leaders packed off to prison (Timothy Leary, the rock group MC5), but the movement itself had lost its way. Unlimited freedom and drug abuse also took its toll, with the premature deaths, within a few years of each other, of major cultural icons such as the founder of the Rolling Stones, Brian Jones; Jim Morrison of the rock group the Doors; guitarist Jimi Hendrix; rock singer Gene Vincent; folk singer Janis Joplin; founder of reggae, Bob Marley; drummers Keith Moon (the Who) and John Bonham (Led Zeppelin); the founder of the group Thin Lizzy, Phil Lynott; and Syd Barrett, the founder of progressive group Pink Floyd, who lost his sanity to the drug LSD.

Although defeated, counterculture managed to subsequently change social attitudes in some very fundamental ways as people involved in counterculture made their way through various parts of society. The environmental movement, feminism, the civil rights movements, changed attitudes to children and animals, intercultural and interreligious tolerance—all of these can be seen as products of counterculture. In this sense, counterculture has done its job as a form of culture: it has cultivated and civilized manners, mores and patterns of behaviour, making them gentler and more considerate.

Veronika AZAROVA

DEFIANCE

*In the end it is defiance that gives our lives value:
it is only our defiance that redeems us.*

Mark Rowlands

Outside of the French and the English languages, it is difficult to find an exact equivalent of *defiance*. Most translations will tend towards “resistance” or “refusal”. But *defiance* is both a more fundamental and a wider concept than “resistance” or any of the other translations.

A composite dictionary definition would read something like “a daring, open or bold resistance to or disregard for authority or power; a challenging attitude or behaviour”. The word has its origins in Old French *desfiance* (challenge, declaration of war); in Middle English it denotes the renunciation of an allegiance or friendship. It is the opposition to the “fi” in the Latin term *fidare*—“to trust”.

What does defiance look like? The Financial Times newspaper has given a good example: “Stand up when the powers that be order you to sit down, and you’ve given a fine example of *defiance*. It happens when someone or a group of someones openly flouts or challenges authority.”

Defiance is an important kind of *political* behaviour—in other words, behaviour towards the powerful in society. It arises out of the fundamental belief that individual human beings have dignity, a moral sense and the right to independent judgment. Whole professions have been founded on the basis of defiance, such as journalism. George Orwell, a journalist and the celebrated author of the novel *1984*, writes: “Journalism is printing what someone else does not want printed: everything else is public relations.” Journalism, we must add, is printing what the government—the authorities, the powerful—in particular does not want printed.

Defiance has often been described as standing your own ground against a force that is overwhelmingly more powerful than you. That was, for example, the position of the so-called “Tank Man”—a solitary Chinese civilian who, in June 1989, stood alone against a column of tanks invading Tiananmen square to clear it of democratic protesters. Defiance is also seen in the famous picture, taken in Nazi Germany in 1936, of one single man refusing to do the Nazi salute—alone in a crowd of saluting Germans.

One of the most famous early examples of defiance involves the legendary Spartans, men of great military valour but few words. When Philip of Macedon (Alexander the Great’s father) had conquered the rest of Greece, he sent them a message. In it, he warned that refusal to surrender to his army would lead to their destruction “for if I bring my army on your land, I will destroy your farms, slay your people, and raze your city”. The Spartans replied with one word: “If”. Neither Philip nor his son Alexander ever threatened Sparta again.

The modern philosopher Mark Rowlands (born 1962) has gone so far as to suggest that the capacity for defiance is what makes us human; conversely, that truly human are only those of us who are capable of defiance:

“There are certain times in our lives when we are at our best. This is when we understand the game is up. These are the times when hope has deserted us, and we have nothing left but our defiance and our scorn...In the end it is this defiance that gives our lives value: *it is only our defiance that redeems us.*”

But what is it that we “challenge” (see the dictionary definition above) with our defiance? Ultimately, we challenge the right of authority (the state) to impose on us its will beyond a certain limit. But can we classify as defiance any and all instances of people refusing to do something that the state tells them to; or breaking the law; or engaging in unlawful street protests?

There seems to be some agreement that defiance, properly speaking, can only be an act of disobedience that is based on moral grounds. This agreement is in turn based on the “natural law” tradition, which states that the knowledge of good and bad, of proper and improper, cannot come to people from the laws promulgated by the government.

That is because people have an ingrained moral sense, on the basis of which they have the capacity to judge laws; and on the basis of which they can decide to disobey laws that lack “moral legitimacy”—that is to say, laws contrary to the individual’s own sense of good and bad. Resisting Nazi Germany’s persecution of the Jews, for example, would be a moral act of defiance, despite breaking the laws then in force in Germany.

From the point of view of the natural law tradition, closely related to defiance is what philosopher John Locke called “rebellion”, Henry Thoreau called “civil disobedience” and Mahatma Gandhi named “civil resistance”.

In John Locke’s theory of government, people explicitly have the “right to rebellion”. The idea is that when people get together to form a social contract and construct the state, they do so in order to attain greater safety and security in their lives. And when a state does not provide these things, but rather begins to take away people’s safety and security, then they have the right to dissolve that state and make a new one. Locke wrote:

“For all *Power given with trust* for the attaining an *end*, being limited by that end, whenever that *end* is manifestly neglected, or opposed, the *trust* must necessarily be *forfeited*, and the Power devolve into the hands of those that gave it, who may place it anew where they shall think best for their safety and security.”

This same point is made more clearly in the American Declaration of Independence:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness... That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

Two generations after the Declaration, the American writer Henry Thoreau argued that not only nations and societies of people but also individuals had the right to break a law that they saw as immoral—something

he called “civil disobedience”. In his own case, he refused to pay taxes for a planned war against Mexico to extend slavery—and went to prison for this.

Breaking the law for moral purposes requires significant amounts of courage and the disregard of everyday considerations, such as cost or comfort. This was emphasized by Thoreau in his opposition to the war with Mexico. He severely criticized those “who are more interested in commerce and agriculture than they are in humanity, and are not prepared to do justice to the slave and to Mexico, *cost what it may...*”.

A clear example of disregarding cost was provided in 1989 by the “velvet revolutions” in Eastern Europe, which overthrew the Communist governments in place. People from the Baltic to the Black Sea rose up in civil disobedience because of their interest in “humanity” and dissolved the old states, regardless of the economic hardships that they knew were coming.

As a subplot to *defiance*, civil disobedience is legitimate, according to moral philosopher John Rawls, when it keeps to three basic principles.

First, it should be limited to “instances of substantial and clear injustice, and preferably to those which obstruct the path to removing other injustices”.

Second, before engaging in civil disobedience, we should make sure that “normal appeals to the political majority have already been made in good faith and...they have failed”.

Third, we must exercise restraint—keep things peaceful, because non-violence is the great moral strength of both defiance and of civil disobedience. Violence will provide the authorities with the excuse to hit back with violence infinitely greater than your own.

It is usually recognized that defiant lawbreaking, in order to constitute civil disobedience, must be either publicly conducted or at least publicly announced. For example, quiet tax evasion is both immoral and a crime, whereas public refusal to pay taxes due to disagreement with government policy—for example, by writing an open letter to the Finance Minister—would constitute civil disobedience.

Defiance and civil disobedience are powerful instruments for change because they are based on morals, natural laws and universal human rights.

This is the reason that defiance and civil disobedience are so often successful against very powerful enemies, who retreat, unwilling to use force against a public moral stand. Conversely, when states decide to use force against defiance and civil disobedience, then either all criticism in society is stifled and it enters the long twilight of dictatorship, or defiance turns into armed struggle, which results in civil war.

Much like revolutions, defiance and civil disobedience are weapons of last resort, pregnant with tremendous destructive power—and are to be used wisely and sparingly.

Evgenii DAINOV

DEMOCRACY, REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.

Winston Churchill

Churchill knew what he was talking about. He went to war, completely alone, against the world's dictators in 1940—not in the name of national survival, but in the defence of democracy in the world.

The word *democracy* is rooted in the Greek *demos* (“the people”) and *kratos* (“rule”), together meaning “rule of the (common) people”. There is, however, much more to this. Originally, in ancient Athens, “demos” was a political district. Every citizen could only take part in public life if registered in one of the Athenian demoses. (Those not registered and not taking part in public affairs were called *idiotes*.)

And thus a correct translation of “democracy” into present-day speech would be something like: “rule by those citizens who are registered as such”—something very different from the majority rule of a populist mob, for example.

In terms of today's practices of democracy, things are also more complicated than they may at first appear.

First, there is a differentiation between democracy in terms of a *collective decision-making method*, based on the equality of participation in, and deliberation among, the members of the group; and democracy as a *form of government—a political regime*.

Second, there is a distinction between the *normative theory of democracy*, concerned with its moral foundations; and *the descriptive and explanatory democratic theory*—the study of those political systems that are qualified as democratic.

Third comes the emphasis on elections as the defining characteristic of democracy, but more than that on the question of *the quality of democracy* and *the purposes it serves* as a system of government, weighted against the procedures that make it endure.

As Samuel Huntington put it in *The Third Wave* (1991), “The concept of democracy as a form of government goes back to the Greek philosophers. Its modern usage, however, dates from the revolutionary upheavals in Western society at the end of the 18th century”.

Aristotle was the Greek philosopher who extensively discussed the normative concept of democracy and its practical dimensions as a political regime, with the idea to prescribe the means to achieve the common good. It should be noted that when Aristotle writes about democracy, he means a system of government that is based on *direct participation* (in opposition to the modern reality of citizens participating through their elected representatives) of every freeborn adult citizen in political debates and in decision-making on an everyday basis. Women, foreigners and slaves were excluded from the political life of the *polis*.

Aristotle shares the conviction of his teacher Plato that democracy is inferior to various other forms of regimes because it devalues the expertise that is needed for the proper governance of the society at the expense of expertise needed to win elections. For Plato, expertise in winning elections does not provide the individual with the qualification needed to navigate through the difficult issues that politics presents the community with. This argument is echoed in the quote, incorrectly attributed to Churchill, that the best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter.

Aristotle’s own critique of democracy is targeted slightly differently. More than the lack of expertise, Aristotle is worried about the bias that *majority rule* carries as a risk. For him, the democratic principle “one man, one vote” inevitably leads to rule by the poor, for their own good.

He creates two categories regarding equality—arithmetic equality and equality of merit. Arithmetic equality, which means that all are equal in all respects, is applied when it is a matter of equality before the law. Aristotle calls this *corrective justice*. The other type of justice, *distributive justice*, is applied whenever something has to be distributed among people.

In *Democratic Freedom and the Concept of Freedom in Plato and Aristotle* (2009), Mogens Herman Hansen says that for Aristotle the “democrats are wrong when they hold that all are equal in all respects” and, accordingly, “want to apply the arithmetic form of equality when common goods have to be distributed among the citizens”. Considering the fact that in almost all *polis*—the political system of a city state—the poor constitute “the majority of the citizens, they will be able to control everything if arithmetic equality is applied”.

Aristotle believes that, in the “rule by many” type of system, there should be a balance: any type of group-related and/or political decisions should be made in “an assembly comprised by an equal number of rich and poor”.

Much later, in 1991, when including *majority rule* as one of the main characteristics of the generic concept of democracy, Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, in *What Democracy Is...And Is Not*, identify the same problem in modern democracies. They refer to it as the moment in which “*numbers meet intensities*”. That is to say that regularly assembled majorities may and often will make decisions that may be harmful to some minority.

While Aristotle sees the solution to the problem in the balance of the two groups—the rich and the poor (hence the minority and the majority) and in a constitution that will prevent everyone from living as they like (a democratic understanding of freedom that Aristotle dislikes), contemporary democratic regimes have found various ways of placing certain issues beyond the reach of the majority, thus protecting minority rights. Schmitter and Karl outline them to be:

- specific constitutional provisions (a bill of rights), a requirement for concurrent majorities in several constituencies (confederalism);
- securing autonomy of regional governments against demands of the central authority (federalism);

- grand coalition governments that include all parties (consociationalism—from the Latin *cosociatio*);
- negotiations of social pacts between major social groups (neocorporatism);
- everyday operation of interest associations and social movements that are influencing decision-makers.

To sum up, in his critique of democracy, Aristotle raises a number of important issues and challenges that contemporary democratic regimes are still trying to cope with. While discussing his idea of a *polity*, he agrees with the democratic idea that the *polis* is a political community of equals that take turns ruling and being ruled. He strongly disagrees with the notion that annual rotation is needed; citizens should be ruled when young and rule when they become old and wise. He also believes that wage earners (*thetes*) and others who work as craftsmen or traders should be excluded from participating in the politics of his polity.

Unlike Aristotle, J. S. Mill discovers and discusses the *instrumental* value of democracy. In his work *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861) he defends the notion of extensive participation of citizens and the enlightened competence of rulers. Mill bases his argument on the instrumental idea that democracy produces relatively good laws and policies and, ultimately, improves the character of the participants. He discusses three ways in which democracy is better than non-democratic regimes: strategically, epistemologically and via the improvement in the character of democratic citizens.

Strategically, democracy has an advantage over other types of regimes because decision makers are forced to take into consideration the interests, demands, opinions and rights of most people in society by virtue of the fact that each individual is given political power.

Epistemologically (scientifically), democracy is better than other types of regimes as a decision-making method, because it is more reliable in terms of discovering the right decision. By including more people in the decision, providing access to more sources of information and creating a forum of deliberation and critical assessment of policies, democracy tends to arrive at decisions that are more informed about individual preferences and the general will of the people.

And finally, as regards *improvement of character*, democracy tends to encourage people to stand up for themselves more than other forms of rule since collective decision making in democracy depends on them individually. This makes the individual more independent and rational, considering carefully their alternatives, because every decision makes a difference to their life. Such effects on the individual, it is argued, tend to improve the quality of legislation since it is produced in a society of rational, autonomous and moral decision-makers.

As noted by Samuel Huntington in the mid-twentieth century, three general approaches have emerged in debates over the meaning of democracy as a form of government. It has been defined in terms of “sources of authority for government”, of “purposes served by government”, and of “procedures for constituting” a government. However, the debate soon became refocused on the idea that there is not much analytical value in defining democracy in terms of sources of authority and purposes of government.

As part of the debate described by Huntington, Joseph Schumpeter focused on the central procedure of democracy that distinguishes it from other types of regimes—“the selection of leaders through competitive elections by the people they govern”. By doing so he criticized the “classical” theory of democracy based on terms such as the “will of the people” and the “common good”. The “democratic method” for him was “that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions, in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote”.

This definition is a minimalist one, organized around elections. Later on, it faced major criticism on the grounds that even if elections are the essence of democracy, they are not in themselves enough for understanding the democratic regime. One could argue that issues like liberty, effective citizen control, responsible government, honesty and openness in politics, as well as informed and rational deliberation, should be included. The notion that elections are a sufficient condition for democracy continues to be criticized and is known as “electoralism”.

By the 1970s, the debate on democratic legitimacy and on the purposes of government was overtaken by the notion that what is important is to understand the functions of democratic institutions and the reasons for their development.

This approach (i.e. to describe democracy in terms of real life procedural practices, thus providing a procedural definition of democracy) crystallized in the term polyarchy, developed by Robert Dahl in order to arrive at a more “realistic” notion of democracy. Defined in procedural terms, democracy is a system in which power is vested in elected officials who compete in regular and fairly conducted elections in which virtually all adults are eligible to vote. It was his understanding that the definition of democracy should focus on the necessary conditions that must be present for it to exist in its modern form.

Dahl organized these “procedural minimal conditions” around two dimensions—participation and contestation. These conditions as formulated by Dahl are:

- Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
- Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
- Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
- Practically all adults have the right to run for office.
- Citizens have a right to express themselves on political matters broadly defined, without the danger of severe punishment.
- Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by law.
- Citizens also have the right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.

Later on, Schmitter and Karl, while arguing that these conditions do not define democracy, but are indispensable to its existence, proposed two additional conditions:

1. Popularly elected officials must be able to exercise their constitutional power without being subject to unelected officials. This condition should serve as a safeguard against the possibility that regular, freely conducted and fairly counted elections are held, but real power is in

the hands of other individuals or entities—oligarchs, the military, civil servants. This point addresses the fallacy of “electoralism”, discussed above.

2. The polity must be self-governing, independent of constraints posed by other political systems, this being the ultimate condition for the operation of the seven conditions formulated by Dahl.

By outlining these conditions, Dahl provided academia with an analytical tool (benchmarks) that made it possible to compare political systems and analyze their degree of democracy as well as to measure to what extent they are becoming more or less democratic. Election fraud, oppression of the opposition, excluding groups from participation in election, censorship—these are clear indicators that the regime is not democratic.

This approach proved to be especially useful during the second half of the twentieth century, when there was a substantial increase in countries using democratic forms of government. A vast range of literature on democratization developed, dealing with the passage through a transitional experience to a regime that satisfies the minimal procedural conditions for a “real existing” democracy (Schmitter), while focusing not on the questions of what conditions make democracy possible (or how democracy functions) but on how it comes into being. In the theory of transitions and democratization, transitology based its argument on the notion that tasks faced by countries on the path of transition are essentially the same and that they should all expect to pass through the same stages of change.

This brought about the idea that transitions can be guided, and that democracy can be implemented, by solving the tasks at hand more or less in an identical manner. A growing body of transition experts, election observers and democracy promoters came into being. After some 20 years of experience, especially as regards the transitions of the post-communist countries, this view has come under heavy criticism.

Thomas Carothers argues that transitology has been built on flawed assumptions and has thus failed to recognize the growing number of countries that have stagnated on the path to democracy in what he calls “the grey zone”. These flawed assumptions are:

1. The idea that any country moving away from dictatorial rule can be considered a country in transition toward democracy.
2. The idea that democracy unfolds in a set sequence of stages. Practice proved that transitions were not linear processes with predetermined stages.
3. That free and fair elections are the backbone of democracy—a problem already discussed with regard to “electoralism”.
4. The idea that there are “No Preconditions for Democracy”. For Carothers, the experience of grey zone proves that structural conditions of democracy are not off the agenda. Economic wealth, previous experience with political pluralism, social class and civil society may contribute to (or impede) the democratization process.
5. The idea that, for democratization to succeed, some modifications to the already-existing state institutions, as well as the creation of some institutions such as Parliaments, would be sufficient. A vast number of countries had to develop the state from scratch or cope with an existing, but non-functional state.

An interesting attempt to combine the three aspects of democracy—in terms of *sources* of authority for government, of *purposes* served by government and of *procedures* for constituting a government, noted by Huntington, was made by Schmitter and Karl. After analysing the wave of transitions that kicked off with the Portuguese revolution of 1974 and culminated in the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe in 1989, they came up with the following definition of democracy:

“Modern political democracy is a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives.”

In order to further elaborate on the modern understanding of democracy, they break up this definition into three components. They note that “democracy does not consist of a single unique set of institutions”, and that “there are many types of democracy” that are dependent on “a country’s

socio-economic conditions as well as on its entrenched state structures” and political practices.

For this reason the authors decided to:

1. describe the generic concepts that distinguish democracy as a unique system for organizing relations between rulers and ruled. That is to say, to outline the defining characteristics of democracy;
2. focus on the procedural norms that must be followed—“the rules and arrangements that are needed, if democracy is to endure”—since the defining characteristics of democracy are necessarily abstract;
3. consider the “operative principles that make democracy work”. These are not included in the generic concepts or formal procedures that explain what democracy is. The operative principles are the underlying conditioning that explain how democracy functions.

Schmitter and Karl start first with the most distinctive characteristic of democracy, the *citizens*—those individuals who hold the right to participate in political life, whether by voting or running in an election, or by joining political associations. Historically, there have been significant restrictions on citizenship in emerging democracies, based on age, gender, class, race, literacy, property ownership and tax-paying status. Today, it is the general standard that all native-born adults are eligible to vote (universal suffrage).

However, as the authors note, there might be specific informal restrictions on the effective exercise of citizenship rights:

- literacy (the ability to make an informed decision, understand the voting procedures, or even being able to read the ballot);
- access to polling stations—distance from one’s home, allotted time frame for voting;
- the weight of one vote—there might be significant differences in how many votes elect one representative, and so redrawing electoral district boundaries might have an impact on the election results (gerrymandering);
- the threshold on entering the legislative body—not taking into consideration votes for parties that are below the thresholds.

The second characteristic, *competition*, has not always been viewed as a defining condition of democracy. “Classic” democracies were based on direct participation and consensus—all freeborn citizens gathered in the *agora* to deliberate and make decisions. Because of this tradition, throughout history there has been a general hostility to particular “interests”. In *Federalist Papers*, James Madison argues that competition among “factions” is a necessary evil, since it comes from the nature of men and it is better to control it than to ignore it. How this competition is organized and how the boundaries are set on it distinguishes between different models of democracy.

The third characteristic is *elections*, “fairly conducted and honestly counted”. However, between elections citizens can seek to influence policy through other means of organization—“interest associations, social movements, locality groupings” and so on.

Since elections are a mechanism that institutionalizes competition, a method of decision making is required. Thus, the fourth characteristic and a major defining feature of democracy is *majority rule*.

Cooperation becomes a central feature of democracy and its next characteristic. For Schmitter and Karl, the actors must “cooperate in order to compete—act collectively through parties, associations, and movements in order to select candidates, articulate preferences, petition authorities etc.” By cooperating and deliberating among themselves, citizens create the *civil society*. The *space* that this deliberation takes place in was described by Jurgen Habermas as the “public sphere”. It should be independent from the state so as to restrain the action of rulers and form better citizens aware of the preferences of others.

The next characteristic of democracy concerns the *representatives*—the people elected in direct or indirect elections to fill public office. The question of their election and accountability is central to modern democracy. Since direct participation of citizens in the everyday decision making of the political system is no longer a plausible or available option, their indirect action through their representatives becomes indispensable for the functioning of modern democracies.

There are many channels of representation in modern democracies. Territorial constituencies that constitute the parliament or presidency are

the most visible and public; however, different types of functional channels of representation exist—hearings in parliamentary committees, testifying in expert policy committees, corporate representation, advocacy for a particular policy and so on.

The combination of the outlined characteristics and the procedures that must be followed if democracy is to endure answer the question of how democracy functions and persists over time. However, the argument of Schmitter and Karl is that there are two important *underlying conditions* that are at the heart of understanding why democracy is even possible.

The first one relates to the idea that democracy requires uncertainty: election results should not be known before elections are held. There is no predetermined outcome. Although the notion of uncertainty is crucial for democracy, limits on it need to be established, such as guarantees for property, liberty, freedom of expression, participation in elections and so forth.

The second important underlying condition concerns the idea that the process of consolidating democracy builds up a specific culture of habits—including participation, tolerance and trust—that foster democracy. This process can take significantly greater periods of time than the actual process of transition toward a democratic regime.

Contemporary democracies face a number of challenges that seriously test the ability of the democratic regime to deal with the rapid change of social, economic, cultural and even technological conditions that surround it. Globalization, technological innovation and migration flaws significantly undermine the ability of national governments to meet the demands of their people. The “mediatization of politics”, as electronic media become the main channel of communication for citizens, substitutes existing channels of communication between people and their representatives and among people in a community. This process undermines traditional mechanisms whereby citizens discuss politics directly with each other. Furthermore, this creates a “commercial nexus that trivialises information about politicians and exploits their personal rather than political actions”, as Schmitter warned in his 2004 paper *The Future of Democracy in Europe—Trends, Analyses and Reforms*.

As a result, a growing dissatisfaction with politics and declining participation can be observed in democratic systems. The solution is to make democracy more, not less, interesting.

This is where the recent return to direct democracy comes in. Over time, representative democracy (voting once every four years and leaving the elected to it) has been seen as increasingly unsatisfactory, as elected officials have succumbed to the temptation to behave as an oligarchy (“iron law of oligarchy”). This is why people have been demanding more direct democracy—such as a referendum, e-government, online transmission of government sessions and so forth. Governments have, to some extent, bowed to such demands, as seen in the various referendums, after 2010, for regional independence (Catalonia in Spain, Scotland in Great Britain). However, following the 2016 UK referendum on leaving the EU, observers have emphasized the dangers of this form of democracy: unlike elections, a referendum takes place only once; there is no rerun four years later.

Hristo PANCHUGOV

ECONOMY

The first lesson of economics is scarcity: there is never enough of anything to fully satisfy all those who want it. The first lesson of politics is to disregard the first lesson of economics.

Thomas Sowell

There ain't no such thing as a free lunch.

Robert A. Heinlein

According to conventional understanding, the term *economy* stands for the complex process or system by which goods and services are produced, bought and sold in a certain state or region. It also stands for the arrangement or a mode of operation of such processes that allow for production and (thereafter) trade, exchange and distribution of goods and services within a certain social system. Thus, classical economy is governed by the principles of scarcity, supply and demand.

The study of an economy is called *economics* and represents the investigation of human choice, behaviour and the methods used to invest, produce and consume, as well as the allocation of available resources. In the words of the “father” of classical economic analysis, the Scottish philosopher Adam Smith, the study of economies is the “inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations”. The conclusion he came to in his own study (appropriately called *The Wealth of Nations*) was that people have a “natural inclination to produce, barter and exchange”; and, therefore, if they were allowed to do so without interference, their individual aspirations would produce more wealth for everyone because the “invisible hand of the market” would ensure generally growing production and increasingly efficient distribution.

Economy has its roots in the Latin *oeconomia*, itself rooted in the Greek *oikonomia*, meaning “household management, thrift”, and *oikos*—“house, abode, dwelling”.

Economics has two main branches—microeconomics and macroeconomics. These are rooted, respectively, in the dual modern meaning of “economy” as it became in the mid-seventeenth century: first, “frugality, judicious use of resources” (microeconomics); second, “the wealth and resources of a country” (macroeconomics).

Microeconomics is concerned with the decisions and actions pertaining to the allocation of limited resources to individuals, households and firms. Macroeconomics is concerned with performance, structure, behaviour and decision-making of an economy taken as a whole, rather than as individual markets. In other words, while microeconomics is concerned with markets, production, cost-efficiency, specialization, supply, demand, firms, uncertainty and market failures, macroeconomics is concerned with growth, economic cycles, unemployment and inflation and monetary and fiscal policies of the states.

International political economy (IPE) is a closely related subject within the field of political science, as it analyzes states’ economy performance on a global scale via the tools of international relations (IR), while international economics studies the specifics of transnational flow of capital, goods and services. Other relevant sub-branches of economics include the field of so-called economic systems that concentrate on analysis and explanation of production organization, investment, consumption and distribution of goods and services according to institutional design and optimality.

The Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle coined the derogatory term “dismal science” (i.e. “dark”, “pessimistic”) to describe the science that deals with the economy, as opposed to the “gay” (i.e. “merry” and “optimistic”) art of writing poems and verse. This was due to the preoccupation of economics with limits, scarcity and unavoidable choices. Despite this miserable reputation, the economy is a complex and flexible field, organized via a complex web of social relations—and it is also value-loaded. Thus, it is closely related to politics and political science and explores the dynamics of the ever-changing relationships between individuals, institutions and systems. Another reason that it is linked to political science is that it attempts to answer the questions of who gets what, how much and when; and what determines all of this.

To understand how an economy works is to understand how the so-called factors of production (such as labour, skills, physical and financial capital and land) are combined in order to create added value in goods and services.

It is of fundamental importance to remember that without human effort in the form of labour, nothing happens in an economy. It is labour, when applied to raw materials, that produces added value; and it is added value that produces what Adam Smith called “the wealth of nations”. The higher the value that is added by every individual worker, the wealthier the society becomes. For example, extracting iron ore and selling it produces low added value and little wealth; while building cars out of iron ore produces high added value and a wealthy society.

In the so-called market economies, competition is the main driving force of production and profit maximization; it shapes and constrains the behaviour of producers. In an economy of specialization of labour, key features for output optimization are the refinement of production tools and cost maximizing.

Such features are present in different types of economies, such as market economies, centrally planned economies and mixed ones. These types differ in the “mix” and balance between “pure” market and state intervention.

In market economies, the free price system that is produced by the interplay of supply and demand provides us with the clearest “signal” of how individuals, households and firms should behave towards the scarcity of certain goods and services. For example, when something becomes too expensive, then this is a signal that too little of it is being produced—an invitation for new producers to move into that field. If that something is a finite resource, such as oil, then its rising price acts as a signal for firms and households to move to a different source of energy, opening up whole new industries and creating new jobs.

By contrast, in centrally planned economies prices do not act as motivators of economic behaviour because they are set by the government as part of its direct allocation of inputs. The regulatory function of prices is lost, and the economy ends up producing too much of some things and too little of others, leading to permanent scarcity. An example is contemporary Venezuela, with its chronic shortages of toilet paper and basic foodstuffs. Another subtype of planned economy is the so-called command economy, where the state not only controls prices but also distribution and production on the basis of massive public ownership of industry.

The key features of the so-called mixed economies are a mix of markets and planning, public and private ownership and also the enhanced power of the state to intervene in order to prevent a condition known as “market failure”

(i.e. a situation where the allocation of goods and services is not efficient). Typically, for example, European countries assume that health, education and railways cannot be part of a purely market economy, as this would lead to market failure—that is, the non-delivery of services in these spheres. This is why, to ensure against such failure, most European states actively intervene in education, health care and rail systems.

In different types of economies, the condition of market failure is the mirror opposite of “governmental failure” (Venezuela) where we observe malfunctions in governance performance as regards the regulation of markets. In general, rational choice analysis and the so-called public choice theory emphasize the role of state intervention and the search for the most efficient “mix” between the role of the state (i.e. state intervention) and the role of the market in resource allocation. Public choice, as a sub-area of microeconomics, is also known as “the use of economic tools to deal with the problems of political science”.

Mainstream methods of investigating economies, their performance and peculiarities rely heavily on quantitative analysis, descriptive statistics and economic modelling. Principal theories, whether on the macro or the micro level, are empirically tested via econometrics and the use of economic data. These instruments are used for their reliability and explanatory power; thus, statistical methods and regression analysis are very common. In cases where scientifically controlled experiments could be applied, so-called experimental economics steps in to illuminate market mechanisms and to test the validity of concepts and theories.

While economics aims at achieving efficient distribution within the bounds of scarcity of resources, politics deals with the fairness of distribution, searching for answers to questions such as “What is the just measure of distribution? To what extent can and should distribution reflect fundamental (non-economic) concepts, such as justice, fairness and human rights?” In recent years, and particularly following the world financial crisis of 2008, these questions have become much more urgent than, for example, during the 1980s-1990s, when it was assumed that a market, properly liberated from state interference, could not fail.

Kiril AVRAMOV

ELECTIONS

If voting changed anything, they'd make it illegal.

Emma Goldman

The people who cast the votes don't decide an election, the people who count the votes do.

Joseph Stalin

Elections are a process through which citizens choose by voting for officers either to act on their behalf or to represent them in an assembly, with a view to government or administration. The major elements of an election are: rules of eligibility for both candidates and the electorate; voting procedures and administration empowered to enforce and monitor them; and laws relating to practice. Elections are considered by Ph. Schmitter and K. T. Lynn (see their “What democracy is... and is not”, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 2, no. 3 (1991), 75–88) as prerequisite for the existence of modern liberal democracy. Guaranteed rights of free participation and expression of opinion in turn are a benchmark of mature democracy (R. Dahl, J. Rawls and L. Diamond). Elections are the mechanism through which political competition is transformed into political representation in the legislative body of the state.

Elections—given that they are held at regular intervals as enshrined in a constitution or electoral code—establish a form of control over politicians, thus allowing for accountability. Their role is to hold representatives answerable to the citizens over time. There may also be pre-term elections in times of political or parliamentary crisis. Elections are considered democratic and “fair” or “just” when “there is a universal adult suffrage and they are conducted on the basis of secret ballots, reasonable ballot security and

the absence of massive voter fraud.” (*Economist Intelligence Unit Report—Democracy index for 2014*)

Elections are both an instrument for institutionalization and legitimization of government as well as an education for citizens about the rules of democratic governance. They help build a strong link between the electorate and their representatives, though under non-democratic regimes they are merely demonstrative in character, as their outcome does not influence de facto the political status quo. Awkwardly enough, authoritarian and even totalitarian regimes also seek legitimization through elections but it is more in the sense of demonstrating popularity rather than actual reaffirmation of their dominant political position. In some of those cases opposition parties are even allowed to take part in elections; however, they are severely intimidated and their campaigning options, if any exist, are restricted to a minimum.

People have known about and held elections since ancient times, though their application, character and extent have changed significantly over time. For example, in Aristotelian Athens only Athenian-born male citizens over twenty years of age, who were not slaves and were landowners, were eligible to participate and vote. In the cradle of modern democracy, the United Kingdom, it was not until the 1920s that women were granted the right to vote (though still discriminative, as only women over the age of thirty could participate), while in the USA, Afro-Americans were able to participate only after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted.

The history of universal suffrage and all-inclusive electoral franchise is pretty much the history of modern liberal democracy as expanding the number of those eligible to participate in elections in fact extended the representation to all citizens and made democracy possible. Thus, we may say that the overall function of elections is creating integrity of the polity of a given society by giving its members a chance to have their voice heard. Building this integrity results in the consolidation of political community; the establishment of social and political standards; the construction of a set of political rights, norms and values; and the formation of a pattern of political behaviour.

Elections are administered in many ways and may take many forms. There are usually official bodies in charge of the electoral process. They

monitor the character of electoral campaigning, public expenditure (under democracy), the rule of law and the practices applied. They may take various forms, such as the Electoral College in the USA or the College of Cardinals which meets in Rome to elect a new pope; or they may operate under the title of a Central Electoral Commission as it is called in Bulgaria. Elections may vary in type: they can be held to choose those elected to office (representatives), or can take the form of a referendum (a general direct vote on a particular issue) or plebiscite (a vote on some major question regarding the whole of society, i.e. a constitutional amendment). Elections are usually held over a length of time known as the electoral cycle—the period between two elections. Subject to specific electoral laws, electoral cycles are usually four or five years in length. Important components of an electoral cycle are the honeymoon, the period right after the election; the midterm, the period between elections; and the campaign period, or the time approaching an election.

Elections are organized under specific rules known as an electoral system. These rules govern voting eligibility requirements for the populace, calculation of the results and voting methods. These specifications are what distinguish one electoral system from another. Electoral systems can differ with regard to the manner in which individuals articulate their voting preferences. In general, election systems produce either single-winner or multiple-winner models, although there are some hybrid systems mixing elements from both, like in Germany. In a single-winner system, known also as “first-past-the-post”, voters usually elect a single person to represent one voting district; in contrast, multiple-winner systems favour more than one representative. These systems are also known as majoritarian and proportional after the principle under which they distribute parliamentary mandates.

The plurality (majority) system as is the actual translation of the “first-past-the-post” rule (also known as the Westminster system, named after its birthplace, the home of the United Kingdom’s parliament, which invented and established this particular electoral formula) also operates in the United States, Canada and India. Under its regulations the winner is the candidate who wins a simple majority of votes in the contested constituency. Contrary to this personality-focused system, the multiple-winner one switches the

attention away from the candidate to the political party that nominates him or her. Its rules explicitly hold the contest not between individuals running for a single seat, but rather between multiple political entities which compete with each other for as many votes as possible with which to secure as many seats as possible for the allocated electoral borough.

The major consequence of the above-mentioned dominant electoral systems and the logic behind their allocation of seats is that the question arises as to which one provides citizens with better qualitative and quantitative representation. There has been a long-standing debate about whether one person, known to the general public for his or her personal and professional characteristics, serves the public interest better than the monolithic, preordained, central party office rubber-stamped list of party loyalists. Both arguments have their merits, however, bearing in mind the common good as an overarching principle for the elected holders of public office, sticking to either of them is a matter of national choice and specifics. What is for sure is that if the environment in which those electoral systems are imbedded is not fundamentally based on the rule of law of democratic principles, therefore securing free, transparent, all-inclusive, non-discriminatory participation of all citizens, it is highly unlikely that either of them will make any difference in terms of real political representation.

Electoral formulas are another key component of electoral systems that provide better representation. They are the actual mechanics which determine the allocation of seats to candidates or political parties, given their score in an electoral cycle. Electoral formulas are constructed under the logic of two major methods: that of highest averages and of largest remainder. Highest-averages methods demand that once votes are tallied, a quotient for each party is calculated with the numerator equalling the number of votes received by that party. However, the formula for constructing the denominator varies across specific methods.

For example, in the D'Hondt formula, a method widespread in Europe, the denominator for each party is the number of seats already allocated to that party plus one. At first, all parties start with zero seats allocated and a denominator equal to one. The first seat is assigned to the party with the highest quotient; then it is recalculated using the new denominator (two) and it continues in that fashion until all available seats are allocated. An

alternative is the Sainte-Laguë formula, where the denominator is rather complicated—for it stands for the number of seats already allocated multiplied by two, plus one. The specifics of Sainte-Laguë's calculations are thought to be more favourable to smaller parties than that of D'Hondt's.

Unlike the highest-averages method, the largest-remainder method does not rely on quotient but on quota. Its more familiar representatives are the Droop and the Hare (simple) quota. Under their calculations each party is awarded as many seats as its total popular vote contains the full quota. However, it is highly unlikely that the numbers of all parties will fit as integer, so not all seats are allocated by full quota meaning that after the quota is subtracted from each party's total numbers, the remainder determines how many seats it will receive of those remaining in the electoral district.

Designed to improve representation in terms of proportionality, the outcome of both available methods can be widely influenced by local specifics such as the electoral threshold—a prerequisite that requires a political party to cross a barrier considered as a security precaution against fractioning of the representative body. It is a practice employed in many European countries such as Sweden and Bulgaria, where it stands at 4% of the total vote, and in Germany, where the percentage is 5%. Introduced mainly as an obstacle for small extremist parties, such thresholds might actually undermine the overall quality of representation.

Real-life cases

Let us take a look at examples of how electoral rules are actually applied in practice.

Case 1: How is "the most powerful person on Earth" elected?

The United States of America has a very peculiar electoral system. On 4 July 1776, when independence was declared, the idea behind the creation of the new political entity was that a number of independent *states* were forming a confederation in order to be free from the rule of the United Kingdom. Most of the so-called "founding fathers" imagined the US as a union of independent states. Up until as late as the end of the Second World War it was not uncommon to refer to the US as "these United States". Some

of the peculiarities of “these United States” are still part of contemporary election laws and practices.

One such peculiarity is central to the election of the President of the United States. When the office of President was constituted, the idea was that he was chosen by the States, not directly by the people. This explains the institution of the “Electoral College”. The Electoral College is the actual body that votes for the President and consists of a number of people representing exactly the relative number of votes that each state possesses. This means that

- a) in order to be elected President, a candidate needs to win a majority *in the Electoral College*, rather than a majority of the votes of the people in the elections;
- b) states are either won or lost—it does not matter how well the candidate has done in the states in which he or she lost, and it does not matter how narrowly he or she won in the other states;
- c) during campaigning, some states are much more important than others—for example, the “home state” of a candidate is almost always won by him or her, and thus other candidates rarely campaign in those home states.

As there is no federal law obliging an Electoral College to even take into account the vote in any given state, there have been cases when the representatives in an Electoral College have voted against the will of their people. For example, in 2000, the Democratic candidate Al Gore won the popular vote by more than half a million votes but lost the Electoral College 266 to 271. Republican candidate George W. Bush had managed to snatch all twenty-five Electoral College votes from Florida with a margin of 537 actual votes. This corresponds to 0.001% of the six million votes cast in Florida and is way into the margins of counting errors.

There have also been cases when the Electoral College chooses candidates who are not in the elections. In 2004, for example, the state of Minnesota gave one of its votes to John Edwards for President, but no person named John Edwards was actually running. In 1976, the state of Washington gave one vote for Ronald Reagan, though he was not in the

race either. Thankfully, so far such incidents have not decided the outcome of any elections.

Case 2: The German Bundestag—where the electoral rules are so complicated that nobody understands them.

After the Second World War, Germany made all possible efforts to ensure that it had the fairest and most democratic system for the election of members of the lower chamber of parliament—the Bundestag. Sadly, in 2008, the constitutional court of Germany ruled that the system had been *unconstitutional all along*, as it allowed for a rare case in which a party receiving more votes could actually end up getting fewer members of parliament. For almost half a century, nobody had noticed this. Starting with the elections in 2013, new rules were put in place, though they made the whole process even more complicated.

Although the system is so complicated that for a generation nobody spotted such a serious deficiency, the German Bundestag rightfully insists that it actually has one of the fairest, if not the fairest, systems of electoral procedure. Just as in the US, in Germany, there has been a huge historical influence over the way elections are conducted. For example, when a German citizen votes, she has to make two choices on the ballot—the first is for a candidate running in her *Bundesland* (Federal Province); the second is for a party list. This procedure was created in order to ensure that people will, on the one hand, know who at least one of their representatives is, while not getting too excited about political leaders on the other. The first vote is used to send one single candidate to the Bundestag—whoever has won the most votes. The second vote is used to calculate the exact percentage of votes for all parties that are above the 5% threshold of entry into parliament, giving them the exact percentage of members.

This system means that, in order to be equally fair to all parties, and to take into account their results in all *Bundeslaender*, the number of members of parliament varies from one election to another. While the Bundestag is composed of at least 598 members, it usually grows to about 650 after the election results, and in theory could reach 800. It is not surprising that in the first day after elections, the German press is occupied with taking pictures of construction work for new seats in the Bundestag.

Another peculiar aspect of the Bundestag elections is that people are actually free to vote differently in the two votes they have. Thus, many people voting for a smaller party (let us say Liberal Party—FDP), would cast their first vote for a politician from a larger party (let us say the Christian Democratic Party—CDU). This kind of voting sends a clear message that the person is in favour of a coalition between the Centrist-right CDU and the Liberal-right FDP.

Being allowed to, in a sense, vote twice, gives the citizen the freedom to vote for a party she is not sure will manage to go over the 5% threshold, while still being represented by her first vote for a candidate.

There is a fine balance between the 5% threshold which aims to ensure that parliament will not be unable to take decisions because of numerous small parties, and the “two votes” aspect which ensures that people who would like to vote for a party near the 5% threshold would not be discouraged to do so.

So far, German election rules and traditions have managed to completely fulfil their intended purpose, providing a stable political system in which no single party is ever dominant, while being flexible in the parliamentary coalitions it tends to create, so that no minor party is excluded from governance against its own will.

Case 3: The winner takes it all—the UK.

While not as strange or complicated, the electoral procedures for the United Kingdom’s House of Commons are quite unique. In some sense, they are exactly the opposite of those of Germany—extremely simple, and, it could be argued, just as unfair.

First, the United Kingdom is divided into a number of constituencies—geographical units of similar size. But, as the borders of these constituencies take into account not only current population but also past traditions, there is actually a huge difference between the populations of various constituencies; some Members of Parliament represent as few as 20,000 people, while others as many as 100,000.

Elections are carried out in all 650 constituencies and are won in the simplest of manners: the candidate with the most votes wins and goes to

Westminster. Historically, this has meant that it is extremely hard for smaller parties to compete.

Following elections, the composition of the UK parliament often looks extraordinarily different from the popular vote. For example, in 2015 the Conservative Party won about 37% of the vote, but got 51% of MPs. The fourth largest party, the Liberal Democrats, managed to get 8% of the popular vote, but only 8 MPs—under 1%. The United Kingdom Independence Party was ranked third in the popular vote with 13%, yet ended up with only one Member of Parliament.

Case 4: Flexible parties and dynamic coalitions in France.

A more balanced version of the “winner takes all” system is in place in France. While France is divided into more or less equally populated constituencies, the French voter has the ability to either change her mind or vote more strategically when parliamentary elections take place.

There are two rounds for electing members of the National Assembly of France. If no candidate receives 50% plus one vote in the first round, all candidates who have received 12.5% go to the second round. This creates many different possible scenarios. In the most basic case, there will be one rightist and one leftist candidate, and the voters who lean towards either one or the other political direction will support him or her. The 12.5% threshold, though, means that sometimes there will be, for example, two leftist candidates and one rightist, and it would make sense for one of the leftists to drop out in order to increase the chances of the other of winning against the rightist. In practice, this leads to a lot of political bargaining at constituency level, with one candidate dropping out but securing the support of the other in a different kind of election.

What is striking about the so-called “two-round system” is how much the specific rules could change the outcomes of elections. The French presidential elections are also organized in the “two-round” manner, but instead of the 12.5% threshold, the two candidates with the highest number of votes are allowed to advance to the second round.

Thus, in 2002, the presidential elections provided an interesting result. In the first round, three candidates managed to gather significant support: Republican Jacques Chirac received 5.7 million votes or about 20%; Na-

tionalist Jean-Marie Le Pen came second with 4.8 million votes and 17%; Socialist Lionel Jospin was third with 4.6 million votes or 16%. While the race might have seemed extremely tight by this point, the second round was a landslide, with Chirac getting 25.5 million (82%), and Le Pen only 5.5 million (18%) of the vote. Obviously, as Chirac did not become five times more popular in the span of seven days, it could be argued that the two-round system encouraged strategic voting and flexible coalitions, depending on the actual thresholds and rules.

Case 5: Bonuses in the south.

Some electoral systems encourage political coalitions—those in Germany in one way, and in France in another. Others practically eliminate them—as in the cases of the US and the UK. There is also a third, “middle” way.

In the Greek Parliament and in the lower Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament, the issue of forming a majority and a government is solved in a very simple way: the winning party receives an extra number of deputies in order to form a viable government. In the case of Italy, this “bonus system” was introduced in the early 1990s, as post-WW2 Italy had a long history of instability and inability to form capable political coalitions. Up until 2015, electoral rules stated that the party or coalition winning the largest percentage of votes automatically received enough deputies to form a majority in the parliament. During the 2013 elections this meant that the leftist coalition, led by the Democratic Party, won only 29% of the vote but received 55% of the deputies. Since then, the system has been under reconstruction, so as to make it more balanced and less skewed towards the largest party.

In Greece, the rules have been traditionally less skewed, as the “bonus” is not calculated in terms of “members needed for majority”, but are a stable number of deputies. Thus, for example, in both parliamentary elections in 2015 the largest party SYRIZA narrowly failed to obtain a majority because the bonus of 50 deputies was not enough to secure the party the 151 deputies needed.

Election systems can be extremely complex. Every state has different electoral rules and traditions. Electoral systems are a product of history, tradition and cultural outlook. They are one of the instruments, along with

actual elections, political parties and all other political and social institutions, that give societies the ability to govern themselves fairly.

For what it is worth, elections are an integral part of the overall outlook of any political system. Their votes-to-seat calculating specifics are responsible for establishing patterns of political interaction which may result in turn into either good governance, rule of law and fair and transparent competition or into illiberal democracy, party cartelization and even “state-capture” by political elites. The end result of any kind of elections, especially under the political system of democracy, pretty much depends on the established civil and subsequently political culture in a given society. For it is predominantly their nature that shapes the dialogue (or its very absence) between those who elect and those elected. Though quite often being attacked as reaffirming the existing political status quo, rather than challenging it, elections are actually one of the quintessential instruments, if not the quintessential instrument, for establishing and maintaining accountability in the institutional framework of governance of contemporary modern representative liberal democracy and its political system.

Lyubomir STEFANOV

EQUALITY

As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy.

Abraham Lincoln

Throughout history, most people, for most of the time, have lived in conditions of inequality. Most people could not take decisions in an independent way, because they were not independent in status. It was assumed that just about everyone had a “master”—someone of superior status who would tell them what to do. “Masterless men” were seen as being outside of society, dangerous (out of control) rebels or brigands.

And yet, according to the German philosopher Hegel, human history is the story of “masterless men”—free individuals, who independently take decisions affecting their lives. Such individuals are by definition equal to each other, because they have no master (nobody situated above them in status, telling them what to do).

According to Hegel, in the beginning only one individual was free—the supreme ruler of a state. Only he could take independent decisions, having no master above him. But he had no equals, being the only free individual around. Later, in classical Greece, a group of people became free—the citizens, as described by Aristotle. They were equal to each other, because none had a master. Later still, in Western Europe after the French Revolution, everyone became free—and, therefore, equal.

Hegel was writing under the impact of the French Revolution, whose main slogan was “Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood”, which linked freedom and equality in solidarity. But more than a century before Hegel, the British philosopher Thomas Hobbes had already written that all men are equal, have no masters and are in possession of all possible rights, which they

voluntarily limit when, as equals, they get together to construct a state via a social contract.

The term *equality*, writes the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “signifies correspondence between a group of different objects, persons, processes or circumstances that have the same qualities in at least one respect, but not all respects, i.e. regarding one specific feature, with differences in other features. ‘Equality’ needs to thus be distinguished from ‘identity’—this concept signifying that one and the same object corresponds to itself in all its features: an object that can be referred to through various individual terms, proper names, or descriptions. For the same reason, it needs to be distinguished from ‘similarity’—the concept of merely approximate correspondence ... Thus, to say e.g. that men are equal is not to say that they are identical. Equality implies similarity rather than ‘sameness.’”

The idea that political society (“state”) is based on free and equal individuals, rather than on extraordinary heroes who are masters over the rest, is the idea which most clearly differentiates modern (“Western”) democratic civilization from all other competing models of constructing and exercising power in society. As the philosopher Karl Popper put it (in a 1958 lecture):

“The monument of the Unknown Soldier to which western nations pay homage is a symbol of what the West believes in—a symbol of our faith in the ordinary unknown man. We do not ask whether he belonged to the mass or to the elite: he was a man, take him for all in all.”

Basing society on the equality between “ordinary unknown” persons has produced a startling side effect—unprecedented levels of trust. In non-equal societies, trust is found only within closely knit, blood-related groups—an extended family, a tribe, a clan. Anyone outside such a group is seen as a stranger and not to be trusted by “us”, because (being a stranger) he may have evil intentions towards “us”. In extreme cases, even the most simple form of a cash economy is impossible: nobody is willing to buy a loaf of bread from a shop, because that loaf may have been produced by some evil “stranger”, outside the clan, with the intention of poisoning “us”, the clan.

By contrast, in societies based on equality people trust strangers and routinely assume that nobody is selling bread with the intention of poisoning them. Within this trust flourishes the modern economy and the scientific progress that has revolutionized the lives of “ordinary unknown”

people. By contrast, unequal societies are incapable of either economic or technical progress. The more inequality, the less trust; the less trust—the less prosperity, as illustrated not long ago by Francis Fukuyama’s book *Trust: the social values and the creation of prosperity* (1996).

Not least, societies of equals tend to be more peaceful than societies of unequals, because the law does not defend the rights of states or kings, but of all individuals equally. This means that disputes are resolved peacefully, through the courts, rather than with violence. Egalitarian societies rarely go to war, because “ordinary unknown” individuals cannot see how war can improve their lives. Egalitarian societies are also democratic, which means that power changes hands peacefully, without violence on the streets.

Which brings us to the fundamental observation that, so far, we have treated “equality” above all as political equality—as a state of affairs in which individuals are equal as regards to access to (and defence from) state power. The principle, as we have seen, is simple: once everyone becomes “masterless”, then everyone is independent in terms of decisions and actions; and, therefore, free from obedience to someone else’s will. And free individuals are, by definition, equal, having no masters and obeying no superior will.

The question arises, therefore: can there be equality outside of the field of politics and the law, for example—social or economic equality? Getting the answer wrong creates great risks, not only because “equality” does not mean “being equal in all aspects”; but also because of Aristotle’s wise warning that it is not possible to have a state composed of people who are too similar to each other.

If we apply the principle “equal access” to areas other than politics, we see that we may legitimately speak of “social equality”. In politics, equality entails equal access to power and decision making. By this measure, in the social sphere we can speak of the equal right of access to society’s resources: water, energy, shelter, safety, employment, education, health. As in politics (or the law), if here we find in operation some practice or principle which limits access for some categories of people (while expanding access for others), then we should remove these practices or principles in the name of equality.

The usual example is “norms of allocation”, maintained by the state. For example, in communist societies the state allocates greater access to

goods and services to senior Party members, which is inadmissible. The same principle applies as regards discrimination (e.g. withholding equal access to employment or pay) on grounds of gender, ethnicity, race, nationality or creed.

Things are more complicated as regards economic equality. The philosophical basis of freedom and equality (i.e. of independent judgment and action amid equals) does not have anything to say about “outcomes” (i.e. whether, in terms of income or quality of life, everyone will be equal in the end). It is not easy to see how this would be possible, because free individuals take different decisions about their lives and therefore arrive at different outcomes. Some invest in stocks and go bankrupt; others invent computers and become rich. Indeed, the prospect of economic equality would destroy any modern economy, because it would kill incentive. Why make an extra effort, if in the end your life will be the same as that of an idle person’s?

The point at which economic inequality becomes inadmissible is when the economically powerful decide to use their wealth so as to distort “the rules of the game” in their favour (making them less equal to everyone else). This would produce a kind of “norm of allocation” and would, therefore, create inadmissible social (and thereupon political) inequality. For example, if the ten richest families in a country manage to lobby a law which cuts their taxes, while increasing the taxation on everyone else, that would be inadmissible, because it undermines equality by creating a class of people less equal than the others.

Something very much like this happened in the opening years of the 21st century, producing the financial crisis of 2008. Because of this, and with economic inequality rising to levels unseen for a century, the debate on inequality has become one of the major debates in the second decade of the 21st century.

Evgenii DAINOV

G

GOVERNANCE

The penalty that good men pay for not being interested in politics is to be governed by men worse than themselves.

Plato

When people fear the government, there is tyranny. When government fears the people, there is liberty.

Thomas Paine

Government is a term or concept that is often used as a synonym for the state. However, its common usage actually denotes reference to the executive branch of the state. In this regard, it is correct to claim that governance is the process of applying government in practice. It is done through the “blood vessels” of society—institutions. The term governance has a broader and different application when it refers to the implementation of policies that seek order and regularity. In the context of government understood as a provider of security and order, it could be seen both as a guarantee for individual rights and liberties and for the maintenance of the rule of law through various institutions.

Governance is often considered to belong to the following categories: good or bad; successful or failing to perform; effective (efficient) or ineffective (inefficient); transparent or behind-the-scenes (corrupt); benevolent (altruistic) or malevolent (egoistic). All these are but attitudes and evaluations of the complicated process of approaching the outcome from governance—namely, the result of the policies adopted or imposed. This is to say that governance is more or less the very process of the application of selected methods for/of government rather than an independent variable of

its own will or behaviour. The common confusion between government and governance stems from their usage as convenient synonyms in everyday life.

“Good governance” is built around the principles of representation and effectiveness. The term was coined by political science and public administration studies in reference to a set of institutional rules, coordination, and decision-making processes aimed at attaining effectiveness in defining collective goals, making priorities, and producing outcomes. Concerns with the quality of governance date back to the time of the birth of political science, when Plato and his pupil Aristotle attempted to define who the best governors were, which the best forms of political government were, and which working political principles were the best.

Aristotle came back with three antinomy-based pairs called constitutions, which addressed the existing forms of political government on the basis of two fundamental principles—access to power and its distribution. These constitutions are drawn along the principle of just and unjust and operate under the rule of numbers: the “right” ones are kingship, aristocracy and polity, while the unjust are tyranny, oligarchy and democracy (*Politics*, Book III).

Under this “theory of justice” principle, “just” is lawful and shows concern for the public good, while “unjust” stands for an egoistic and elite-based usage of politics. So, the city state could not be run as a business enterprise to maximize wealth (as the oligarchs intended) or as an association of free and equal individuals (as the democrats supposed). Therefore, the correct conception of justice is aristocratic, assigning political rights to those who fully contribute to the political community, meaning those freeborn people with virtue as well as property: literally, the rule of the *aristoi*, the best people.

Contemporary understanding of governance is dominated by the empirical approach based on a practical and pragmatic understanding of the phenomenon and was introduced mainly by scholars from the US. Inspired by the technological boom of the 1980s and armed with sophisticated methods for research, data collection and analyses, social scientists from around the world leaned extensively towards digitalization of various sociopolitical and economic processes. The quality of governance fell

victim to this surge for comparison and detailed inspection of quality of life, democracy, or economic development, among others. Social science scholars opted for generalizations and overarching explanations for the sake of building paradigms and discourses, thus ignoring the “human factor” in each and every activity. Patterns of functional and structural character were built, whose explanatory models failed to describe how individuals and their preferences influence governance and its institutions.

Governance could also be studied through the perspective of its modes. It can be vertical (networking) or horizontal (layer-based interests) in terms of directions and resource flow; linear or progressive in terms of setting up goals and the speed of their achievement; results orientated or values-based in terms of end-goals assessment. The most precious or important feature of governance is that it fosters predictability and installs security through reference to constant measures and principles and rule of law. This in turn promotes individual security or insecurity, or approval or dissatisfaction towards the individual or group or party in charge of the government. Overall, however, this creates an orderly environment and shapes expectations.

Governance, like the institutions which make it happen, depends on various factors. Some major factors are: the nature of the political regime in a given society; the cultural and historic background of a polity; economic development; access and distribution of resources among individuals—and their current sociopolitical stratification. It is opportunistic to claim that governance is good (or even superior) if it is democratic in principle, with free and open access to power and resources compared to non-democratic governance. At least, it would be misleading to make such a claim before asking the citizens or subjects of the polity in question about their preference and evaluation. Even then, it is a risky business declaring a mode or method of governance good or bad, as it is a result of both academic measurement and, above all, a matter of subjective evaluation and individual perception.

The government of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan on the one hand, and of Mikhail Gorbachev on the other, could exemplify governance in terms of good and bad respectively, despite dating back to the late 1980s. The former became examples of neoconservatism returning to Adam Smith’s

minimalistic state intervention in politics, while the latter set into motion the beginning of the end for the communist totalitarian state.

Under Reagan and Thatcher, the economy thrived, encouraged by privatization and more opportunity for private entrepreneurship and initiative. Individuals prospered due to lower taxes and greater chances of self-realization; the West won the Cold War and set the rules for the next global stage of evolution through various institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (to become later known as World Trade Organization), the European Union, and NATO. Under Gorbachev the Soviets ceased to exist both as a legal entity and a global power; the economy collapsed under the pressure of the market economy principle; citizens faced the economic and political pitfalls of a troubled transition towards what was promised to be democracy; and the Communist party was outlawed officially by the Russian Federation's Duma (parliament).

These phenomena are intrinsically connected as both Thatcher and Reagan actually organized, and put the final touch to, the dismantling of the Soviet "empire of evil". It was a consequence of their individual political genius—correctly "reading" the signs from the environment—as well as of the principles of leadership they shared in common. But above all, what marked their governance as good is that they managed to create an institutional framework which allowed them to maintain the pressure over the Soviet Union by easing the consequences of the economic crises from the mid-1980s through thorough reforms and modernization.

By structuring and allowing for an increase in the involvement of citizens in the governance process on a daily basis, though through the ideological perspective of the Cold War, both governments prevailed over the totalitarian one-party dominated state of the Soviet Union, which suppressed every attempt at reform until Gorbachev, who also did not intend *perestroika* to evolve into transition to democracy.

Overall, good governance can be characterized by the following principles:

1. It is accountable and responsive.
2. It is transparent.

3. It is in accord with the rule of law.
4. It is inclusive, non-discriminative and participatory.
5. It is effective and efficient.

(For further details, see M. Keating, *The Politics of Modern Europe*, 2nd ed., 1999; and P. A. Toninelli, M. Toninelli, eds., *The Rise and Fall of State-owned Enterprise in the Western World*, vol. 1, CUP, 2000.)

On the other hand, bad governance can be linked to some blatant state failures, especially in high-income countries—the fiscal crisis from the 70s in most Western capitalist economies, for example. But in other parts of the world, rather than state failures, there are failed states—in Central America and the Caribbean, Central and West Africa, the Middle East, and South East Asia. In contrast to the former, the latter are undersized and insufficiently operative states, described as “fragile, collapsed or failing states” by the World Bank (1992, 1995).

According to Acemoglu and Robinson’s definition (in their *Why Nations Fail*, 2012), there are two kinds of political institutions—“extractive”, where a small group of people exploit the rest of the population; and “inclusive”, which are oriented towards wide participation and open in the process of governing. So far, history has shown us that inclusive institutions exist only under the principles of modern liberal democracy.

Lyubomir STEFANOV

HEGEMONY

To tell the truth is revolutionary.

Antonio Gramsci

The goal of this entry in the book is twofold. The narrow goal is to present the word *hegemony* and a selection of different concepts in the social sciences it represents. The second, broader, goal is to explain how one word can and often does mean different things in different academic, scientific and historical contexts.

The case of *hegemony* is quite a fruitful one. The original Greek word means *leadership* or *rule*, with its etymology stemming from a root about *hunting* or *tracking down*. The contemporary English word *hegemony* can mean many things depending upon context: *power*, *rule*, *authority*, *leadership*, *dominance*, *control* among others.

The common ground between the different concepts denoted by the word *hegemony* is the notion that there exists some sort of power of one entity over another. The differences are explained below in the different concepts that the word denotes.

When used in the field of International Relations, *hegemony* is the ability of one political entity to impose its rules over other political entities by using the threat of its political or military might. Many examples of this exist in history. In ancient Greece, the city state of Sparta, with its significant land army, was a hegemon of the Peloponnesian League because it provided security against foreign threats and was also capable of invading nearby city states who refused to cooperate. Sparta's hegemony was challenged by Athens's increasing wealth and its naval supremacy, but was later restored after the Peloponnesian War. In a sense, Athens's economic

strength clashed with Sparta's political and military hegemony and resulted in a war which Athens lost.

Later, over approximately the first two hundred years AD, the Roman Empire established a hegemony over most of the European continent by its successful military campaigns and unchallenged economic supremacy. The Middle Ages failed to produce a hegemon in Europe, and later, in the early Modern period (starting roughly around 1450), political hegemonies became less dependent on land armies and more focused around control over money, trade and colonies. The first modern hegemonies, like Portugal and Holland for brief periods of time, and later Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries, started their global dominance by leading the colonial race and later becoming the first industrial countries, thus controlling a major share of the production and wealth of the world. This, in turn, allowed them to invest even more in their fleets and to better protect their naval supremacies.

In a reversal of the story of conflict between the land-based power of Sparta, and the naval and economic giant of Athens, Europe in the 19th century was dominated by the (maritime) British Isles, as long as the German Empire had no immediate intentions to exert hegemonic power over Europe. This later changed and resulted in the First and Second World Wars and in the Cold War. Thus, no hegemony existed for most of the 20th century.

After it became clear that the Soviet Union had lost the economic race with the Western World in the 1980s, a new type of hegemony was established. In the 1990s and the first years of the new millennium, the United States acted as a world hegemon because of both its economic supremacy and its ability to use military power all over the globe. A state exerting this new type of hegemony is called a *hyperpower*. The United States' hyperpower status was soon challenged by the rising economic importance of China, by Russia's re-emergence into relative military significance and by the general American failure to achieve economically and politically efficient results with its military campaigns across the globe. Being the first and only world hegemon turned out to be an unprofitable business.

A related concept, also denoted by the word *hegemony*, is used in sociology. Generally speaking, when a state achieves hegemonic status within some sort of geographical boundary, it also tends to create softer

instruments of power. Such instruments may include social, economic or educational organizations of all sorts. While these institutions may or may not achieve their explicit goals, the external results of their existence usually tend to increase the importance of the language, attitudes and concepts of the hegemonic power.

For example, British educational institutions in the colonies perpetuated the usage of the English language even after the colonial period ended. Before that, French was used as the main language of most of the European aristocratic elite, and later, when Germany was the predominant military power on the continent, most able military personnel across the continent were able to communicate freely in German.

This soft version of *hegemony* is sometimes called *cultural imperialism*. Currently, no world power possesses a global cultural empire, though the effects of previous hegemonies are still clearly visible. The British hegemony and the French colonial empire exerted huge influence over their colonies and even today English and French are spoken by large groups of these previously colonized societies. English, German and French are the most used official working languages of the European Union. English (because of the influences of both the British Empire and of the United States) is by far the most popular second language in the world, with anywhere between one and two billion speakers. The linguistic effects of the British and American hegemonies have become part of the daily life of many people around the world.

There is also a Marxist use of *hegemony*. Political and social theorist Antonio Gramsci introduced the concept of *cultural hegemony* in the 1920s, while in one of Mussolini's prisons. While his main writings, collected under the name of *Prison Notebooks*, are somewhat badly compiled, making it somewhat hard to detect a simple definition of the concept, it is clear that this kind of hegemony differs from the other kinds in two important aspects.

First, *cultural hegemony* is not imposed by a political entity, but by a social class. In Marxist theory, the hegemonic class is the bourgeoisie, which has managed to impose its values and institutions (in the wide sense of the word) over the other classes. This has happened both at international and

national level. The values of the industrialized world have been shaped by the historic hegemony of the money-making class.

Second, this process has been largely unintentional and is not forced by coercion or intimidation but through prestige and subtle manipulation. Any threat of using force remains implicit and thus no resistance against such hegemony can easily be organised.

Gramsci used his concept to explain why the working class failed to rebel in order to change the social rules and norms about how the distribution of goods and property was decided. The working class had simply silently agreed with the norms established by the money-making class. *Cultural hegemony* exists when one social group has implicitly agreed to play the game by the rules invented by another social group, and these rules are clearly beneficial to the group which has created them. In order to dethrone a hegemonic class, another class can and should first define the world in its own terms—thus creating a *counter-hegemony*. Only then can social conflict be understood and resolved.

While history has proved Marxist economic and social theory to be largely wrong, an important aspect of Gramsci's understanding of cultural hegemony seems relevant today. In order to change society, contemporary thinkers, politicians and revolutionaries need to start by capturing the "moral high ground". Revolutions succeed or fail depending upon whether its main actors are able to establish a counter-hegemony and then impose it over larger portions of society.

A good example of this is the largely failed Arab Spring of 2011. While protesters and revolutionaries during the Arab Spring had a very clear idea what they were fighting against—authoritarianism, corruption, and lack of human rights and freedoms—no clear vision existed about how their societies should look after the authoritarian governments had been dethroned. This attempt at hegemony remained incomplete, producing lack of agreement and, in the end, conflict and war. Some countries, like Libya and Syria, plunged into complicated civil wars, while others, like Egypt, entered into a complex process of political normalization without sharing a common understanding about the final destination of this process.

Let us return to the broad goal of this entry. In the social sciences words can mean many different things. *Hegemony* relates to two different concepts in the field of political science (which includes the study of international relations) and also to another concept, somewhat related to the one in IR, in sociology. The three concepts have some things in common, but are also different. For example, the idea of *cultural hegemony* focuses on the subtlety of the process, while *hegemony* in IR is by definition clear and obvious. The scholar of the social sciences needs to be aware of the exact concepts that are being referred to by the use of words; and to put most of her efforts into understanding and clearly differentiating the different notions, concepts and ideas in the language of her field.

Peter STURM

HIERARCHY

Hierarchies are celestial. In hell all are equal.

Nicolás Gómez Dávila

The term *hierarchy* comes from the Greek *hierarchia*, which means “rule of the highest priest” and describes a structure organized vertically, where the lower elements are subordinated to the higher ones. Since, in almost every sphere, both in nature and in society, “the organization of things” is arranged in some hierarchical order, the term has been widely applied in all aspects of human knowledge—in all natural as well as social fields of science.

According to anthropologists, in the traditional way of thinking hierarchical structure equals order and the cosmos, in opposition to everything which is not ordered, not structured, and symbolizes universal chaos. Chaos is dark, unknown and frightening; and, therefore, we observe a natural drive towards structuring society in a hierarchical order. It might be socially unfair most of the time and may lead to dramatic discrimination, but since it ensures some kind of stability, it is usually preferred, even sometimes at the cost of rights and freedoms.

Over the ages, social structures have been divided, in different ways, into various strata which assume the form of social hierarchy. Although no society without hierarchical order exists, there have been many and various types of this stratification. Factors determining it might be economic status, educational status, origin, age or professional achievements, to name but a few. Here are just three examples:

In ancient Greece, there were distinct classes of social hierarchy: the upper class, with obligatory inherited status and citizenship; the middle class (Metiks) consisting of citizens not born in the *polis*, but having settled down in order to earn their living—mainly manufacturers and traders; the

lower class composed of freed slaves with very few rights, and almost no privileges and no property; and the slaves—people who have no rights at all. This class was also divided into substrata: slaves with no rights, education or private property, but also slaves higher in rank, who were educated, have some property and even possess other slaves.

In India, the hierarchy of the social structure is organized in quite a different way. There are four castes: *Brahmins*, the superior group of highly spiritual people, highly respected for their deep knowledge of the Holy books of India, the Vedas; *Kshatriyas*, who usually belong to the aristocratic families and are warrior class; *Vaisyas*, ordinary people, most of them occupied in trading or agriculture; and *Shudras*, the lowest caste of Indian society, working as servants to the other castes, bereft of rights and considered dirty both in the literal and symbolic sense.

The social hierarchy of ancient China looked like this: the *King* and his family were placed on the topmost level of the ancient Chinese social pyramid, the most respected possessing the largest amount of land and ruling the people in the entire kingdom; *Shi* were regarded as the low-level aristocratic lineage in the social structure, having certain privileges such as riding in chariots and commanding in battle; *Nong* comprised peasant farmers, higher in rank than craftsmen and traders; *Gong* was composed of craftsmen and artisans; and *Shang* was the lowest class in the social hierarchy.

Since in the mere idea of a vertical social structure there is some sense of social injustice, there have been numerous attempts in human history to rearrange this structure. These attempts have led to social revolutions with the idea of either rearranging society in such a way that the “last become first” or creating a utopian social order based on an equal hierarchical status of all members of society. An example of the latter is the French Revolution, whose slogan is “Liberty, brotherhood, equality!”.

Communist ideology, for example, is based on the ideal that all people are equal in all respects, but its practical application created a very strict hierarchy everywhere, with the Communist elite on top and, at the bottom, large masses of people deprived of basic rights, such as the right to travel or to speak freely.

Nevertheless, nowadays the first words in many national constitutions proclaim the idea that every human being is born free and has equal rights; the same is to be found in all international documents on universal human rights, starting with the UN Declaration of 1948. The thinking behind these documents is that human beings are equal in one fundamental aspect—they all have dignity in equal measure. Therefore, all rights and freedoms arising out of their right to protect their dignity are equal for all.

Equality in rights, however, does not entail equality in everything else. Some people will take wise decisions about their careers, others less so. Some people will invent a new way of doing things and become prosperous because of this; others will not. In terms of achievement and quality of life, inequality remains; and so does social hierarchy.

We can look at the hierarchical division of society through three basic principles.

The first principle of hierarchy classification is *economic status*. In most societies, the upper class is at the same time the wealthiest. We see such an example in the hierarchical structure of ancient Greece. But, if left without counterweights, this is also the most direct way to establishing social injustice and entrenched discrimination. For example, one of the first signs of social decay of a given society is when a given ethnic or religious group constitutes itself as a social stratum. The danger here is that, under normal circumstances, people could rise up through a hierarchy through their own efforts. If, however, the upper reaches are blocked by people belonging to a specific ethnic or religious group who welcome no “outsiders”, then upward mobility becomes impossible and violent resentment is usually the result.

The second principle of hierarchy classification is *power*—the ability to exercise influence over other people. The hierarchical order of ancient China is such an example, and this is also typical of every classic model of Monarchy. In the liberal democracies of today, power is also hierarchically structured. For example, the prime minister tells ministers what to do, they issue instructions to deputy ministers and so forth. But this hierarchy exists temporarily—until the next elections—and is, while in existence, under the control of other powers (legislative and judicial), as well as the media and civil society.

The third principle is *prestige*. This is all about the different degrees of recognition due and received. Whereas the first two principles are somehow stable and objective, the idea of “prestige” can be totally different in the perception of different societies. Here is an example, taken from the sphere of intercultural negotiations. When a German delegation sits at the negotiating table, it is the highest in professional rank who opens the discussion, who finalizes the process of negotiation and, most importantly, takes the decisions. When a Japanese delegation initiates dialogue, it is the eldest person who opens the debate; his are the decisions that are most respected, although he might not formally occupy a top position in the business hierarchy.

A significant feature of modern social hierarchy is social mobility—the opportunity of people of a particular class moving to another class. This mobility is generally exhibited in two forms. One can move up in social status and one can move down. This transition depends upon various factors such as achievement levels, willpower and so forth. This is thought to be the best model for any society because, after all, we are all human beings; and class matters least in forming relationships between people.

Veronika AZAROVA

HUMAN RIGHTS

Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights; but not to equal things.

Edmund Burke

Human rights are universal. They belong to every person in her capacity as a person, irrespective of gender, age, culture, ethnicity, religion or nationality. This is because rights arise out of human dignity, which we all possess in equal measure.

In a handbook on human rights, published by the United Nations, the following useful point is made:

“...a right is a freedom of some kind. It is something to which you are entitled by virtue of being human. Human rights are based on the principle of respect for the individual. Their fundamental assumption is that each person is a moral and rational being who deserves to be treated with dignity. They are called human rights because they are universal. Whereas nations or specialized groups enjoy specific rights that apply only to them, human rights are the rights to which everyone is entitled—no matter who they are or where they live—simply because they are alive.”

In retrospect, it is not difficult to see how we got to this point. In antiquity and in the Middle Ages, people were seen to have different rights according to their different “stations” in society. Slaves had no rights, being not fully human but, rather, “tools, capable of speech”. Feudal peasants

(serfs) had fewer rights than did their lords. In turn, the lords had fewer rights than the King, until the English King John signed the Magna Carta in 1215, establishing the equality of all lords (and of the King as the highest Lord) before the law. Women were seen as inferior to all men and had no rights in this scheme of things.

The higher up the social ladder you were, the more respect you were due from everyone else; and the more rights you were entitled to.

With the coming of modernity, all forms of slavery and serfdom gradually disappeared. More and more men reached the status of “free person” (i.e. of one who obeys no master) previously preserved for the aristocracy. By the 18th century it became clear that, ultimately, everyone would end up with the same “station” (status) in life: free of obedience to masters, independent in decisions, equally entitled to the protection of the law and access to resources.

Equally free, all human beings were entitled in equal measure to be respected; and to defend and uphold their dignity. Out of this equality arose the idea that everyone had a set of equal rights, due to them in their capacity of human beings, none of whom was master to anyone else.

In the 17th century, the philosopher John Locke first wrote of “natural rights”, which everyone possessed even before people got together to create states to enforce laws. These rights, according to Locke, included “life, liberty and estate (property)”, and also the “right to rebellion” against bad governments.

During the 18th century, universal human rights were encoded in various revolutionary documents, such as the United States’ Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. The Declaration of Independence remains the most famous, being the clearest:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they were endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”.

The German philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote on the absolute dignity of every person as “an end in itself”; thus, no human being could be seen as a tool for some other human being’s needs. Later on, another German philosopher, Hegel, reaffirmed that all human beings have dignity and also

have the right for that dignity to be respected by everyone else, including the state. Indeed, Hegel suggested that modern people's behaviour is above all motivated by the desire to get respect and recognition.

In the 20th century, various political philosophies and regimes arose which attempted to return things back to the times when people were not equal and therefore did not have equal rights. According to the doctrine of the Russian Communists, after the success of their revolution whole sections of the population lost their rights, including priests, former entrepreneurs, military officers and so forth. According to the doctrine of the German Nazis, whole "races" were inferior and therefore had no rights, not even the right to live, such as Jews, Gypsies, Slavs, black people and so forth.

These approaches led to the Second World War and, understandably, after its end, extra effort was made to ensure the continuation of universal human rights. The United Nations organization was established and in 1948 it published the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All UN member states are bound to obey and implement this document.

It starts with a forceful affirmation which re-establishes the link between equality, dignity and rights:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights".

The UN then lists the following fundamental human rights:

- the right to life, liberty and security;
- the right not to be enslaved or kept in servitude;
- the right not to be subjected to torture or cruelty;
- the right of access to the law;
- the right not to be discriminated against;
- the right not to be arbitrarily arrested or detained;
- the right to fair and public trial;
- the right not to be subjected to attacks on one's honour or reputation, nor to have correspondence read without permission;
- the right to freedom of movement, including across state borders;
- the right to nationality;
- the right to marry;

- the right to own property and not to be deprived of it;
- the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change one's religion or belief;
- the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference;
- the right to freedom of peaceful assembly;
- the right to take part in the government of one's country, directly or through freely chosen representatives;
- the right to equal access to public service in one's country;
- the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment;
- the right to form and to join trade unions;
- the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay;
- the right to education.

It is to be noted that the Declaration includes neither the right to the pursuit of happiness (as included in the Declaration of Independence), nor the “right to rebellion”, upheld by John Locke as a natural right.

Several generations later, in 2000, the European Union published a Charter of Fundamental Rights, the first sentence of which again reaffirms equality in dignity as the source of all rights:

“Human dignity is inviolable, it must be respected and protected”.

This duty to respect and protect dignity is encoded in the list of human rights; the implementation of these rights is the way dignity is respected and protected.

Since its beginning, the topic of human rights has caused great controversy. For example: what should be included in the list of human rights—of those rights which belong to us as humans? Is, for example, the right to apply to a University a human right? In recent decades, pressure groups and NGOs have been trying to expand the list of human rights into every sphere, such as the right to access to clean water and so forth. This has been called “rights inflation” and can be dangerous, because any inflation devalues the thing inflated—in this case, it devalues the value of human rights.

Because of this danger, the great moral philosopher John Rawls (1921–2002) has proposed that human rights be seen as a special class of “urgent rights”. Such rights cannot be very numerous, because they must deal only with the preservation of human dignity and the conditions for its existence.

A recent challenge to human rights has come from the Islamic world. Increasingly, Middle Eastern thinkers and governments have denounced the UN Declaration as not a universal but a partial document, based on a specific religious (Christian) philosophy and on the specific history of a specific part of the world (Europe). Under this argument, the rights listed by the UN can not be applicable to all human beings, because some—Muslims, for example—come from a different religious and historic background and may disagree with some of the rights listed.

Even more recently, authoritarian governments, such as Vladimir Putin’s in Russia and Viktor Orban’s in Hungary, have denounced human rights as an “American invention”, incompatible with the “national character” of Hungarians and Russians.

Such challenges are, in the final analysis, stupid and arrogant. No opponent of human rights—no Islamic scholar or government, no Russian or Hungarian—has actually pointed out which human rights, specifically, they do not recognize as applicable to them; nor have they produced an alternative list of universal rights.

The closest to an alternative has been the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam (1990), which starts thus:

“All men are equal in terms of basic human dignity and basic obligations and responsibilities, without any discrimination on the basis of race, colour, language, belief, sex, religion, political affiliation, social status or other considerations. True religion is the guarantee for enhancing such dignity along the path to human integrity.”

This, of course, is wholly unacceptable. Since the beginning of the 20th century, when women attained the same rights as men, all such documents have spoken of “human beings”, rather than “men”. To speak of “men” in 1990 is a very clear statement that women are unequal and have less dignity and fewer rights than men.

The mention of “true religion” is also dangerous. It implies that rights are only applicable to people of that religion; and that people of other religions are not included. This makes a nonsense of the whole idea of human rights as belonging to all human beings equally. Inequalities are further deepened, in the Cairo Declaration, as regards women. These are said to have their “own” rights (listed in the Declaration), but do not have the *same* rights as men. Of course, this approach recalls the philosophy of Apartheid (“separate development”), enforced against black people in South Africa through most of the 20th century. And it also makes a nonsense of the very idea that all human beings are equal in dignity and rights.

The document proceeds with further absurdities, such as forbidding Muslim officials to serve under non-Muslims (how this can play out in international organizations is anyone’s guess). Finally, freedom of speech—the basic right on which all other rights depend—is limited to “the right to advocate what is right, and propagate what is good, and warn against what is wrong and evil according to the norms of Islamic Shariah”. This sentence, apart from making a nonsense of the freedom of speech, also kills any form of freedom of religion as set out in the UN Declaration.

The topic of human rights may be problematic and debatable. But all attempts to provide “non-Western alternatives” are, in effect, reactionary and primitive attempts to take rights away from people. Such “alternatives” are propagated by dishonest, contemptible and dishonourable men (there seem to be no women involved), who seek to return human beings to the times when nobody was equal, everyone had a master, very few were free; and the strong ruled the weak by force and guile, rather than through law and debate.

Given this nature of all available “alternatives”, the formulation of universal human rights must be seen, by all human beings, as the greatest achievement in their history to date.

Evgenii DAINOV

I DENTITY

Any classification according to a singular identity polarizes people in a particular way, but if we take note of the fact that we have many different identities—related not just to religion but also to language, occupation and business, politics, class and poverty, and many others—we can see that the polarization of one can be resisted by a fuller picture. So knowledge and understanding are extremely important to fight against singular polarization.

Amartya Sen

The term “identity” has not fared well in political thought; it has had better fortunes in the fields of sociology and psychology. Nevertheless, most politics today tends to include at least a whiff of “identity”. When Europeans panic that Middle Eastern refugees will endanger “European values”—that obviously involves identity. When, conversely, Islamic fundamentalists talk of the need to eradicate the influence of the “Great Satan”—that is also to do with identity.

In fact, most political talk about “values”, which has, since the mid-1990s, taken over from subjects such as “class” or “culture”—that political talk is also, ultimately, about identity.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, identity is “The fact of being who or what a person or thing is”.

Of course, “Who am I?” is one of the most difficult questions in the known Universe. It is a supremely important question, not least because it is usually followed by another: “And what is it that I should be doing?”.

When the answer shifts in the direction of action, for example—“I should be preserving/changing/reforming/destroying the world I find in place”—that is when “identity” becomes an intensely political issue.

Establishing a link between descriptive judgments (“I am an atomic scientist”) and prescriptive judgments (“Therefore I should be constructing atomic bombs”) is a highly suspect philosophical procedure—and a highly risky political one. This kind of leap between description and prescription locks one into an “expressive” behaviour—the need to see every act in one’s life as an “expression” of “myself”, at the expense of “instrumental” behaviour aimed at achieving a particular goal.

This is what Margaret Thatcher had in mind when she complained in her memoirs that, today, everything seems to be about how one feels about things (i.e. expressive); whereas when she was active in politics, it used to be about “getting things done” (i.e. instrumental).

The problem of bringing “identity” into politics is well illustrated by the fashion of “identity politics” which swept through liberal democracies in the closing decades of the 20th century. The idea was that some groups were so oppressed that the idea of equality, inherent in liberal democracies, did not fully work. Such groups needed special recognition in order for equality and justice to be restored. In the USA, the more visible proponents of this idea included feminism, the Black Civil Rights movement and the American Indian movements. The intention was to make the larger society redefine the stereotypes and attitudes that it had towards the particular oppressed group.

Remedying injustice and restoring equality are fundamental to liberal democracy; but the approach of identity politics raised serious concerns. Once you start recognizing “collective rights”—that is, specific rights provided to some group just because it is that particular group—you run the risk of undermining the equality on which democracy depends. The risk is that the different rights provided for the different groups will quickly lead to a hierarchy of unequal groups—some group will always have more rights than some other group.

It is precisely to get around this problem that political thinking has, since the 18th century, centred on the rights of individuals rather than of

groups or collectivities. Once you declare that all individual human beings have exactly the same rights because they are individual human beings, rather than collectivities, then you avoid the trap of group inequality. What that means, however, is that all rights are individual—there are no rights for groups.

Theorists of “identity politics” have tried to get around this problem by recourse to the concept of “authenticity”, of somehow being “true to oneself”. This is how the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* tries to explain this:

“While doctrines of equality press the notion that each human being is capable of deploying his or her practical reason or moral sense to live an authentic life qua individual, the politics of (identity) has appropriated the language of authenticity to describe ways of living that are true to the identities of marginalized social groups.”

No longer was recognition due to someone as an individual only. Recognition was also due to someone on the basis of her membership of an oppressed group: as a woman, as a black person, as a gay person.

This approach has rightly been criticized as “reductionist” (or “essentialist”) which means unjustifiably bringing the whole complexity of identity (or authenticity, or, indeed, rights) down to just one dimension. Critics have asked: if it is group identity that deserves recognition, then how is an Asian-American lesbian to be recognized? As part of the group of Asian-Americans, or of women, or of lesbians?

And why should she be made to make this choice in the first place? If asked, she may choose to identify herself as something completely different—as a concert pianist, for example.

There is a further criticism that identity politics is in conflict with universal human rights. If, the criticism goes, we are to provide special recognition and rights to groups rather than to individuals, what are we to do in a case in which a Muslim father living in (say) London, kills his daughter for reasons of ancestral “honour”? Does he have the right to express his inherited group identity—and therefore the legal system should do nothing? Or does his daughter have the universal (individual) human right to life—and therefore her father should be put in prison?

“Identity politics” was more or less dead by the beginning of the 21st century (it had died in the arena of philosophy sometime earlier). But the issues it tried to address have remained central to thinking about society and politics, not least because changes in the pattern of people’s lives continually raised identity questions.

For most of the 20th century, sociologists believed that they could predict an individual’s behaviour by placing her into a sociological category based on job description. By the 1980s this was no longer the case. Changing job and career patterns broke the link between identity and work. Gradually, a new understanding of identity broke through: “I am what I do when I do *not* work—I am the people I associate with, the music I like, the causes I embrace”.

It was only a matter of time before people would realise that they could put together their own identities from various bits and pieces that they liked. As this conclusion was being reached, it was challenged by Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” thesis, which argued exactly the opposite: that the dissolution of previous identities led people to seek simpler, not more complicated identities. And that the simple identity that was most attractive could be found among the great religions and their related civilizations.

By the opening years of the 21st century, these developments posed at least two major questions: What is personal identity? What is the identity of nations? Because the individual and the nation state had been, for half a millennium, the very basis of political thinking, these seemingly abstract questions were, in fact, situated at the very centre of political thought. Matters acquired extra urgency after September 2001, as the (Christian) West entered into the “war on terror” against (Muslim) extremists.

And so the issue of identity remains at the heart of political turmoil, producing a number of path-breaking books by some extremely intelligent thinkers. Most have built on the idea that identity is not about “being” but rather about a constant process of “becoming”.

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (b. 1931) came, chronologically, first, with his 1989 book *Sources of the Self*. He believes that to be human is to follow causes:

“To know who I am is knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand.”

Taylor also argues that we are members of so many different groups that a simple group identity is not only restricting, but virtually impossible:

“The recognition that we live on many levels has to be won against the presumptions of the unified self... And this means a reflexive turn, something which intensifies our sense of inwardness and depth, which we have seen building up through the whole modern period.”

To constantly construct, reconstruct and maintain your identity—that is not an easy task, however. In this game of identities, warns Taylor, a moment may come when you decide to just give up and redefine yourself as part of some group, in opposition to other groups. That way violence lies, as we have seen in the Middle East, where the battle of identities has pitted every religious group against every other; or in the Ukraine, where the Ukrainians’ attempt to forge a new, liberal democratic national identity was confronted by Russia’s efforts to stop this process.

Years before these kinds of crises erupted, Taylor warned that they would come:

“We’re living in an age of anxiety where everybody is made insecure in their own deep sense of meaning by the fact that there are all these competing elements. One of the ways you can calm down that anxiety about your own sense of meaning is by diabolizing the others, making it absolutely clear and undeniable that they are wrong...No one, just in virtue of having the right beliefs, is immune from being recruited to group violence: from the temptation to target another group which is made responsible for all our ills, from the illusion of our own purity which comes from our readiness to combat this evil force with all our might.”

Another thinker, Nobel Prize winner (economics) Amartya Sen (b. 1933) has devoted a major book to precisely the link between identity and violence (*Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, 2006).

Sen follows Taylor in seeing beyond “unitary identity”, arguing that every person’s identity is composed of dozens of facets linked to various group memberships and loyalties; and that different facets of this identity explain different acts done by the same individual at different times and in different circumstances. It is therefore impossible to say that “John does such-and-such things because he is a Christian and Ahmed does such-and-such things because he is a Muslim”. As Charles Taylor, Amartya Sen underlines the importance of resolute political leadership—such as that of Gandhi or Mandela—in rescuing societies from violence linked to religious identities and loyalties.

More specifically, Sen writes:

“In our normal lives, we see ourselves as members of a variety of groups—we belong to all of them. The same person can be, without any contradiction, a Norwegian citizen, of Asian origin, with Bangladeshi ancestry, a Muslim, a socialist, a woman, a vegetarian, a jazz musician, a doctor, a poet, a feminist, a heterosexual, a believer in gay and lesbian rights. Each of these identities can be of significance to the person, depending on the problem at hand and the context of choice, and the priorities between them could be influenced by her own values as well as by social pressures.”

Unlike Taylor, Amartya Sen focuses on the political (indeed, the geopolitical) field and criticizes the entire world community for abandoning the fundamental assumption that all people are equal—that the world is a collection of individuals:

“Despite our diverse diversities, the world is suddenly seen not as a collection of people, but as a federation of religions and civilizations. The insistence, if only implicitly, on a choiceless singularity of human identity not only diminishes us all, it also makes the world much more flammable.”

When this was written, the flames of the Ukrainian, Iraqi and Syrian crises were still years away; but the flammable material was already there

in the way people were redefining identity and turning their backs on 300 years of progress in human rights and justice.

A Bulgarian thinker, Bogdan Bogdanov (1940–2016), has also contributed to the identity debate, with his 2005 book *Separately and Together* (*Отделно и заедно*). Building on the basic idea that identity is not “being”, but “becoming”, Bogdanov describes the human individual as a “situation”, constantly negotiating and renegotiating her relationships with (and memberships in) other situations:

“Living, as well as thinking, are expressed in ongoing situations, in which phases of distancing from are intertwined with phases of identification with something else...a sequencing of phases of linkage and dissociation, of moments, in which the person is specifically this person, and other moments, in which she is someone else.”

Bogdanov argues that this process can happen in two ways: managed (by the person) or unmanaged. He argues for a managed process in which the choices we consciously make shape the world as a unity of “becoming”, rather than leading to its disintegration. From this perspective, Bogdanov revives a tenet of identity politics: that we are in a constant process of negotiating and renegotiating our identities with everyone around us. Unlike identity politics, however, which centre on groups and their confrontational negotiations with other groups, Bogdanov places at the centre of the process the individual. It is the individual, constantly reshaping her own complex identity, who is in constant negotiations with the others—not the group. In this way, Bogdanov returns the debate to where it should be—to the territory of the individual and of her universal rights, rather than the group and its claims to special recognitions.

The answer to the question “Who am I?” cannot be: “I am this one thing”. And it should not be, because such an answer leads to the need to express your identity in opposition to everything which is not your “one thing”—and, ultimately, to violence and disintegration. The answer, in order not to destroy the world, but to preserve and improve it, must be: “I am many and different things as I walk through many and different situations”.

Which brings us, as Bogdanov correctly points out, all the way back to the beginning of civilized politics—to Aristotle’s belief that “mixed” systems

of government were best for the political community of people. Following this, we can believe that “mixed systems of identity”, rather than clear-cut identifications, are best for our troubled times.

The great contemporary thinkers on identity warned of the dangers of group identities before these dangers started producing civil wars. These thinkers also outlined a solution to the situations that spawn violence based on identity: the need for great leaders to become involved; and the need to refocus on the individual, in all her complexity, as the basis of a world that is mixed, varied, jumbled, complicated—yet peaceful and sustainable.

Evgenii DAINOV

I DEOLOGY

Ideology has shaped the very sofa on which I sit.

Mason Cooley

The shortest dictionary definition of *ideology* has to be “visionary theorizing”. Given, however, that “theory” is usually taken to mean something like “constructing rational models of an observed phenomenon”—how can this exercise be, at the same time, visionary?

Therein, of course, is the rub. Ideology is, on the one hand, a theoretical ordering of observed reality; but it is, on the other, an active (indeed—activist) ordering. It tells us what the world is like; but it also takes sides, by telling us what is wrong with the world and how to fix it. Such an explanation is “visionary” by virtue of the simple fact that it is situated in the future—the envisaged time when the wrongs of the world will be put right.

But ideology is not simply fiction or wishful thinking. It must be rooted in observable reality and this is hinted at by the suffix *-logy* at the end, derived from the Greek *logos*, meaning (among other things) “reason”.

This active, future-oriented nature of the concept is behind the classic dictionary definition of ideology as “a set of beliefs, especially the political beliefs on which people, parties, or countries base their actions”. *Political* means “things relating to the well-being of the *polis*” (i.e. the political community); and so an expanded definition of ideology would read something like: “a set of explanations which outline a better future for people organized as a political community”.

Michael Freeden, the noted student of ideology, reminds us: “We produce, disseminate, and consume ideologies all our lives, whether we are aware of it or not.” There is a reason for this: “Ideologies...map the political and social worlds for us. We simply cannot do without them because we cannot act without making sense of the worlds we inhabit.”

The term “ideology” was coined by a French Enlightenment aristocrat called Antoine Louis Claude Destutt, Comte de Tracy (1754–1836). He advocated “ideology” as a science, which could not only explain the world, but also point to its shortcomings and ways to remedy them. In other words, it could change the world.

Destutt’s investigation of ideology led him to conclude that all political doctrine should be judged by reason and reason alone; that a republican form of government was preferable to a monarchy; and that the state should not interfere in the economy. These conclusions got him in trouble with Napoleon, who as Emperor could not afford to agree with any of them. So the Emperor entered the philosophical battlefield and, rather successfully, managed to turn “ideology” into a term of abuse.

Karl Marx (1818–1883) followed Napoleon by describing Destutt as a “fish-blooded bourgeois doctrinaire”, but his irritation with ideology stemmed from entirely different grounds. Together with his partner Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), Marx was convinced that almost everything people knew about the world was false—an “ideology” imposed on them by a ruling class that was interested, not in objective knowledge, but in keeping the workers, exploited by that class, from asking uncomfortable questions.

“The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas,” wrote Marx and Engels. “The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production.”

The outcome, for the working people, was that they looked at the world through a “false consciousness”. And it fell to people like Marx and Engels (who called themselves “Communists”) to help the working people see through the illusions of ideology and recognize that their interest lies in overthrowing the ruling class, abolishing private property and constructing a society where nobody rules anybody else and everything is everybody’s.

Through the second half of the 19th century, “ideology” continued to labour under the label “distorted view of reality”. Political thinkers and parties avoided using the word and, while in reality being heavily ideological, preferred to use other words to denote their packages of ideas, such as “programme”, “manifesto”, “platform” and even “philosophy”.

Things changed after the First World War. That war was such a catastrophe for all involved that people came to the conclusion that there was something very wrong with the way the world's politics were constructed. The search for an answer to questions, such as "What went wrong?" and "How to fix it?" produced a new age of ideology. The new political movements and parties shrugged off the old stigma of ideology as "false consciousness" and began claiming that an ideology (theirs, of course) could be a "correct" or even a "scientific" description of the world.

In Italy, Mussolini's *Fascists* claimed that what was wrong was the existence of political parties, who divided the nation and weakened its state. The Fascists produced an ideology which placed the State above everything else:

"The keystone of the Fascist doctrine is its conception of the State, of its essence, its functions, and its aims. For Fascism the State is absolute, individuals and groups relative," adding, for greater clarity: "All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state".

In that State, people are not represented via competing political parties but via "corporations" (professional guilds). Employers are represented as employers, workers—as workers, farmers—as farmers and so on. On top of all this stands the one Party that embodies the unity of the State.

In Soviet Russia, Stalin's *Communists* believed that what was wrong with the world was the existence of private property and the division of society into two classes: those who had private property; and those who did not (and were therefore forced to work for those who did). The ruling class was abolished, as was private property, along with the entire political edifice of "capitalist democracy" such as independent media, rule of law, human rights and political parties. This regime was called "dictatorship of the proletariat" and was described, by Stalin himself, as "the tightest and mightiest form of state authority that has ever existed in history."

Based on this ideology, the Communists evolved a state structure similar to that of the Fascists. There being no parties, people were to be represented through their workplace organizations, called "Soviets", who sent representatives to the "Grand Soviet" sitting in the capital city. On top of this construction was placed the one Party, which embodied the interests of the working people.

In Germany, Hitler's *Nazis* (National Socialists) believed that what was wrong with the world was that its "races" were not properly situated one towards the other. The Nazis believed that there were superior and inferior races; and that the superior ones were by right the rulers of the inferior. But under the rule of democracy, races were all jumbled up together, leading to chaos and degradation. The Germans, thought the Nazis, were a superior "Aryan" race; and were, therefore, rightfully obliged to dominate inferior races such as Jews and Slavs. But, under democracy, the German "race" had been penetrated by Jews and Slavs, who were degrading the Germans.

Hitler himself wrote:

"All the human culture, all the results of art, science and technology that we see before us today, are almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan. This very fact admits of the not unfounded inference that he alone was the founder of all higher humanity, therefore representing the prototype of all that we understand by the word 'man.'"

By definition, therefore, all non-Aryans were not "man", not truly human or, in the Nazis' own word—"untermenschen", subhuman.

What needed to be done, therefore, was to cleanse Germany of inferior races; and then assert Germany's right to rule over all countries populated by inferior races. In order to do this, the united German people needed to be cleansed from the divisions of democracy and competing political parties, as well as of independent media and rule of law (because both placed superior and inferior races on the same footing). On top of this, as with the Fascists and the Communists, stood the one Party, embodying the historical destiny of the Aryan German "race".

All of these "scientific" ideologies were extremely warlike and ultimately produced the Second World War, giving "ideology" a bad name again. Post-war political parties avoided using this term, returning to words such as "programmes", "platforms" and, increasingly, "policies". In 1960, a celebrated thinker, Daniel Bell (1919–2011) even published an influential collection of essays called *The End of Ideology*.

The non-Stalinist Left, however, focused closely on the term "ideology" in order to understand what it in fact may mean. Even before the Second World War, the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), languish-

ing in one of Mussolini's prisons, came up with a novel concept, overturning Marx's idea of "false consciousness" as well as the newer concepts of "scientific" ideology.

Gramsci came to the conclusion that it was not necessarily the case that the dominant ideas of a given time were those of the ruling class. It is true, argued Gramsci, that most of the time they were; but not always and not inevitably. Quite simply, the dominant ideas of an age represented a *hegemony* of someone's ideas. That "someone" could be the ruling class; but could also not be the ruling class. Therefore, if one was to struggle against the ruling class, one could first try to acquire "hegemony"—that is, to ensure that her ideas were seen as natural and commonsensical by society; and then attack the privileged groups and classes on the grounds of common sense.

Ultimately, today's PR industry is one of the outcomes of this "hegemonic" approach to ideology.

Unconnected to Gramsci's prison writings (which became known only at the end of the 1960s), a Leftist circle of thinkers known as the "Frankfurt School" also explored the problematic of ideological hegemony (without calling it that). These thinkers evolved, by the 1960s, an approach known as "Critical Theory", described by one of its authors, Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) as a theory that is critical to the extent that it seeks "human emancipation from slavery", acts as "a liberating influence", and works "to create a world which satisfies the needs and powers" of human beings.

Critical theory was in the business of explaining what is wrong with the world; identifying the actors to change it; and providing clear norms for criticism and a strategic framework for social transformation. The ultimate core of the theory, according to Horkheimer, was that it "has as its object human beings as producers of their own historical form of life". Or, as modern social anthropologists would have it—human beings as "authors" of their own lives, rather than as actors playing out someone else's script for their lives.

Critical theory, we see, was a classic piece of "ideology"—an activist explanation of the world. Together with Gramsci, however, the critical theorists were convinced that the production of ideology was not inevitably

the domain of the ruling class. Anybody could do it—anybody could join the battle of ideas for the future of their society.

And, in the 1960s, many people did. In the USA, Critical Theory informed much of the struggles for civil rights, as well as the various attempts by the hippie “movement” to reconstruct America along new lines. In Western Europe, the student rebellions in France and elsewhere were attacking the powers-that-be from the position of new ideas of personal liberation. In Czechoslovakia and Poland, whole nations confronted the dominant Communist ideology and demanded that they be the authors of their own lives rather than playing out scripts written in the Kremlin.

Suddenly, everyone was in the business of trying to attain “ideological hegemony”—something which set the stage for the gradual return of “ideology” to the world of politics and government.

In the Communist East of Europe, the official package of ideas, underpinned by the totalitarian dictatorships, had lost its hegemony by the beginning of the 1980s. In spite of all efforts on the part of the dictators, by that time it had become “common sense” that communism was a failure—and had no future. “Hegemony” had been attained by those who were critical of the communist system, although they had no access to the media and no right to form political parties or movements. By the time Communism was openly challenged, by the destruction of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989, there was nobody left who believed in the system enough to defend it.

This situation immediately led to another burst of “end-of-ideology” thinking. Weeks before the fall of the Wall, the American thinker Francis Fukuyama (b. 1952) attained instant fame when he published an essay titled “The End of History”. In it, he argued that all arguments as to the best way to organize human life—all ideology and, indeed, all “history”—ended with the demise of Communist ideology. Liberal democracy and the market economy would, from here on, be unchallenged. We are witnesses, wrote Fukuyama, to “the end point of mankind’s ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.”

To his credit, he did foresee that some form of militant Islam may, at some point in the future, rise to challenge this new hegemony; but he did not really believe it possible.

For a while, the world behaved as if, indeed, all ideological arguments were, once and for all, over. In politics, Left and Right agreed on more or less the same policies and packages of ideas, structured around the concepts dominant at the moment of the fall of the Wall—namely, concepts arising out of a Right-Conservative interpretation of the world, as best formulated by the then British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and American President Ronald Reagan.

Everyone joined in the celebration of the death of ideology, while unconsciously producing new ideologies. One example is the European Union's ambition for an "ever closer union", published in 2000. This was a typical ideological exercise, outlining what was wrong with the current situation (not enough coordination between the policies of member states) and providing a solution (ever closer union). Another example were the economic policies dominant from the end of the 1990s in Europe and the USA. These policies believed that what was wrong with the economy was too much state interference; and that what needed to be done was to withdraw the state from the economy ("deregulation").

"Ideology", nevertheless, continued to be a dirty word in politics, replaced increasingly by "pragmatism": the idea that there was nothing basically wrong in the world and that government and politics were, therefore, a matter of fixing various problems arising.

This way of thinking continued until the attacks against the World Trade Centre in New York on 11th September 2001 signalled that there was, indeed, an Islamist challenge to the then current hegemony. By 2008, when policies fuelled by the celebration of the free market produced the largest ever world financial crisis, few believed that ideology was truly dead. To compound matters, a few years later Russia declared itself in ideological opposition to liberal democracy and in 2013 invaded, by force of arms, a neighbouring country, Ukraine, which had declared its allegiance to liberal democracy. A handful of countries, run by dictators, followed Russia's lead and also declared themselves free of the "liberal democratic ideology".

By 2015, there was much that was obviously wrong with the world; and challenges to the hegemony of liberal democracy and market economy were multiplying around the globe. As people today search for answers to the usual questions in such situations—“What went wrong?”; “How to fix it?”—ideology is back (if it ever truly went away).

Evgenii DAINOV

I NDIVIDUAL

I acknowledge no man as my superior, except for his own worth, or as my inferior, except for his own demerit.

Theodore Roosevelt

The term comes from the Latin *individuum*, meaning “an indivisible particle (atom)”. Since the second half of the 17th century it has come to mean, in English, “a person”, as opposed to a group or collective.

Right from the moment of its birth (Socrates), Western philosophy has placed the individual at the heart of the process of thinking and acting. In Western thought, it is the individual that freely reflects upon the world and upon one’s own place in it and actions within it.

This is important: in other philosophical and theological traditions, it is not the individual that thinks and acts but rather the family, the group, the tribe, the ruler, the state, the Party or, indeed, God. In these traditions, the individual simply fulfils the roles ascribed by these collectivities or supreme beings. The individual, in such settings, is not the free, reflective and self-determining agent that she is in the Western philosophical context.

Politically, of course, the problematic of the individual links up with the problematic of freedom. The reason is simple. If it is the individual who thinks and acts, then it is the individual who makes the choices—who is free, because she does not simply follow choices made for her by other agencies.

That freedom is somehow linked to individuals has been obvious since classical Antiquity. A free individual was someone who had no master and was, therefore, self-determining. The essence of being a free person was not to be subjected to someone else’s will.

After the fall of Rome, it took some time for the supremacy of the individual to be transferred from philosophy to political philosophy—and

then to politics and government. That moment can be said to have come with the writings of Thomas Hobbes in the 17th century. Hobbes pointed out that all people (“men”) were equal and, therefore, had equal rights and liberties. Nobody, in other words, is qualified to be anybody else’s master or ruler; and nobody is under the obligation to obey masters or rulers.

A generation after Hobbes, John Locke was to reaffirm the link between individuals and freedom. People, he wrote, were naturally in “a *State of perfect Freedom* to order their Actions...as they think fit...without asking leave, or depending on the Will of any other Man”.

Parallel with this, in society a social revolution was taking place: the shift from a hierarchical system, under which “honour” was the prerogative of the few, to a system under which “dignity” was equally due to everyone, irrespective of their station in life. As the contemporary philosopher Charles Taylor has pointed out (in his influential essay *The Politics of Recognition*):

“It is obvious that this concept of dignity is the only one compatible with a democratic society, and that it was inevitable that the old concept of honor was superseded. But this has also meant that the forms of equal recognition have been essential to democratic culture. For instance, that everyone be called “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” or “Miss,” rather than some people being called “Lord” or “Lady” and others simply by their surnames—or, even more demeaning, by their first names—has been thought essential in some democratic societies.”

Ultimately, from the recognition that dignity was due to everyone in equal measure arose the whole edifice of human rights, which is currently accepted throughout the world.

In terms of politics, by the 19th century the centrality of the individual became the basis of Liberalism. “Human beings in society”, J. S. Mill wrote, “have no properties but those which are derived from, and which may be resolved into, the laws of the nature of individual men”.

From this follows an obvious conclusion. Both political authority and the law need to find a special justification for their existence, because both limit the liberty of individuals. But how can a free person become subjected to someone else’s will? In a word: she can not. The only will that she can legitimately be subjected to is her own. A free individual has to specifically agree on the limitations on her actions, thereby subjecting herself to her

own decision to be limited. Out of this philosophical position arose the various theories of the “social contract”.

To Liberal thinkers, rooted in the concept of the free individual, only a limited government, non-interfering in the affairs of individual citizens, could be justified. Indeed, the basic task of government was seen as safeguarding the freedom (including the property) of individual citizens. As modern philosopher John Rawls was to write in 1999: “Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive system of equal basic liberty compatible with a similar system for all”.

Back in the beginning of the 20th century, however, a generation after J. S. Mill, some Liberal thinkers rebelled against the idea that society was simply a “heap of individuals”. Their take on the problem was: OK, the individual is indeed the basis of politics and law, and everyone is responsible for the consequences of their actions and theirs alone; but society as such is a different thing, a complicated organism with a complex internal life, within which the individual is situated and by which she is defined.

John Dewey was one of those critics. He criticised the classic Liberal thinkers for assuming that the individual was “something already there”, prior to society; and for viewing social institutions simply as instruments for coordinating the interests of these pre-social individuals. Dewey attacked the very idea that individuals were atoms, capable of living outside of society, by arguing that social institutions were not “means for obtaining something for individuals. They are means for *creating* individuals”.

Dewey has recently re-emerged as an influential thinker because he also attacked the idea that the individual was, in the Roman sense, an “atom”, fixed, whole and indivisible. The individual, he argued, “is nothing fixed, given ready-made. It is something achieved, and achieved not in isolation but with the aid and support of conditions, cultural and physical:—including in “cultural”, economic, legal and political institutions as well as science and art”.

Ultimately, this line of thinking has resulted in today’s concepts of “identity politics”, “politics of recognition” and “politics of authenticity”. But in Dewey’s time (before the Second World War), the immediate result was a reassessment of the concept of freedom.

If the individual exists prior to social institutions, then freedom for the individual is secured by simply removing external obstacles, such as legal restrictions, to individual action. If, however, the individual is in some way “made” by these institutions, as Dewey argued, then freedom is not the mere absence of external constraint. This was, for him, too “negative” because, he argued, freedom was something more: the “positive power to be an individualized self”.

Out of this line of thinking arose that 20th-century school of thought, which divided liberty into “negative” and “positive” liberty.

In the meantime, Dewey was to go on and produce a complex theory of the individual, based on three fundamental points:

- a) Individuality is *reflective*. Freedom, from this point of view, consists in the ability (and the willingness) of the individual to reflect on her goals and to revise them as the result of this reflection. This, with individuals, is a constant process and explains the differences between them. As Dewey wrote, each person displays “a distinctive way of feeling the impacts of the world and of showing a preferential bias in response to these impacts”.
- b) Individuality is *social*. Being an individual involves active participation in the shaping of the social conditions that bear on individuality (later to be termed “positive freedom” by Isaiah Berlin). As Dewey wrote: liberty “is that...fulfilment of personal potentialities which takes place only in rich and manifold association with others: the power to be an individualized self making a distinctive contribution and enjoying in its own way the fruits of association”.
- c) Individuality is something that must be *exercised*. Dewey was convinced that the individual should actually exercise freedom in order to have it. Liberty is not *possessed*, it can only be *exercised*.

The Second World War amply illustrated what happens when societies neglect the freedom of the individual. The new world, constructed out of the ruins of the war by the Western Allies, specifically resurrected the main topics of classical liberal political theory. The turn began with the publication of Karl Popper’s *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945), which rejected all forms of collectivist and historicist thinking in politics. Writing in the early 1960s, James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock hammered home

the basic point: “This [organicist] approach or theory of the collectivity... is essentially opposed to the Western philosophical tradition in which the human individual is the primary philosophical entity”.

Entering into the field of economics via Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman, this return to classical individualism resulted in the “neoliberal” theories of market economics, taken on, paradoxically, by Conservative leaders such as British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and US President Ronald Reagan. Inevitably, after a few years of “neoliberal” policies (still implemented in the EU and the USA today), there came a challenge. The “communitarians” appeared on the scene.

These philosophers drew on Aristotle for their idea to revive the community as a focus of human living; and on Hegel for the concept of “recognition”, due to every human being as such, but only truly possible in a community, rather than in a collection of separated individuals. These thinkers, among them Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer, attacked the classic liberal assumption that the task of government was to leave individuals alone as far as possible. The communitarians argued that individuals were not, simply, “pure autonomous choosers” and nothing else. This, the communitarians argued, was impossible, because such “pure choosers” cannot really exist. If individuals were simply choosers, free of their attachments, values and loyalties, they would not be able to retain their identity.

The communitarians went on to formulate a theory of “the self” very reminiscent of the writings of Dewey two generations earlier. They focused on our social side (as opposed to the competitive side, which was the basis of “neoliberalism”). People, they argued, are not competing atoms, but, rather, social creatures, community-forming members of cultures and traditions. While remaining free as individuals, people tend to gather and live together, thereby incurring duties and loyalties to each other.

Ironically, while a decade earlier Conservatives had taken on “neoliberalism”, very soon the Liberal communitarians found themselves on classic Conservative philosophical ground. In the end, the communitarian view of politics held that politics should be concerned not only with securing the conditions for individuals to exercise autonomous choice but also with the need to sustain and promote the social attachments crucial to our sense of

well-being (“recognition”, “belonging”). The very same concept of politics was at the time argued by the world’s leading Conservative philosopher, Roger Scruton. Indeed, this view of politics can be seen in the writings of the world’s first modern Conservative thinker, Edmund Burke, back in the 18th century.

The great liberal-communitarian debate ended in the closing years of the 20th century. Both camps came to the conclusion that they had been overstating their case, while new challenges to individual freedom and democracy were stalking the world. The first such challenge was to emerge from East Asia.

Much of the 1990s was spent debating the concept of “Asian values”, a term devised by a cluster of Asian officials for the purpose of challenging Western-style civil and political freedoms. Asians, the claim went, reject the atomization inherent in “Western” individualism. They believe in other things, such as family and social harmony. As Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew put it, Asians have “little doubt that a society with communitarian values where the interests of society take precedence over that of the individual suits them better than the individualism of America”.

The political message was unmistakable: the West is doomed to crumble into a chaos of clashing individuals and should not even think of promoting human rights and democracy in Asia. In order to prove that their collectivist societies developed not worse, but better than Western individualist ones, East Asian leaders pointed to the record-breaking growth of their economies. This claim crumbled with the dramatic collapse of the “East Asian economic miracle” in 1997–8.

A decade later, Chinese officials were to make the same claims, gradually constructing very complicated non-individualist models of politics. For example, out of China came the concept of a tricameral legislature, appropriate to “Asian values”, with a meritocratic “House of Exemplary Persons” and a “House of Cultural Continuity” that would balance and lead a classic democratic legislature. Even such grand constructs, however, were to be undermined by the deep economic troubles which engulfed China from 2015 on.

Claims that not the individual (and her freedoms) but rather some collective entity forms the basis of society were also to come from places

like Russia (with President Putin's emphasis on the state) and Uzbekistan (with President Karimov's emphasis on the neighbourhood). Because of the brutal nature of these regimes, and given the manifest failures of their economies, such claims have not been taken seriously.

Today, thinking about individuality from the left (Zygmunt Bauman), the centre (Charles Taylor) and the right (Roger Scruton) continues to be centred on the problem of how to combine individual freedom with a revived sense of community, recognition and belonging. At the time of writing, a promising avenue seems to be Scruton's concept of society as an ongoing "conversation"—an idea first floated half a century earlier by Dewey. This "conversation", writes Scruton, is conducted on terms of "friendship" by free individuals, who treasure the fact that they belong to a community and are therefore happy to voluntarily place restrictions on their own appetites because of their loyalty to (and love for) others.

Or, as one writer in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* puts it: "So, the conclusion is, yes, community is valuable—at least as valuable as the need for freedom, if not more so."

Evgenii DAINOV

I NSTITUTION

In the infancy of societies, the chiefs of state shape its institutions; later the institutions shape the chiefs of state.

Charles de Montesquieu

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or exercise their revolutionary right to overthrow it.

Abraham Lincoln

Despite the incredible growth in institutional studies in recent decades, we lack a single definition of institution upon which students of politics can reach at least some nominal agreement. The range of ideas is as broad as the approaches in the field questioning why and how we should study institutions, what the impact of institutions is, and arguing about the extent to which institutions may be thought to be *endogenous* (independent or autonomous) or inextricably *exogenous* (woven into the very fabric of the society through traditions, culture, norms and preferences).

What is not in doubt is that institutions are of multiple functionality and various natures. For example, they may be thought to embed history and political ideas and to reflect, therefore, a set of traditions and practices, whether written or unwritten. Institutions thus can be interpreted as reflecting habits and norms, more likely to be evolved than to be created. But institutions may also be seen as an artefact of the human mind, an invented framework of rules that determine opportunities and incentives for behaviour.

“Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist both of informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights)”, argued Douglass North in 1991. It seems a plausible observation, especially given the fact that institutions might be seen as artificial human products which aim to create and maintain order and reduce uncertainty. In line with this suggestion, their variety and number have evolved over time to cover the expanding area of human activities without, however, changing the very nature and purpose of their own—a regular standing army, the police, courts, tax service; as well as social services, healthcare, education, elected government, trade unions or NGOs, for example.

It is enough to think about the first and most fundamental institution, the family, to grasp the two core principles that are embedded in every institution: security and order. These principles are even more easily comprehended through the idea of Abraham Maslow (1943) that human needs are ranked hierarchically; and that next to the very basic need for physiological survival of individuals stand the needs for security and order. It is on this basis that the next, higher-up levels of needs are built: belongingness (to some form of social structure and/or organization), which provides the basis for individual esteem (“recognition”) and results in self-actualization, the highest level of needs.

The word *institution* is rooted in the Latin *instituere*, “to set up, put in place; arrange; found, establish; appoint, designate; govern, administer; teach, instruct”.

For a narrowly practical definition of what an institution is, a legal definition is at hand: a set of rules. An early type of institution is customs—those rules in society that are based on reiteration, that reflect its culture and have a record of memory as long as the history of society. The question concerning the nature of the order created, imposed and maintained by the institutions is not about whether that order is good or not *per se*. They were created to be tools to preserve the whole, thus guaranteeing the stability and predictability of the environment in which humans operate.

However, institutions can also have quite the opposite effect—they can be intended to change the behaviour of people, to establish a new order

with which to promote or push for some kind of progress. It is, however, highly debatable whether introducing new types of institutions leads to a new social reality, or whether such institutions ultimately succumb to the existing patterns of social interactions and traditions. Such seem to have been the cases with post-revolutionary France (of the early 19th century), as well as post-war Afghanistan and Iraq (in the early 21st century). In all of these cases, the attempt to foster a new sociopolitical order through the imposition of new political principles and new institutional frameworks failed. This failure can be attributed to a lack of fit with the specific environment in which change was to be achieved.

The attempt to totally change France failed because it was too ambitious (including a change of religion and a change of calendar), too rapid and too harsh (the reign of terror in France). Two centuries later, in Afghanistan, the principles of the attempted change were never popularized enough so as to convince people that the new principles were better than the old—that is, that they would be better off under democracy than under traditional tribal law.

These examples demonstrate in practice that rules are not exactly neutral by nature, but are instead part of a competition between challengers to the status quo and holders of power.

Still, as Acemoglu and Robinson argue in *Why Nations Fail* (2012), some countries like “Egypt... had revolutions in the past that did not change things, because those who mounted the revolutions simply took over the reins from those they’d deposed and recreated a similar system. It is indeed difficult for ordinary citizens to acquire real political power and change the way their society works.”

There are, of course, exceptions to this. After several more revolutions, France did change into a society different from what it was. The Glorious Revolution in England (1688) did create a new political settlement and constitution; and the USA that emerged after its break with British rule in 1776 was a completely new country, in which the people constructed the institutions they wanted for a new way of life that they preferred.

Not least, a large number of ex-communist East European countries are today unrecognizably different from what they once were, due to the impact of the new institutions they constructed, after 1989, in order to

change their societies; in other such countries, the new institutions seem to have sunk into the established ways of doing things and change has not been so evident.

At this point we may add an economic aspect of institution modelling and change: that of securing the welfare of both the state and the individual. Reviewing Acemoglu and Robinson's book, Niall Ferguson concludes that it is "not the lay of the land or the faith of our forefathers that determine whether a country is rich or poor"; instead, it's man-made institutions that determine this.

Acemoglu and Robinson's thesis, arrived at on the basis of a comparative analysis of many "countries in transition" is clear. If, in the end, your country ends up as a success, that is because you have managed to construct *inclusive* institutions—institutions which function transparently and in the service of the common good, creating an environment of security, predictability and calm. If your country is not a success—if people are poor and frustrated—then that is due to your having constructed *extractive* institutions—institutions that do not deliver to society, but "extract" from it, having been placed in the service not of the public, but of crony interests.

The practical conclusion is simple: if your country is not a success (in Europe: Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia and others), then you should deconstruct your extractive institutions and reconstruct them as inclusive. There is no other way forward.

The vast number of existing institutions can be grouped in various broad categories named after the approaches used to describe and define their genesis, evolution, functional diversity and establishment.

Political institutions are central to students of politics, who try to understand whether such institutions were invented by power holders to preserve their political power, or by challengers of that political power.

Rational-choice institutionalists think of institutions as a system of rules and incentives, which helps us not to forget that institutions can be seen as rooted in traditional law as well as being by-products of political engineering. Institutions in this sense create and provide arenas for the safe resolution of conflict; and efforts to alter them stimulate conflict in turn. The rational choice approach enables us to assess the efficiency of institutions in terms of whether they are the product of agreements that

are “Pareto optimal”—when no party is made better off, but no one is made worse off in terms of resource distribution.

Historical institutionalists, for their part, see institutions as continuities, which are meant to preserve, thus being conservative by nature. This method of looking at institutions as inherited norms and culture also forms the basis of *sociological* institutionalism.

The analysis of political institutions must differentiate between the following levels:

- a) understanding institutions as organized arenas within which political actors interact;
- b) studying the processes that translate structures and rules into political impacts; and
- c) assessing institutions as processes that translate human behaviour into structures and rules (see J. G. March, J. P. Olsen, “Elaborating the “new institutionalism,”” *The Oxford handbook of political institutions*, vol. 5 (2006), 3–20).

What is worthwhile noting at this point is that the branch of political science responsible for explaining institutions, namely *Institutionalism*, offers many approaches to their study, but on the whole they are all efforts for understanding and improving political systems. Having been introduced to these, we may conclude that the three perspectives presented so far—political, rational choice, and historical (sociological)—are not exclusive. Most political systems can be, and actually are, interpreted as functioning through a mix of these principles.

Lyubomir STEFANOV

JUSTICE

Liberty and to everyone their due.

Vasil Levski

“Liberty and to everyone their due” was the way Bulgarian national revolutionary Vasil Levski once described the purpose of the struggle for national independence from the Ottoman Empire. This also happens to be the pithiest explanation of justice and its links to freedom and equality.

The word *justice* is derived from the Latin *iustitia*, meaning “righteousness, equity”. From the end of the 14th century, in England it has come to mean “right order, equity, the rewarding to everyone of that which is his due”.

On the face of it, the matter is easily settled: justice is, indeed, giving everyone their due. And yet “justice” could just turn out to be the most complicated word in political philosophy because in order to imagine justice, we have to ask two preliminary questions: Who is “everyone”? And—what is their “due”?

Liberty and justice

Levski was right to link liberty and justice in one programmatic sentence, because justice can only exist between equal and, therefore, free individuals, who owe obedience to no master.

A master (ruler, chief) can be kind, fair, or even respectful of his subjects (slaves, servants); but that depends on his personal character or mood and cannot be a structured, sustainable and predictable state of affairs. The great novelist, Count Leo Tolstoy, for example, cared deeply for his peasant serfs; and yet on occasion he would get so angry with them as to send them to be flogged. Then he would suffer from genuine remorse.

Justice, in order to be durable, must depend on more than one person's whims, no matter how kind that person is; it must be a system, and it must be independent of the moods or whims of the powerful.

Justice can only take place between equals; a true system of justice can only exist in the framework of a state. As is said in the *Federalist Papers* (Number 51):

“Justice is the end of government. It is the end of civil society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit.”

The modern conversation about justice dates back to Plato, who treats justice as the crucial, basic virtue of both individuals and societies. In several of his *Dialogues* he addresses the question: To whose advantage is justice? Would we not be better off if we could act unjustly—as long as we don't get caught?

Plato's answer is, while useful, not very original: justice, if practised by both individuals and the state as a whole, becomes the very foundation of people living together. With justice in place, there will be wisdom, moderation, courage and self-discipline—exactly the kind of environment in which people can go about their business undisturbed, and with the reasonable expectation that they will enjoy the fruits of their labours.

Aristotle's concept of justice revolves around the idea of moderation or lack of extremeness. Following Plato, Aristotle argues that justice in an individual is a virtue and, therefore, as all virtues, is a “mean”, situated between the vices of excess and deficit. At the level of society, however, Aristotle (unlike Plato) thought in terms of structures. This is how he came up with what would later be called “distributive justice”: a kind of proportionality, due to people as equals, in which reward is dependent on contribution. If John contributes twice as much as Paul, then John should receive twice as much as Paul.

This approach takes for granted the equality between the participants as the basis of (distributive) justice. In Aristotle's thinking, there also exists a kind of “justice of rectification” which re-establishes equality when it has been disturbed. For example, if John defrauds Paul by \$X, justice demands that John be deprived of this \$X, which should then be restored to Paul, recovering the original equality between the two parties.

Epicurus came up with a slightly different vision of justice, also based on the concept of equality and freedom. The good life, he thought, was tranquillity or freedom from disturbance. In order to attain this good life, we need to construct a society based on the avoidance of disturbance. From this comes the idea of justice based on a universal agreement to avoid disturbance (aggression, offense, deprivation). Ultimately, such a system of justice would boil down to an agreement, equally binding for all participants, to keep one's word and uphold social norms ensuring tranquility.

To everyone their due

For all Classical thinkers, justice was grounded in *reason*—in the capacity of free men (women would come into the picture much, much later), a capacity supplied in equal measure to all, to employ their reason and, after discussion, to agree on what is just for each one of them and for the commonwealth as a whole.

Then came a period of more than a thousand years, during which European thinkers thought of themselves as Christians rather than as carriers of Reason. Particularly when writing on morals and justice, such thinkers sought to base their theses on faith and feeling, rather than on analysis and rationality. At the end of the 18th century, two British thinkers, Francis Hutcheson and David Hume, tried to think of justice in terms of Christian love (Hutcheson) or Christian benevolence (Hume). Both argued that justice was not based on reason (i.e. on the calculation of outcomes and balances) but on a moral sentiment, which is deeper and predates reason.

The idea of equality as the basis of justice was not abandoned, because the “benevolence” which arose out of this moral sentiment would be impartial and due to all in equal measure. This construct was an obvious echo of the “love thy neighbour” divine command; and it is easy to see how it functions in small communities, where everyone is everyone's neighbor and affection is easily attained. What, however, happens when societies become so large that we do not know each other and are unable, therefore, to distribute benevolence and affection to everyone in equal measure? Why should we not steal from strangers, if what we have stolen can benefit our family and neighbours—the people we do know and have affection for?

Hume could not quite get around this question for one very simple reason—the difference in the strength of benevolence we show to our neighbours and to complete strangers re-establishes a kind of inequality between people. And justice can only take place between equals. Therefore, some other principle had to be found—a principle that could be applied across the whole of society, to every individual in equal measure, irrespective of whether they are our neighbours or not.

A widely accepted answer was provided by German philosopher Immanuel Kant. He achieved this by divorcing private from public justice—that is, by saying that a just act does not necessarily need to be made by a moral (“virtuous” in the sense of Plato and Aristotle) person to be a just act. Nor is a just act to be judged by its outcomes (results). A just act is a just act, irrespective of the motivation of the doer and of the outcome of the act itself.

Kant gets around the problem of motivation and of outcome by concentrating on the one thing that we all have in equal measure: the gift of reason. This gift helps us, as it were, go out of ourselves and see our actions critically from the outside; it also helps us envisage future developments and the probable consequences of our actions.

According to Kant, if we want to be moral persons (i.e. act justly), then we must follow a “categorical imperative” (i.e. a command which applies to us categorically because we are rational beings), which is:

“act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law”.

It is easy to see how this works—and why it is so universally accepted. If you intend to do something, you will justify it in your mind; you will find a principle that makes your intended act legitimate. Then what you should do is imagine that this justification works for everyone else. And then ask yourself the question: Would I like to live in a world in which everyone follows the principle I have just formulated for myself?

You could say: “I will kill a person with darker skin than mine, because this will promote the supremacy of my kind”. Then you should imagine what happens, if everyone starts doing it—for example, would you like the first person with a skin whiter than yours to kill you?

Or you could say: “John has much more money than I do; therefore, I would be right to steal some of it because it is not fair for him to have so much and for me so little”. But then you should ask yourself, would you like to live in a world in which someone else, who has less than you, feels it just to steal something from you?

In formulating the categorical imperative, Kant revived the fundamental equality between people by regrounding justice in the one thing that we all have as people: reason. Trying to ground justice in something else—faith, sentiment—does not work, simply because there are many, and very different, faiths and feelings. Reason is the only thing we all share in common.

But he went even further and managed to establish the foundation of the kind of humane (non-killing) democracy that we have today. He put into the “categorical imperative” a “humanity clause”, which sounds something like: *we should never act in such a way that we treat humanity, whether in ourselves or in others, as a means only, but always as an end in itself.*

This directly feeds into the current doctrine of universal human rights, which is based on the “dignity” of the individual and the recognition due to it.

But how can this possibly work? After all, we use multitudes of people as instruments to satisfy our needs: the bread we eat has been produced by a baker; the clothes we wear have been produced by a tailor; the chair I am sitting on while writing this has been produced by a carpenter.

What the “humanity clause” says, in this case, is that the baker, the tailor and the carpenter are not mere means for our ends; they are also something else—ends in themselves. We ride a horse and we ride a taxi; we use both as a means of transport to get from point A to point B. However, we owe much more respect and recognition to the taxi driver who, being part of humanity, is not only an instrument, but an end in herself. By being respectful and fair to the taxi driver, I expect the same to be applied to me when I teach. Yes, as a teacher I am an instrument for the ends of my students; but I am also more than a mere instrument and I expect the recognition due to being an end in myself.

Having re-established, in his views on justice, the fundamental equality between people, Kant went on to reaffirm the idea that, being equal, we are all free (have no duty to obey masters). Therefore, we do not obey

the state's laws because it is our master; we obey only those laws that we have participated in formulating as commands to ourselves. This approach ("autonomy of the individual") is, of course, part of the philosophical basis of modern democracy: the reason we obey laws is that we ourselves have made them, via our representatives in parliament.

And it was in the setting of a modern liberal democracy that the next phase in the thinking about justice came about—the work of John Rawls, which began in the early 1970s. Building on Kant, Rawls set out to construct a rational theory of justice that can be applied easily to society; and by using this theory, we can judge the level of justice of a government.

Rawls concentrates his analysis of justice on the institutions (which he calls "basic structures") of society. It is here, in the principles of institutions, that, Rawls believed, justice as an individual virtue met justice as a social virtue.

Starting with the equality (and, therefore, equal freedom) of people, Rawls formulated (in his 1971 masterpiece *A Theory of Justice* and later works) the foundations of "distributive justice"—justice in the sense of "to everyone their due". This, Rawls believed, rests on two fundamental principles of justice:

1. *Each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme for all; and in this scheme the equal political liberties, and only those liberties, are to be guaranteed their fair value.*
2. *Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: (a) They are to be attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and (b), they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society.*

As with Kant, all of this is reducible to one question. With Kant, the question is: "Would you like to live in a society where everyone behaves like you do?" With Rawls, the question is more in the nature of a statement: "You can declare a society just only if you are prepared to enter it as a member of the least advantaged group."

It would be a just society only if you could be certain that, entering it at the bottom, you would find enough opportunities to advance and better yourself. If life at the bottom, even for a short period, is unbearable; or if

there are no opportunities for advancement—then this society cannot be a just society.

Looking at the big picture—from Aristotle to Rawls—we may generalize that there are two basic levels of justice in society:

1. General justice. A state or government is just to people when it treats them fairly, honourably and equitably, does not privilege nor discriminate against any person or group, does not lie to people and does not take from them that which is due to them.
2. Proportionate justice. A society is just when every one of its members receives what is due to her because of her contribution or service to the common good; and nobody is truly left behind.

During the first decade and a half of the 21st century, we have seen the global retreat of justice due to the weakening of its foundations: equality, freedom, reason. Increasing numbers of people (and nations) in the world have begun to prefer inequality, to abandon freedom and to replace reason with passion and prejudice. The result has been the weakening of the world order, the disintegration of states and the descent of whole societies to the very depths of barbarity.

As justice retreats, violence, cruelty and war stage their return into the life of humanity.

Evgenii DAINOV

L EADERSHIP

My own definition of leadership is this: The capacity and the will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence.

General Montgomery

“Leadership” is undoubtedly one of the buzzwords of today. We hear it everywhere; but it is a curious fact that no great thinker has investigated the concept of leadership. The matter has been left in the hands of lesser investigators; and the result is mostly confusion.

On the one hand, there is a profusion of small-scale theories (including such tongue-twisters as “positive reinforcement theory” and “the ontological-phenomenological model”) while, on the other, little real agreement exists around basic ideas on the subject.

And yet, most people instinctively “know” when they are in the presence of a leader. “Leadership” must, therefore, be something fairly obvious.

Explaining leadership is much like teaching music: you cannot teach it unless you can do it. Few, if any, great leaders have taught classes in “leadership” (and most people writing on “leaders”, aren’t). Yet, given the current conceptual confusion, it is to the great, universally acknowledged leaders that we must turn in order to understand this fairly obvious thing that is leadership.

„Having power is like being a lady...if you have to tell people you are, you aren’t,” used to say British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), who once led the way to a revolution in economy, society and international relations, helping bring about the defeat of the world communist system.

In this quote, she is underlining the fact that you can't fool people into believing that you are a leader if you are not; just like you can't fool people into believing that you are a musician if you can't play a musical instrument. Leadership and musicianship are, both, immediately evident (or not) even to the most casual observer.

For many generations, the role of leaders in changing the world was self-evident. Great men, "heroes", did the great things in history. Then things changed. After millennia, during which historians would explain history through the role of leading individuals (kings, great warriors), from the mid-19th century we see a revolution in the way people see the "actors" (or "driving forces") of history. A new consensus was reached, claiming that not leading individuals, but rather "non-individual" ("impersonal") factors shaped history—factors variously called "classes" (by the Marxists), "nations" (by the German Romantics and later by the Italian fascists), or even completely depersonalised forces, such as "the laws of social development".

Then things changed again. In 2007, more than 160 years after the last book on the subject (*On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History*, published by Thomas Carlyle in 1841), Paul Johnson published his seminal *Heroes. From Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar to Churchill and de Gaulle*.

These days, most people would agree that "leadership" means, above all: *the process of influencing others to work towards a mutually desired vision*.

In order to be able to achieve this, argues Johnson, the leader must have a certain set of qualities.

At the very foundation of these qualities is clarity of vision: "the capacity to see the world clearly and to draw the right conclusions from what you see". Johnson is echoed here by ex-Secretary of State General Colin Powell: "Great leaders are almost always great simplifiers, who can cut through argument, debate, and doubt to offer a solution everybody can understand".

Based on this clarity, six "leadership characteristics" are needed for anyone to be recognized and be able to function as a leader.

"First, ideas and beliefs," writes Johnson. "The best kind of democratic leader has just a few—perhaps three or four—central principles to which he is passionately attached and will not sacrifice under any circumstances..."

Margaret Thatcher, whom *The Times* called “a woman of simple truths” on the day she died, agrees with this simplicity, saying: “I am in politics because of the conflict between good and evil, and I believe that in the end good will triumph.”

“Next”, writes Johnson, “comes willpower...A politician can have immense intelligence and all the other virtues, but if will is lacking he is nothing.” Willpower not only helps the leader change situations, but it also draws in followers and partners, willing to be included in the task at hand. Overcoming adversity and crises, of course, is not possible without willpower. Where there is no will, the chaos of events takes over, dragging people along as so much debris in a flood.

Of the great modern leaders, Winston Churchill had an abundance of willpower. This helped him, when standing alone against Europe’s dictators, to avoid the temptation to negotiate with any of them. Instead, he chose for England to fight alone and, in the end, achieved his declared aim: unconditional surrender of Germany, Italy and Japan. Margaret Thatcher, a great Churchill admirer, showed her iron will in 1982, when in the face of stunned world opinion she sent British armed forces all the way around the globe to liberate the Falkland Islands, occupied by the Argentine army.

Willpower also impresses potential adversaries. One of the knock-on effects of the British victory over Argentina was the loss of nerve on the part of the leadership of the Soviet Union, then the biggest adversary of the West. Seeing “little Britain” devastate the army of their ally, Argentina, the Soviet leaders lost the will to confront the Western Allies; and were swept from the stage of history less than a decade later.

A third virtue of leadership, according to Johnson, is “pertinacity”—persistent, stubborn determination to achieve the set goals. This is different from mere obstinacy, which has led to many defeats. Churchill’s “Never surrender” speech is a good example of pertinacity.

Fourth comes the ability to communicate. By definition, a leader must have followers. And they are best recruited through clear and mobilizing explanations of aims and causes. Not all great leaders are great explainers like Abraham Lincoln or Ronald Reagan; but they manage to get their message across—and recruit followers—by force of example. Margaret Thatcher, for example, was a bad communicator. But, writes Johnson, “The

Russians called her the Iron lady. You do not need to charm when you are manifestly made of iron. It is a form of communication in itself”.

The fifth leadership virtue listed by Paul Johnson is “magnanimity: greatness of soul”. A leader who has this will not only be followed; she will be loved. Churchill put the whole thing in a nutshell when he wrote, towards the end of the First World War: “In war, resolution. In defeat, defiance. In victory, magnanimity. In peace, good will.”

Of course, these virtues can only grow out of a basic quality of character, which we can call bravery. Leaders are brave in the sense that they are willing to risk their lives for the things they believe in.

The job of a leader is, simply, to lead. When advised to abandon her politics because of rising public disapproval, Margaret Thatcher had to explain that “lead” does not mean “follow”: “Don’t follow the crowd; let the crowd follow you”.

There are notorious differences between “a boss” and “a leader”. In the words of US General and then President Dwight Eisenhower: “You don’t lead by hitting people over the head—that’s assault, not leadership.” A boss, for example, would say: “Do this!”; whereas a leader would say: “Let’s do this!”. When something goes wrong, a typical boss would say: “That’s the fault of my staff!”; the leader would take the blame onto herself. Conversely, when success is achieved, a boss would take all the credit; the leader would claim that the achievement was not hers, but that of her team.

As Ronald Reagan pointed out while US President: “The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.” And, further: “There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don’t care who gets the credit.”

The leader refuses to accept the situation as she finds it, for the simple reason that she always sees a better version of that situation that can be achieved. Ronald Reagan again: “Status quo, you know, is Latin for ‘the mess we’re in.’” The leader does not accept “the mess we’re in” because, in the final analysis, Napoleon was right to say “A leader is a dealer in hope.”

Are leaders born or made? Can anybody become a leader? After decades of debates, we can say the following: some leaders are born; most are made. Everyone can be a leader, at least to a certain extent—if everyone takes the time and effort to cultivate the qualities which make a leader.

Harry Truman, the most “ordinary” US President, nailed it: “In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.”

The world is changing. This change will continue for generations; and there is no telling what the end result will be. We can no longer expect to lead our lives without exercising leadership. Whole professions disappear overnight; new ones are invented by leaders. No amount of “training” can prepare us for a future in which our profession suddenly becomes useless. We can handle this flux only if we can see ahead clearly, impose our will on confused situations and achieve results with the help of others—that is, only if we become leaders. As George Orwell once wrote: “When it comes to the pinch, human beings are heroic.”

And “to the pinch” we have come, in the second half of the second decade of the 21st century. Our societies are increasingly confused, passive and demotivated because our leaders do not provide the values, the vision, the will or the pertinacity needed to make sense of the “mess we’re in” and find the way forward. Courage and leadership are sorely needed if we are again to make sense of who we are and where we should be going.

Evgenii DAINOV

LIBERTY

Rightful liberty is unobstructed action according to our will within limits drawn around us by the equal rights of others.

Thomas Jefferson

Liberty is freedom in a political context. This difference goes back to the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. The subjugated Saxon-speaking locals spoke of “*freiheit*”, from which we have inherited the word “freedom”. The conquering Normans, the new ruling class, used the French “*liberté*”. We know this as “liberty”. The Saxons being the subjected people, their “freedom” has come to signify an everyday context (“Are you free for a drink tonight?”). Conversely, because the Normans were the ruling class, establishing and running the institutions of power, “liberty” has acquired the connotations of politics and institutions (“The right to liberty”).

Both “freedom” and “liberty” describe a situation in which the agent has no constraints on her will and desired actions. As wrote the philosopher David Hume in his *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748):

“By liberty, we can only mean a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will; that is, if we choose to remain at rest, we may; if we choose to move, we also may. Now this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one who is not a prisoner and in chains.”

I am free when I decide to move to the nearest pub for a drink and nobody prevents me from doing so. I have liberty when I come out to protest against the government and it does not put me behind bars.

As a legal term, “liberty” dates from the end of the Middle Ages, as the old feudal order began to unravel. “Liberties” given to a town or a University meant that that town or University was exempt from obedience and duties

to the local lord. In this sense, by its legal origins “liberty” was a privilege; and it took some centuries for it to be seen as a universal right.

Liberty is possible only in societies in which sovereignty rests with the ordinary people, organized as citizens. In alternative models (i.e. where sovereignty does not rest with the ordinary people), liberty does not properly exist, because it is replaced by the principles of obedience or submission.

In Muslim theory, for example, sovereignty rests with God. The role of the people is to submit to His will, as revealed in the holy texts. In absolutist monarchic theory, sovereignty rests with the Crown and the people’s role is to obey the monarch in their capacity of subjects. In some modern theories (e.g. today’s Russia), sovereignty rests with the state. It may or may not choose to grant some liberties to the people; and it can withdraw liberties when, in its judgment, its own interests require such a withdrawal.

As an organizing principle of society, liberty arises in societies where the ordinary people are seen as sovereign. It is only they, therefore, who can formulate and uphold the law. And they can only do this after free discussion as equals and following their arrival at an agreement. Because the people are sovereign, at any time they can change a law, or change the government, or both.

In other models, the law comes from some superior source—God, King or State. In Europe, however, during the 17th and 18th centuries, the thinkers of the Enlightenment came to the conclusion that no such superior source could exist. They argued that the law governed both heavenly and human affairs; and that it is discovered and formulated not by obedience to higher authority, but by the exercise of Reason and free debate between equals. Because these thinkers saw the individual (and not, for example, families, nations or cultures) as the carrier of reason, then it followed that both the law and the free discussion of it could focus only on the individual rather than on some group or collective.

Thereby arose the concept that individual liberty formed the basis of modern society. As we read in the Declaration of Independence (1776):

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

By the mid-19th century, the idea had firmly taken hold that the individual must be defended against tyrants. In 1859 John Stuart Mill posed a new question: are there dangers to liberty, other than tyrants, that have not been noticed? He came up with the answer that, in modern society, governments and society had the capacity to limit individual freedom—by, for example, banning minority opinions. He argued against this, pointing out that it may be that a minority opinion on some subject is the right opinion. If society banned minority opinions, it was losing the benefit of useful new ideas. Liberty is needed, concluded Mill, if society wants to develop—because out of free debate come the useful new ideas that drive development. Society could impose limits on individual freedom in one case only: if one individual's actions are harming another individual.

In the second half of the 20th century, Isaiah Berlin developed this line of reasoning (in his famous *Two Concepts of Liberty*, 1958) so as to come up with his famous separation of “negative liberty” (“freedom from”) and “positive liberty” (“freedom to”).

Negative liberty is (following Hobbes and Hume) the absence of constraints on the agent imposed by someone else. Positive liberty is more complicated. It involves the ability, not just the opportunity, to act. For example, the opportunity to make an informed choice exists in all democratic elections, but it is doubtful whether everyone who votes has the capacity (formed by education, among other things) to make a properly informed choice. The “capacity to self-rule”, as part of positive liberty, also involves the capacity to act so as to change the circumstances of the agent (e.g. to form a neighbourhood committee, a reform club or a political party).

Berlin was aware of the dangers of positive liberty: of the situation where liberty leaves the individual and expands into the wider arena of society as a specific influence of some individual over others. He warned that, in extreme circumstances, this course of action could lead to unfreedom, by subjecting the freedom of the individual to some “greater good”. In particular, he warned against Jean-Jacques Rousseau's idea that “true” social freedom involved the subjugation of individual will to the “general will” of the nation—an idea which was later taken on by totalitarian dictators such as Stalin, Mussolini and Hitler.

Having warned of the dangers of “positive liberty” taken to extremes, later in life Isaiah Berlin regretted that he had not done the same as regards negative liberty—for example, exposing the possibility of extreme exploitation under free market capitalism.

Berlin emphasizes in particular the link between individual liberty and the equality between individuals in their capacity as citizens. Free and equal individuals, he argues, make choices about their lives. These choices are different for different people and nobody should have the right to say which choices are “right” and which are “wrong”.

A pluralist and liberal society is therefore needed, both to provide the freedom for everyone to make their choices and to implement Mill’s “harm principle” (that I do not have the right to exercise my liberty in a way that harms you).

This sounds like a recipe for chaos, but it is a historical fact that societies based on this kind of thinking are less plagued by violence and conflict than are societies based on obedience and submission. A glance at the Muslim and the Russian world, as they are in the second decade of the 21st century, should be sufficient evidence of this.

This seeming paradox is explained by the fact that liberal-pluralist societies, where everyone is free and equal, have developed the habits, mechanisms and institutions which ensure that debates and conflicts are resolved before they reach a violent stage. This is due to the assumption that ordinary people argue about their choices—not about some “correct position” that is more important than ordinary people. In this way, debates remain discussions about alternatives, rather than clashes over the interpretation of the “correct position”; and it is just such clashes that lead to violence. It is not possible, in a liberal pluralist society, to start a civil war by saying: “You are a traitor to the correct position, as formulated by God/King /State/Great Leader!”

In the first decade of the 21st century, an increasing number of thinkers (e.g. A. Kalyvas, I. Katznelson, *Liberal Beginnings: Making a Republic For The Moderns*, Cambridge, 2008) return, critically, to the concept of positive freedom, trying to help it emerge from the shadow of the dictators. A consensus seems to be emerging that the real risks arise when one of the freedoms (“negative” or “positive”) achieves absolute dominance over the other; most reasonable mixes of the two seem to be risk-free.

Within this line of thinking, “positive freedom” is the very essence of “Republicanism”—of that political philosophy according to which the highest values of the political commonwealth are to do with serving the common good, the readiness to sacrifice one’s own good for the good of the many, respect for dignity, integrity, heroism on the battlefield in the defence of the Republic. From such values arises a society in which the economic sphere is in the service of the political commonwealth, where people seek distinction with their civil virtues (rather than with their riches) and where society controls individual appetites with a view to the common good.

“Negative liberty” is, in its turn, the basis of today’s model of liberal democracy. In this case, the basic values are to do with individual freedom, entrepreneurship in the economy and aspiration to personal riches. In this model, people seek distinction by way of economic success, and the task of the state is not to interfere with the economic activities of individuals, while keeping in place the legal regulations that protect people from harm.

When going too far in the direction of “positive freedom”, we end up with weak economies, “big” and interfering states and the use of war as a routine instrument in foreign relations. If we go too far in the direction of “negative freedom”, we end up with unchecked greed, the withdrawal of the state from serving the common good, the isolation of people from each other and their withdrawal from politics (i.e. from the common good), as well as the appearance of oligarchy—something revealed in the financial crisis of 2008.

Given these risks, the thinkers of the 21st century are looking for a mix of both republican and liberal traditions in which the risks of both kinds of liberty are minimized and their benefits maximized.

The interplay between equality and liberty has produced, over the 20th century, the kind of individual rights we now accept as universal human rights, that is, as belonging to all individuals, irrespective of their origin, culture or history. Such rights include movement, freedom of speech and association, the right to property and security and so forth (to which the American Declaration of Independence has added “the pursuit of happiness”).

The interplay between rule of law and liberty, in turn, has produced “constitutional liberalism”, that is, the kind of political structure within which individuals remain in equality and at liberty. It is “constitutional”,

because it has its basis in the rule of law (i.e. in the idea that the law exists separately from political power and that everyone, even the mightiest in the land, are equally subject to it). It is liberal, because it comes out of the tradition of individual liberty, which started in classical Greece and was later developed during the Enlightenment.

The mission of constitutional liberalism is to ensure the rights and liberties of the individual. To secure these rights, it enforces separation of powers, it constructs checks on the power of each branch of government, it guarantees equality under the law, impartial courts and tribunals and separation of church and state.

In recent decades, new threats to liberty have come to light. The most obvious are the “alternative civilizations”, conceptualized by radical religious fundamentalists and, more recently, by Russia’s claim to be a separate, non-Western “Eurasian civilization”, where universal human rights do not apply. Such concepts reject the claim that the individual is at the centre of things and substitute submission (to God or State) for rights and freedoms. The instant they do this, they begin sliding into violent conflict (see above).

A more sophisticated threat to liberty is the habit of authoritarian leaders to divorce “procedural democracy” (i.e. elections) from constitutional liberalism (i.e. the upholding of individuals’ liberty). In his book *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (2003), Fareed Zakaria has argued that we too often see as “democratic” countries which are not. The reason, as J. S. Mill pointed out a century and a half previously, is that democracy is not only about procedures for forming a government (voting). Democracy is also about something more than procedures: it is about the aims of government and the means it uses to reach them. According to Zakaria, we can call a country “democratic” only if its political system includes two fundamental elements: “participatory politics” (taking part in elections) and constitutional liberalism (defending individual liberty).

Allowing your citizens to vote does not necessarily make you a democrat. What makes you a democrat is constructing the state around the liberties and rights of ordinary people.

Evgenii DAINOV

MODERNITY

Modernity is the ability to be on time.

Pedro Almodovar

According to philosopher Roger Scruton, “The adjective ‘modern’ has two senses: first, as the description of a period in Western civilization, and second, as the description of a style or attitude”.

As a *period in time*, modernity is taken to signify a contrast between the modern (progressive) world order and its premodern (traditional) and supposedly postmodern (contemporary) versions. As an *attitude or style*, modernity encompasses various intellectual practices that arose in post-traditional Europe, which place individual human existence at the centre of history.

The two meanings are at one in their rejection of tradition, under which individual human beings were deemed to be parts of bigger entities that gave them meaning: tribes, religions, agricultural communities, states. In modernity, individuality, equality and liberty give meaning to the human experience.

The term itself has its origins in the Latin *modo*, meaning “just now”. In current usage, although it can be applied across the board, including science, the arts and fashion, modernity is best conceived as a political concept, because by placing the individual at the centre of the world, it has profoundly affected the distribution, behaviour and pattern of power. It is, however, a challenge to date its beginnings in history.

Some authors link the rise of modernity to key events, such as Gutenberg’s adoption of moveable type in the year 1436, marking the beginnings of the mass printed book; Martin Luther’s rebellion against Church authority in 1517; the beginning of the war between various Protestant and Catholic states, known as the Thirty Years’ War; the legitimization of Parliamentari-

anism by the Glorious Revolution and the British Bill of Rights of 1688–9; or the American and French Revolutions of 1776 and 1789.

Modernity, in this specifically political sense, is best seen as a general movement of transition, which starts with the liberation from the bonds and constraints of Medieval society. Then it passes through the Reformation, which, together with Renaissance, liberates minds from obedience to the clerical hierarchy and bodies from obedience to the local feudal master. Then comes the Enlightenment, which empowers ordinary people (at the expense of divinities and elites) through the idea that we can, by ourselves, understand everything by following our own reason. This is followed by the American and French revolutions, which construct free societies of equals in the place of the old societies of unfree unequals.

It is easy to see how modernity is linked to liberal democracy, given the emphasis on the autonomous individual with no masters above her. It is less easy to see the connection to 20th century totalitarianism, but it does exist.

Part and parcel of the idea of modernity is the emancipation not only of the individual but also of the nation. The individual, emancipated from obedience to masters, becomes the basis of the social order. The nation, emancipated from obedience to imperial leaders, similarly becomes the basis of the political order, in the shape of the nation state. This idea took shape in Europe by the mid-19th century, leading to the appearance of modern Italy, Germany, Greece and other Balkan states.

By the 20th century, the idea of the nation state had become linked to the philosophical current of “historicism”. The outcome was the theory that every nation had some kind of final goal, and that the actions of individuals could only have a marginal effect on the general progress to this final goal. Thus, the individual became subsumed into the collective (the nation or, in Hitler’s case, the race) and “right-wing” totalitarianism—fascism, Nazism—was born. Similarly, in the case of communism, it was assumed that a large collective—the world’s working class—was destined to a final goal; and that the individuals within it could only play a marginal role. In this case also, individuals were subsumed into a collective and “left-wing” totalitarianism was born.

In both types of totalitarianism, a curious fusion of modernity and romanticism was observed. A group of people declared themselves heroes,

leaders and “vanguard” and assumed leadership. The others were supposed to follow these heroes in order to reach their grand goal: national greatness (fascism), racial purity (Nazism) or world communism.

In this way, after a series of metamorphoses, modern ideas led to profoundly anti-modern results. Instead of being truly freed from obedience, the individual found herself thrown back into the Middle Ages.

Modernity today can be said to give way to the “post-modern” era, beginning with the student rebellions and the counterculture movement in the second half of the 1960s.

Modernity, seen as a period of history, seems to be an ongoing rebellion against tradition. That means that in place of a culture centred on religion, of a way of life grounded in the village and of an economy based on agriculture, modernity has constructed a way of life based on secularization, urbanization and industrialization. In this sense, the story of modernity is easily told by four grand narratives.

The Renaissance

The first narrative is the Renaissance, which started with the rediscovery of classical Greek philosophers such as Protagoras, whose most famous quote is “of all things the measure is man”. Although the Renaissance is best known for its artistic developments, it is above all the beginning of humanism and secularism—the emancipation of the human being from subservience to higher powers, including divine powers.

This period, dated from the 14th to the 17th century, is a burst of freedom for thought and expression. In its prime arena of achievement—visual art—the Renaissance abandoned the previous belief that artistic endeavour should aim only for the glorification of religion. Art became fascinated with real human beings to the extent that they entered into religious depictions, replacing the previously schematic and iconic representations of deities and sacred persons.

The Renaissance focused on the fundamental importance of individuality and of individual achievement, placing supreme value on human beings freed from the obligation of servitude and submission. One result was an explosion of scientific and technical inventions, as seen in the blueprints

of artist Leonardo da Vinci of helicopters and submarines. In the field of politics, writers such as Machiavelli divorced politics from religion, thus helping people realize that they can and must be involved in the structure and functioning of power.

The Reformation

*You are not only responsible for what you say,
but also for what you do not say.*

Martin Luther

The second narrative is the story of the Reformation. Initiated by Martin Luther, the cessation from the Roman Catholic Church began with criticism of the sale, by the Church, of “indulgences”—documents that excuse all your sins in the eyes of God. Luther’s rebellion against the clerical status quo was a struggle over the monopoly of the Church over the interpretation of the Gospel: which is, in effect, a struggle over information and media. At the same time, the spread of Gutenberg’s printing press provided the means by which this struggle became a general rebellion against tradition, by rapidly spreading controversial ideas and religious materials in the vernacular, which everyone could understand, rather than in Latin, understood only by the highly educated.

The most important assumption of this rebellion against tradition was that people had gained the right and obligation to communicate with God independently of the Church. This made the human being independent of authority and placed her at the centre of history. Stimulated by the distribution of the printed word, the principles and values of Reformation led to a media and information revolution, enabling people to emerge from the dependencies of traditional life.

The Enlightenment

The third narrative is the philosophical movement of the Enlightenment, which came to dominate the world of ideas, philosophy and science.

According to Scruton, “in the realm of ideas the modern age began with Bacon and Descartes”. Francis Bacon argued that scientific knowledge is based only on the observation of nature and on inductive reasoning, remaining completely outside holy religious texts. Only observable facts, rather than religious illumination, were admissible in science. Similarly, René Descartes placed individual human reason (rather than scripture) at the centre of the effort to understand the world, formulating the famous saying: “I think, therefore I am.”

This approach to science immediately spilled over to society and politics. If, the argument went, we need no divine guidance to understand the mysteries of the Universe, then why should we need divine guidance to understand our own much less mysterious affairs, structured in the power relations of society?

The transformation of views on society began with the writings of Thomas Hobbes in the 17th century. Hobbes promoted the idea that all people are equal and have equal rights and liberties; therefore, nobody is under obligation to obey anybody else. But if nobody obeys anybody and everyone does as they see fit, how can we avoid a war of everyone against everyone else? Hobbes’s answer constructed the basis of modern political society, and went something like this: being free and equal, we are only bound to obey our own will. But if we, he continued, want peace and security, we should limit our freedom—not by becoming obedient to someone else, but by constructing a state whose laws (rather than some person’s instructions) we will be obeying. Ultimately, because we have constructed the state, by obeying its laws we would be obeying ourselves.

Such modern theories of consent, together with the ideas of John Locke and Charles de Montesquieu on the separation of powers and the right to dissolve existing states, were to be incorporated into the American Revolution of 1776 and the American Constitution of 1788.

The Industrial Revolution

The fourth narrative is related to the Industrial Revolution and the so-called “long 19th century”, starting with the French Revolution (1789) and ending with the start of the First World War (1914). Whole societies, starting with Britain, left the agricultural phase of self-sufficiency and moved into

the age of mass industrial production, money and markets. The material world we live in is the product of this transition.

But such progress was not limited to production and exchange only. This was the period of the formulation and implementation, in politics and government, of the principles of republicanism and liberal democracy. Ultimately, these principles produced the modern nation state. Conversely, this period is also associated with the global decline of monarchies and empires, leading to some of the most profound changes in recorded history.

Modernity as a style and attitude

We can be heroes just for one day.

David Bowie

As a style, modernity asserts the notion of the individual as the essence of “man”. According to Scruton, “the modern person exists in *conscious* relation to history; if he acts out of custom and tradition, it is in a certain measure from a sense of irony: if he commits himself to a future, it is either recklessly, or with a battery of predictions designed to tell him how history *must* proceed”. The modern person is, therefore, “one who is not merely part of history, but conscious of history as part of himself”.

Modernity asserts what the philosopher Hegel has called “the principle of subjectivity”. This principle considers the human being as a *subject*, meaning an individual who possesses conscious experience, such as feelings, desires, beliefs and perspectives—and makes his decisions accordingly. At a very basic level, this means that the modern individual constantly makes independent choices: What should I do? How should I look? What should I believe in? What motorbike should I buy? For whom should I vote?

This situation need not mean that everyone stands alone, isolated from others. Modernity as style and attitude is mostly what Martin Heidegger explains as a phenomenon of world disclosure. Heidegger placed the human being at the centre of time (and history) and considered disclosure of the human being to the world only by means of being part of an ontological world. His assertion suggests that all things become intelligible and relevant only if they are pre-structured in human practical day-to-day encounters with other people and things in the world, mostly through language.

Nevertheless, many modern individuals feel lonely and isolated; the constant pressure of making individual choices (and taking the consequences) is difficult to bear. The result has been a search for forms of community belonging that overcome both the obedience of traditional societies and the isolation of modern individuals. At the same time, many people have felt powerless when faced by “the system”—the institutions and rules of modern society that can be felt as oppressive as those of traditional societies. The combination of these factors has led to a renewed rebellion, a renewed search for freedom and self-determination, which has come to be known as “post-modernism”.

Modernity and post-modernity

In terms of social and economic transformation, modernity is the prioritization of individualism and freedom, as well as a distinctive faith in progress and in the development of human abilities. It is this faith, however, coupled with frustration with “the system”, that has led to a reaction against modernity itself. The post-moderns reject the idea of endless progress, together with the “grand narratives” that accompany it—such as those outlined above, but also others: capitalism; socialism; scientific achievement; liberal democracy; the free market, and so forth. The post-moderns feel that such narratives serve to perpetuate the power of entrenched elites, just as traditional narratives, related to religion, once justified the power of traditional elites. The solution, it has been said, is to “deconstruct” all such narratives in order to become free of entrenched elites (i.e. in order to truly be able to construct and reconstruct the circumstances of one’s own life). Some have taken it further, claiming that it is possible (once freed of the narratives and liberated from obedience to elites) to construct and reconstruct our very identities—who we “are”.

Such efforts have opened up new horizons of individual freedom and self-determination. They have also led to the emergence of new kinds of communities and community life. But there is a sinister side to post-modernism. If, some have thought, the grand narratives are no longer legitimate, why should we continue to take them for granted—liberal democracy, for example? The outcome of this line of inquiry has been today’s populist, anti-individualist political movements, some of which have produced

dictatorships along purely traditional lines, such as President Putin's rule in Russia, or the religious dictatorships imposed over much of the Middle East by various Islamic militant groups and states.

At other levels, loss of faith in the "narrative" of the Enlightenment has led to a turn away from reason back to traditional superstitions and obscurantist beliefs. The ongoing global revival of religion, following centuries of decline, has been a direct result of this.

Tsvetozar VALKOV

MORALITY

Do not be too moral. You may cheat yourself out of much of life. So aim above morality. Be not simply good; be good for something.

Henry David Thoreau

When we analyze different cultures around us, when we look at different societies across the ages, we see that there are common values which prevail in all of them. Such values are humanity, dignity, respect for others, courage, or even readiness to sacrifice yourself for the good of the community.

The word comes from the Latin *moralis*, meaning “proper behaviour of a person in society”. In the descriptive sense, morality refers to *codes of conduct, personal or cultural values* or social norms of behaviour. It does not connote objective claims of right or wrong, but only refers to that which is considered right or wrong. In its *normative* sense, the term refers to whatever is right or wrong, which may be independent of the values or norms specific to any particular peoples or cultures.

Morality can be regarded as a set of principles derived from a *code of conduct* from a particular ideology or *religion*; or it can derive from a standard that a person believes should be universal. Every world religion provides prescriptions on morality and moral conduct, most often in the form of sacred normative texts, such as The Ten Commandments in Christianity or the Buddhists’ Eightfold Path.

Key to the understanding of morality is the Aristotelian approach to practical reasoning, which is based on the notion of virtues, and which generally links moral considerations to those of a more practical nature. Later on, Kant introduces the moral imperative: “Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a

universal law". This view of morality is based mainly on categories such as obligation, duty and social norms.

Anthropologists have ascertained that in every culture there exist certain taboos connected to the system of morality. Three of these taboos are basic, common to every culture, age and society: *homicide*, *incest* and *cannibalism*; breaking these taboos is regarded as the worst possible crime, a sin, as well as moral failure

Yet there are numerous examples demonstrating that, in some circumstances, even these eternal moral taboos can be broken without incurring any penalty. Cannibalism was a tradition in some African tribes. In modern times, "forced" or "inevitable" cannibalism has not been criminalized under some conditions, such as preservation of one's own life. Such cases, although disputable and not condoned, at least ensure that people who break that taboo are not regarded as sinners or criminals.

There are also the incestuous marriages of antiquity—marriages between close relatives in ancient Greece and Rome and between immediate family members in ancient Egypt. This practice contributed to the preservation of the bloodline and the greater stability of the dynasties, according to the rule "keep it in the family".

Such exceptions have led to theories that, in the arena of politics and power, taboos are designed by rulers to control the ruled. There may be some truth in this, but in the larger sense, society could not exist without a minimum of taboos that hold it together.

Finally, there are countless examples of situations in which homicide is accepted, approved and even regarded as obligatory. Such conditions are wars, present in all world cultures, but proscribed by some religions; situations in which homicide is inevitable in order to preserve one's personal life or the lives of others; situations in which moral social justice is imposed—the death penalty, according some national legislations; situations of revenge or re-establishing one's personal dignity.

Very often, Eastern and Western cultures are compared in terms of morality and moral values. More precise scrutiny will reveal very interesting, controversial and sometimes diametrically opposite attitudes towards one and the same moral category, depending on the specific influence of religion, philosophy or ideology on the different societies.

Increasingly, it has been argued that our (Eurocentric) notion of morality suffers from a certain subjectivity and even narrow-mindedness. This is mainly because we consider our system of values not only superior to those of the rest of the world but also, in a way, unique and absolute. Let us consider the following example. To the Eurocentric-minded society, the highest social value is undoubtedly “human life”. This is probably rooted in the Christian concept of life and death: life is “given only once”, there is no reincarnation, and after death the human soul has to follow its path to different places, “never coming back”. This concept makes human life, every minute of it, uniquely precious not only *per se* but also because it is the only possibility we get to demonstrate the kind of decent behaviour that would ensure the soul’s immortality. In this respect, the preciousness of human life is closely connected with the immortality of the soul, another key concept of the Christian religion.

In contrast, in most Asian cultures the highest moral value is having “a good name”. The name, both literally and metaphorically, is the irreducible core of the human being. This view is so ancient that it is confirmed by the tradition of some African tribes, where the most severe punishment is not death, but the “taking” of the name of the offender. Once this is done, that person exists only in a world of shadows, becoming a shadow himself. This is social death, much more terrible than physical death.

On a symbolic level, “the preservation of the good name” is the highest moral value and moral obligation of every human belonging to any Eastern culture and religion, from Turkey to Japan. We can look to the Eastern religious view of life for an explanation of this. According to all Eastern religions, the human path is just a continuation of many lives, and death is followed by reincarnation. This idea of eternally recurring life reduces the value of individual life while, furthermore, encouraging its sacrifice at the altar of a higher moral value.

This world view correlates closely with the theory of Geert Hofstede who, in *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (2005), wrote about two types of cultures: individualistic and collectivistic. In individualistic cultures, morality is a very “personalized” category and therefore adherence to prescribed moral norms is mainly the person’s own responsibility. The

breaking of moral taboos will lead to significant repercussions only on the person involved (and sometimes his closest circle of relatives).

For collectivistic cultures, the breaking of moral norms by one of the members of society is considered not so much a personal matter, more a serious problem with dramatic consequences for the whole community. In this respect, “the good name” is believed to be not only a possession of the person but also of his family and ancestors. In various cases, the loss of one’s life through sacrifice, killing or even suicide might be the only way to preserve the dignity of one’s name, thus placing the value of life below the value of a good name. For example, in traditional Japan, if a woman has been raped, she is regarded with real compassion as a victim of crime. At the same time, she is expected by all her relatives to commit ritual suicide (*seppuku*) in order to clear her own good name and that of her family.

Finally, to summarise the matter of morality, we can cite John Galt, a character in Ayn Rand’s novel *Atlas Shrugged* (1957):

“Man has been called a rational being, but rationality is a matter of choice—and the alternative his nature offers him is: rational being or suicidal animal. Man has to be man—by choice; he has to hold his life as a value—by choice; he has to learn to sustain it—by choice; he has to discover the values it requires and practice his virtues—by choice. A code of values accepted by choice is a code of morality.”

Veronika AZAROVA

NATION

A nation is the same people, living in the same place.

James Joyce

A *nation* is a large group of people connected by a sense of *group identity*, without necessarily having personal or familial ties. To understand the concept of *nation*, we need to understand the elements of *group identity*. In the different social sciences, different concepts are denoted by the word *nation*. These concepts differ over the leading criteria that decide what a *nation* is.

In sociology, the main criterion is a functioning and organized *nation state* which unites different ethnic and religious communities in a single territory. The nation state secures and guarantees the collective sovereignty of the individual and the group, and also of the territories they inhabit. The people and the communities are united by different types of ties: cultural, linguistic, ethnic. No single tie needs to be universal, nor is any of them mandatory. Different groups can have their own cultural traditions, language and religion. But the individual members of every group belong to the *nation* because of equal *citizen's rights*, guaranteed by the nation state. This concept describes states such as the USA, Canada, Australia and others, where there is a clear distinction between different ethnicities. In Canada, for example, the population is split between English-speaking and French-speaking groups. Neither of the two groups feels more or less Canadian than the other. The sociological approach towards the understanding of the term *nation* is generally followed in the English-speaking world.

From the point of view of economic history, modern *nations* are established after the break-up of feudal societies and are related to the search for expanding markets of capitalist production. In practical terms, this means that capitalist production needs a territory and people to sell to.

Development of production and trade calls for a common language. In the course of intensive trade, different but close ethnic groups assimilate each other, trading not only goods and services but also cultural traditions and practices. This version of the meaning of the *nation* has followers mostly in Western Europe, because it explains the waning of local identities in favour of a national identity. Interestingly, this process is intensified in times of emergency. For example, French peasants turned into French people during the Napoleonic wars, whereas the peasants of Tuscany, Lombardy and Piedmont started seeing themselves as Italian during the French advances through the Apennine peninsula.

The cultural interpretation of nation is generally followed by German scholars. Under it, a *nation* is an organic cultural and linguistic community, based on ethnic, religious or linguistic proximity. This concept understands the *nation* as a natural product of the transformation of close ethnic communities into the single political entity of the nation state. This nation state is seen as an instrument of their sovereignty. The main example is, of course, the German nation. This concept is also widely accepted throughout the Balkans, because it explains the modern Balkan states which reunited Balkan ethnic communities into nation states.

A key scholar of *nations* and nationalism is the British philosopher and anthropologist Ernest Gellner. He defines *nations* as a phenomenon of the Modern age. For him, culture acts as a major force of internal consolidation, but also creates the external borders of the community. Culture then creates a group image of the community, which in turn serves as a basic template for individual and collective identity. This shared culture creates a standardized system of communication across the whole community and a common group image that allows an elite culture to exist. This elite culture then becomes available to the masses by education provided by the nation state. Thus, a people turns into a *nation* when it understands that it possesses power over its own fate.

The *nation* is a relatively new form of collective identity that aids the process of transformation of political organization into what is today understood as the modern nation state. There have been attempts, mostly short-lived, to create greater-than-national identities that transcend the national identities in place. One such attempt was to create a “Yugoslav”

identity for the nations living in the Yugoslav federation. Another was the drive to produce “Soviet man” out of the hundreds of nationalities living in the Soviet Union prior to 1991, as was the assumed “Czechoslovak” identity of the Czechs and Slovaks living in what was Czechoslovakia. All of these attempts failed within a generation and, in the end, these conglomerates dissolved back to their constituent nation states.

One contemporary example is the federalist view of the European Union. European Federalists believe that the future of the European states is an “ever closer union”, leading to merger. This “ever closer union” includes a decline in national identity and the acquisition of a new “European nationality”. While there was once a weak trend of people stating their nationality as “European” at the start of the new millennium, it died off soon after. It is thus now clear that at this point in history most people across the world will continue to consider themselves as a part of a nation.

Peter STURM

O PPRESSION

A desire to resist oppression is implanted in the nature of man.

Tacitus

Oppression is the intentional or unintentional abuse of power by an institution, a group or an individual that removes other people's liberty and rights. Oppression takes many forms; the misuse of power is often, but not always, exercised in a brutal, unpleasant and harsh way.

The origin of the term comes from the Latin verb *opprimere*, which literally means "pressed against". The *Oxford dictionary* defines oppression as

- a) prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority;
- b) the state of being subject to oppressive treatment;
- c) mental pressure or distress.

Let us consider them in turn.

1. Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or exercise of authority.

In this sense, oppression involves actions of an authority restrictive for a given group and may include enslavement, discrimination, segregation and its newer forms such as apartheid, inequalities under the law, group-based harassment. Oppression is not limited to the "usual suspects", such as tyrants and dictators. Just as anyone in power can become corrupt, anyone can become an oppressor. Indeed, it was Napoleon who once wryly remarked that most people who complain of oppression would dearly love to be oppressors themselves.

2. The state of being subject to oppressive treatment.

Being subject to oppressive treatment may be defined with reference to the individual, but oppression often targets groups of people. In this sense oppression could be socialised or institutionalised.

Socialised oppression occurs when a society and its institutions are so structured that they prevent, by their practices, certain categories of people from equitable treatment, whether or not such practices are intentional. Moreover, social oppression describes relationships of dominance under which members of certain groups benefit from the systematic abuse and unfair exploitation of other subordinated groups. An example of this kind of oppression is the situation of black slaves in the South of the USA prior to the civil war of 1861–5.

Institutionalised oppression exists when there are institutional rules, customs and laws which imply oppression. This kind of oppression justified as political and/or economic need is often hidden and covert. A good example is the treatment, in some societies, of women, who are “kept at home” and forbidden to appear in public unless escorted by male members of the family.

3. *Mental pressure or distress.*

In the situations described so far, oppression is structured into institutions and habits visible to all. In the case of mental pressure, oppression is covert. This can take place in small and opaque communities, such as families, sects or small groups living on the margins of society, who oppress one or more of their members without being seen by outsiders. But this kind of “unseen”, undeclared oppression can also affect many more people. There can be cultural norms, habits and traditions that oppress groups of people without ever declaring it; such is the fate of many Roma groups in Europe today. Without anyone ever going public with this, Roma are frequently denied access to the job market, health, education and other public services, all of which is defended, when criticized, by reference to history or national character.

Things become even more complicated when we widen our inquiry to include “covert oppression”. According to Roger Scruton:

“A disputed instance of covert oppression is that in which the oppression is also unintentional, while the force stems from social or economic power working upon economic need. This is the model of oppression adopted by virtually all left-wing movements, which set out to liberate the ‘oppressed’ from their unwitting captors, be they colonialists, capitalists, racists or simply people more comfortable than those on

whose labour they depend. In the limiting case this kind of persuasive definition tends to the view that oppression exists wherever there is inequality. The element of force is simply dropped from the concept.”

Briefly put: can an oppressor oppress without intent and without using force? While Scruton is right to warn against political perfidy, it is surely obvious that unintentional oppression can and does exist, especially in less democratic settings, where prejudice and habit are stronger than reason and compromise. Things become even more complicated if we include other similar theories (such as “structured violence”) which claim that oppression and violence can result not from people’s explicit intentions or decisions, but automatically, out of a given structure of society. Under such scenarios, oppression exists, but no one can be blamed for it. One solution, proposed by the radical Left of the 1960s, would be total revolution, deconstructing and afterwards reconstructing society in such a way to make structured violence and covert oppression impossible.

Such grand solutions have, however, rarely proved successful. As a general rule, drawing on experience, it would seem that every claim of oppression must be judged on its own merits, case by case, but with reference to another key concept: *justice*. Given that all forms of oppression ultimately place some groups at a disadvantage to others, then oppression is a form of injustice. If, therefore, we investigate a claim of oppression and see people unjustly treated—barred from equitable access, or from using declared rights, or placed (without consultation or agreement) into a situation of dependency—then we can declare that oppression does, in this case, exist.

At the philosophical level, this endeavour will be helped by texts such as John Rawls’s *A Theory of Justice*; or at a practical level by the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Tsvetozar VALKOV

PARTICIPATION

Democracy is a daring concept—a hope that we'll be best governed if all of us participate in the act of government.

Brian Eno

“Participation” (“being a part of”) is, in democratic societies, held to be the right of all citizens to engage in the decision-making process. The reason is simple: in a democracy, it is assumed that it is the citizens who govern themselves, who pass laws via their elected representatives and who are, in the final analysis, sovereign. Such activities can take place at a micro-level—local community, as well as a macro-level—society, the nation state or supranational communities such as the European Union.

Participation can be cooperative or confrontational. Cooperative participation takes place, for example, with the inclusion of ordinary citizens (or their legitimate representatives) in various advisory or consultative committees at government ministries or departments. Confrontational participation takes place when oppressed, excluded or marginalized groups of citizens demand their presence in the decision-making process. This kind of participation is often seen as a part of a larger process of protest or civil disobedience—as, for example, in Martin Luther King’s civil rights movement of the 1960s, which combined protests and civil disobedience with demands for the inclusion and participation of people of colour.

In modern times, participation is frequently seen as an instrument that compensates for the deficiencies of representative democracy. The problem is this. In, say, classical Greece or the self-governing Italian city states of the Renaissance period, people who were citizens were a minority

of all inhabitants. Thereby, this minority could frequently meet, discuss the issues facing the community, take decisions and appoint people to implement these decisions. In modern mass societies, such general meetings of all citizens are impossible. Therefore, citizens come together at election times to choose who will gather, debate, resolve and implement in their name—their representatives in parliament. The history of the past few decades suggests, however, that simply voting is not enough to guarantee that the government will serve the common good rather than the good of the individuals in power. Therefore, public participation—the inclusion of ordinary citizens, in between elections, in the process of deliberation, decision, resolution and implementation—is seen as an instrument to both get citizens involved in between elections and make sure that citizens keep an eye on the doings of officials, so that the common good is served.

In a positive situation—one where there is given good will on all sides—participation is a win-win strategy. From the administrative viewpoint, participation can achieve public support for the activities of that administration. It can educate citizens about that administration's activities, tasks and aims, as well as bringing in good will and expertise from the outside. From the citizen's viewpoint, participation enables individuals and groups to influence decisions in a legitimate manner.

From the earliest times, it has been argued that participation (involvement in decision making), apart from having a beneficial effect on government, is also good for the citizens themselves. As argued in the mission statement of the International Association for Public Participation:

“Participatory processes enable people to see more clearly, and learn from the complexity that they are living and working amid. Through participation people can identify opportunities and strategies for action, and build solidarity to effect change”.

The philosophers of classical antiquity assumed that good citizens were those who made a good government (and a good state). Aristotle, for example, regarded politics as an arena for the implementation of the rules of morality, as outlined in his book *Nicomachean Ethics*. A good state,

especially one that we could today recognize as democratic, can only exist, he argued, if based on virtuous citizens who take an active part in the decision-making process.

In turn, for citizens to be virtuous, a wide-ranging education effort was needed. This explains the ancient Greeks' education curriculum, which included arts, philosophy, rhetoric, science, mathematics, sports and war skills. This wide concept of education, known as *paideia*, was linked to another Greek concept (analysed by Aristotle at some length)—*arete*, or excellence. Taken together, the two concepts describe a citizen who is constantly educating himself, so as to reach excellence not only in his private affairs but also—and above all—in his involvement with the common good of the community. The highest excellence (and virtue) was to serve the community.

This approach to citizenship was continued in the philosophical tradition of *republicanism*, which was built into the foundations of the USA and informed the writing of some classical liberal thinkers of modern times. John Locke, for example, in his *Instructions for the conduct of a young Gentleman, as to religion and government*, wrote that:

“(a gentleman’s) proper calling is the service of his country, and so is most properly concerned in moral and political knowledge; and thus the studies which more immediately belong to his calling are those which treat of virtues and vices, of civil society and the arts of government, and will take in also law and history”.

In general, however, the liberal thinkers who structured the political environment in which we live today were dubious about making good government dependent on the active participation of virtuous citizens. That is to do with their adherence to the concept of “negative freedom” (the freedom of the individual from interference, especially by government) at the expense of the “positive freedom” embraced by the followers of the republican tradition. In that tradition, “positive freedom” was chosen because it involved the active involvement of people in the structuring of the political environment around them. Ultimately, the liberal philosophers decided in favour of “limited government” (i.e. government non-interference

in the affairs of individuals) at the expense of participatory government (i.e. citizen interference in the affairs of government).

The exception here is the liberal philosopher J. S. Mill. In his influential pamphlet *On Liberty*, he argued that participation in democratic decision making would be, above all, good for the citizens themselves—“as a means to their own mental education—a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them a familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal”.

On top of being good for the state (which would formulate better decisions) and for the citizens (who would develop their “faculties”) participation is, according to Mill, also a very good form of hands-on education in matters civic, “taking them (i.e. the citizens) out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns—habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another.”

If, wrote Mill in *Considerations on Representative Government*, people adhered to the classic liberal idea of limited government and did *not* participate, remaining sunk in their own private affairs, then good government would not be possible, due to the spread of “ignorance, stupidity, and baleful prejudice”. On the contrary, participation in government matters “must make [persons] very different beings, in range of ideas and development of faculties, from those who have done nothing in their lives but drive a quill, or sell goods over a counter.”

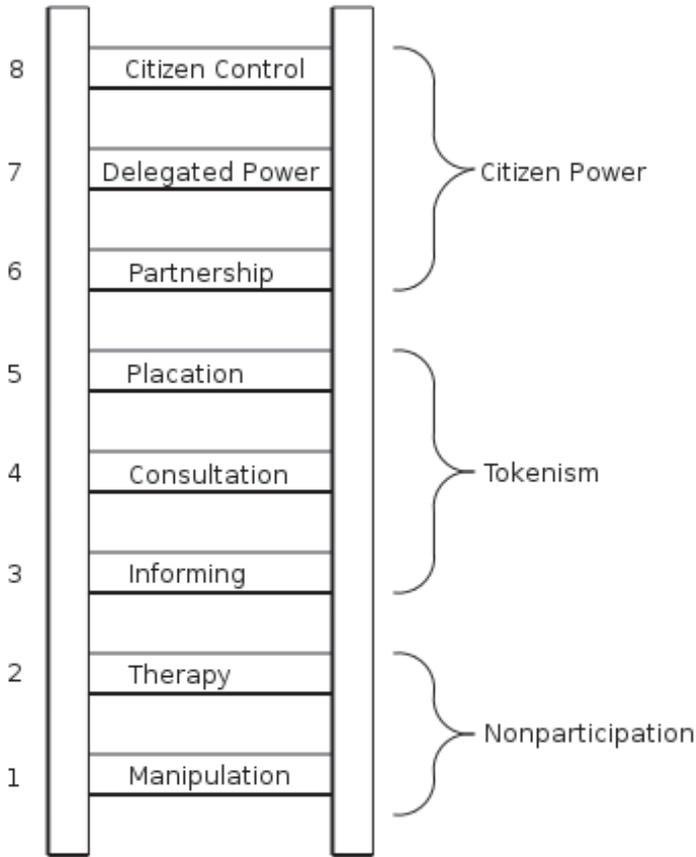
A century after Mill, the leading political philosophers of the second half of the 20th century expanded the concept of participation into a full-blown philosophy of *deliberative democracy*. The idea, according to Jürgen Habermas, John Rawls and others, is that a political decision can only be fully legitimate if it is the result of discussions among citizens under reasonably favorable conditions. It is generally agreed that this means that discussion should be transparent, inclusive, free, equitable and civil (courteous, respectful). In practical terms, deliberative democracy involves efforts to increase and make durable the scope and impact of such public discussions.

It can be argued that when participation disappears over significant periods of time, the quality of government degenerates as the “iron law of oligarchy” takes hold. Under this “law”, first developed by the German sociologist Robert Michels in 1911, all political organizations, including parties and governments, tend to become self-serving oligarchies unless pressured from the outside. In democracies, such a degeneration of government and social life usually leads to a strong revival of demands for participation, frequently garnished with protests and revolutionary events.

After one such period, the “May events” in France in 1968, American sociologist Sherry R. Arnstein developed the famous “Ladder of Citizen Participation” in her 1969 article of the same name. Taking a radical and confrontational view of the subject, Arnstein defines participation in almost revolutionary terms:

“...citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out. In short, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society”.

In this view, governments have an interest in imitating participation, so as to keep citizens away from true involvement in decision making. This is seen in the famous ladder:



Eight rungs on the ladder of citizen participation

As can be seen, of the various forms of participation, no less than five are, in effect, imitations designed to keep citizens away from involvement; only the top three forms are genuinely participatory. “Consultation” is a particular favourite of governments keen on imitation. This is what that great aristocrat-democrat, Winston Churchill, had to say on the subject, back in 1947:

“...one can always consult a man and ask him, ‘Would you like your head cut off tomorrow?’ and after he has said, ‘I would rather not’, cut it off. ‘Consultation’ is a vague and elastic term.”

In today’s world, the most widespread imitative form favoured by governments is “consultation”. In all democratic societies we see hundreds of

“consultative” institutions in which citizens debate together with officials; but in the final analysis the government is not obliged to take into account such “consultations”.

In 1996, Sarah White distinguished between several levels of participation:

- *Nominal participation*: used by more powerful actors to give legitimacy to development plans. Less powerful people become involved, but not empowered. This is close to the concept of “consultation” (above), because it does not result in either change or more power to the citizens involved.
- *Instrumental participation* signifies participation at the community level as a means to achieve a clearly formulated aim by pooling together the skills and knowledge of community members.
- *Representative participation*: giving community members a voice in the decision-making and implementation process of projects or policies that affect them. For the more powerful, representative participation increases the chances of their intervention being sustainable; for the less powerful, it may offer a chance for leverage.
- *Transformative participation* results in the empowerment of those involved, and as a result alters the structures and institutions that lead to marginalisation and exclusion.

As could be expected, the world financial crisis of 2008 led to an explosion of demands for participation in decision making. It was generally felt that governments and banks had formed oligarchies beyond the reach of the citizens. Those oligarchies then proceeded to manage people and resources for their own profit rather than for the general good. Demands for participation, in this case, signified the desire of citizens to re-establish control over their representatives with a view to bringing government back to serving the common good.

At a more significant level, the revival of participation is one of the elements in a general turn of opinion away from the liberal view of the state (i.e. minimal citizen participation) and towards a revival of the republican tradition (i.e. constant and active citizen involvement in public affairs). It is felt that during the years of liberal ascendancy, citizens turned their backs on

participation, thereby ensuring that governments became oligarchies. The remedy, the thinking goes, is a revival of citizen involvement at all levels of decision making, with a view to avoiding future crises and bad government.

The issue of citizen involvement is particularly important within the European Union as it faces a crisis of confidence and trust in the middle of the second decade of the 21st century. Increasingly, European citizens feel isolated and powerless as regards the “Brussels bureaucracy”; loss of faith in the EU and loss of trust in its institutions has been the result, leading to the rise of “Euroscepticism” and of various populist political parties. This level of alienation led, in 2016, to the UK’s decision to leave the EU under the slogan “We want our country back!”.

At the time of writing, it seems that only a significant step towards more participation can evade an existential EU crisis, by harnessing the opinions and the expertise of citizens on the one hand and by making citizens aware of the complexity of running such a huge transnational organization on the other.

Evgenii DAINOV

POLITICAL PARTY

If a political party does not have its foundation in the determination to advance a cause that is right and that is moral, then it is not a political party; it is merely a conspiracy to seize power.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Parties are a relatively new political development, a result of the introduction of political representation. The classic idea of democracy does not include factions, interest groups or parties, the initial attitude towards the clash of competing interests not being positive.

In *Federalist No. 10*, James Madison defines factions as “a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community”—a necessary evil, he thought, but an evil nonetheless.

Necessary, because they come from the nature of men; and evil, for factions brought only instability, injustice, and confusion into public councils—“mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished”. So, controlling the violence of factions was the crucial task of any constitution.

Such considerations notwithstanding, political parties have become a key concept when explaining modern politics in general and democratic political process in particular.

The word *party* comes from the old French word *partie*—meaning part, portion, separation or division. It can be literally translated as “that which is divided”. Used more and more to describe the division of opinion among the participants of the various medieval assemblies, at the end of

the 13th century it gradually came to be used to describe the sides in a contest or dispute. Later, the 17th century introduced the meaning of the word as “persons gathered together”. Ultimately, the word described the process of dividing people only to unite them in cooperation for political purposes, and thus its usage generally became associated with political representation.

The “classical” model of democracy, presented to us by Aristotle, presumed decision making based on direct participation and consensus. The notion of competition through elections, that is to say different factions competing to get access to the system that makes binding decisions regarding society, became a defining characteristic of democracy in the process of developing new institutions (such as parliaments or assemblies) of vertical and horizontal accountability of the rulers.

It was only natural that this competition could be feasible only through cooperation. It became evident that actors must cooperate in order to compete—that is to say, to “act collectively through parties, associations, and movements in order to select candidates, articulate preferences, petition authorities” and so forth, with parties becoming the main vehicle of political representation through elections.

A common understanding of what a political party is can be found in Hans-Jurgen Puhle’s definition:

“In democratic regimes, the political parties are mediators between voters and their interests, on the one hand, and the decision-making institutions on the other. They are the channels of political interaction between the civil society (in the broad definition by Locke) and the state”.

In order to distinguish political parties from other forms of political representation, we need to identify the core functions that all political parties perform as intermediaries between civil society and the decision-making institutions, as opposed to other forms of civic participation and organization.

Generally, the literature identifies a number of core functions of political parties. These are:

- *Interest articulation*—the expression and articulation of specific demands on behalf of particular groups within society.
- *Interest aggregation*—the organization and aggregation of the expressed interests into understandable and distinguishable policy alternatives (party programmes). This is a process of extreme impor-

tance as regards the coherence of public policy and „policy stability“ in the long run. From this arises our next function.

- *Simplifying choice*—preparing for elections, parties may choose to focus on questions of immediate and transient importance, or on the more durable interests of social groups. In both cases, they „play a crucial role in structuring the choices and the alternatives along different issue dimensions“, as Larry Diamond and Richard Gunther have pointed out in *Political Parties and Democracy* (2001). This function the authors call *issue structuring*.
- *Recruitment*—this is believed to be the core function of the parties and is defined as the process of nominating and selecting candidates to fill public office. Gunther and Diamond believe that this function is related to two distinct phases of the electoral process: the *nomination of candidates* (the internal party contest and the procedures for appointing party representatives in the following interparty elections); and *electoral mobilization* (the process of mobilizing support for the candidates among the electoral bodies of the parties).
- *Competing in elections to constitute government* and act on behalf of the aggregated and articulated interest, which is a result of the next function.
- *Interest representation*—taking the form of both electoral struggle for the support of specific social groups and the elaboration of different policy alternatives within the legislative body. That is to say, weighing the gains and losses for specific social groups when drafting legislative proposals.
- *Social integration*—by enabling citizens to participate effectively in the political process, parties might foster the general belief that each one has a vested interest in its preservation, ultimately increasing the political legitimacy of the political regime.

None of the other types of civil organizations can perform all of these functions at once. Interest groups may share the functions of interest articulation and interest representation, but they rarely invest in interest aggregation and do not undertake the task of recruitment and constituting government.

How well and what functions the parties do perform may determine the character and the model of the electoral democracy. That is to say that it might have a major impact on the quality of democracy, the structure of

electoral competition, the process of political socialization, the stability of democracy and so forth.

There exists, in the literature, a multitude of criteria for developing typologies of parties. Gunther and Diamond argue that most of these have been developed from studies of Western European party development. Thus, existing typologies have been criticized on the grounds that they fail to recognize important characteristics of political parties in the context of developing post-communist countries. Such a context entails strong ethnical, religious, linguistic, state-building and other issues that are of considerable importance for party diversity.

Having said that, a number of party typologies do exist.

The first group focuses on *functionalist* criteria to distinguish between different types of parties. These are based on the *specific goals* that parties might have—representing one group, or wanting to transform an entire society (Sigmund Neumann); emphasizing electoral competition or the “logic of constituency representation” (Herbert Kitschelt); seeking votes, wanting to be in office, or pursuing policy change (Pippa Norris and Steven Wolinetz); seeking public financing or access to state subsidy, thus restraining electoral competition, setting up thresholds for newcomer parties, effectively establishing a “cartel party” (Katz and Mair).

Other classifications are based on the *organizational* characteristics of parties, distinguishing between parties with loose organizational structures and those with large and complex organizations. The classic model, developed by Maurice Duverger, draws a distinction between the “cadre party” that is an elite-based electoral vehicle only, and the “mass party”, comprising a complex organizational structure based on the mass membership of its electoral base.

Some (Robert Michels, for example) seek *sociological* explanations of models of parties, based on the understanding that they represent and hence are the product of specific social groups. Finally, the literature employs a mixture of these approaches to distinguishing among the models of political parties. Such is Otto Kirchheimer’s four party model: “bourgeois parties of individual representation”; “class-mass parties”; “denominational-mass parties”; and “catch-all people’s parties”.

Historically, political parties emerged as a solution to collective choice problems within the first (late medieval) representative assemblies that were responsible for deliberating in parallel with the monarchs. Given the necessity

to arrive at a decision on a number of related issues, individual representatives in these assemblies discovered that it would be beneficial to cooperate. With the new classes extended the right to participate in assemblies, and by gradually introducing elections as the mechanism to constitute such assemblies, parties became not only parliamentary factions but also undertook the task to be electoral vehicles.

To find an example we may look into the process of the creation of the two parties in Great Britain after the adoption of the *Magna Carta Libertatum* in the 13th century—the Whigs and the Tories. The adoption of Magna Carta secured the right of barons to have the final word on any tax that the crown might decide to introduce or change. This right was implemented through the establishment of a council of barons that over the centuries developed into the British Parliament. As a result of the interactions in this process, the Whigs developed over time as a faction representing the interest of great aristocratic families, opposed to absolute monarchy and supporters of parliamentary rule. The Tories, on the other hand, represented the smaller landed gentry more inclined to authoritarian forms of government, leaning towards absolute monarchy.

In the beginning, the first assemblies in Europe operated under a system of restricted suffrage. That is to say that the voting rights were restricted to specific segments of the population, based on different criteria—property ownership, age, gender, class, race, literacy or taxpaying status. At that time, parties were simply groups of traditional social elites. The first researcher to describe these parties comprehensively was the French sociologist Maurice Duverger. He described them as groupings of social elites and identifies two types of parties at the end of the 19th century. The *conservatives* were composed of aristocrats, industrialists, bankers and influential clergy. The *liberal* or radical parties brought together merchants, smaller industrialists, administrators, teachers, lawyers, journalists and writers.

In terms of organizations, these were no more than loose federations of electoral committees. The moment they started to “outlive the elections” and to function in between election cycles, they became true party election committees. This type of organization he called *cadre party*—the grouping of elites for preparing elections, conducting campaigns and organising candidates. These parties brought together influential people whose name, prestige or connections could garner support and thus secure votes for the candidate.

The *cadre party* model is characterized by the practical lack of a central party leadership that is different to or independent of the party's members in the legislature. The local party organizations are by definition independent electoral vehicles and thus have little incentive to be subordinate to a central party leadership. The cadre party may thus be defined more as a conglomerate of local organizations than as a single unified national organization. Modern versions of the cadre party are the Canadian and Danish parties—they both have strong parliamentary groups dominated by leadership but weak, virtually non-existent local membership organization.

The practical goal of this kind of conglomerate is to secure a place in the legislature for the local elite, thus representing a practical symbiosis of the “party in public office” and the “party on the ground”. Both terms have been used by Peter Mair to distinguish between organizational structures of a party:

- “party on the ground”—the membership and the local organization of a party;
- “party in public office”—the members of the parliament, local and central government; and
- “party in central office”—the party central leadership and ministration.

With the extension of voting rights and the enfranchisement of new segments of society, the model of political parties changed. The introduction of universal suffrage brought about the need to educate, organize, mobilize and integrate large portions of the population. This process was facilitated by the expansion of governmental activities and its dependence on representative assemblies that fostered a greater need for cohesive and unified majorities.

The parties that formed to represent those groups that had, to this point, been excluded from the political process, did so outside the legislative bodies and initially had no access to them. It was obvious that the existing model of the cadre party was unsuitable for tasks that were discussed with regard to the newly enfranchised people. The greatest tasks of the organization, such as the mobilization and education of the electorate, happened in the very struggle of these groups to gain access to the political sphere in general, and the democratic process in particular. The need was first to mobilize the people to win their right to vote, and then to secure the votes needed to win in the new mass suffrage system.

Thus, the new party model relied not on financial resources or the quality of its members, but on numbers—the voters for the party were also members of the party. Duverger calls this a “*mass party*”. This type of party developed a highly hierarchical and complex model of organization and communication with the members. Financial resources were collected through a membership fee. The party was responsible for educating the members in the electoral process in general, and in the policies and ideologies of the party in particular—as well as organizing them and, ultimately, mobilizing them to participate in the political process. A classic example of this model is the Socialist Workers’ Party of Germany, established in 1875.

This model demonstrates the clearest possible division between the three faces of the party, mentioned above, with clearly defined central and local leadership and “party in the Parliament”.

There is general consensus, in the literature, about the three stages of party development in contemporary Europe. More specifically, three waves and four types of party structures are identified.

The first wave of adaptation and modernization happened between 1890 and the First World War and it marked the period of change from traditional parties, which Duverger calls *cadre parties*, to the more organized mass parties.

The second wave started after the end of the Second World War, with the emergence of the catch-all party model. The term was developed by Otto Kirchheimer in 1965 to describe the demise of party loyalties based on class structure, the weakening of political ideologies, growing volatility and the technological change that led to the rise of mass media, and the “marketization” of politics.

As a result of all this, parties became more focused on the electoral process itself, exchanging the depth of their relationship with the voter for a wider audience and more immediate election success. A party cannot hope to attract all types of voters, but it might expect to appeal to voters from categories that are not in serious conflict; hence the focus on developing programmes that benefit all segments of society, concentrating on problems that do not face significant opposition in the community and national goals that go beyond group interest.

Furthermore, rising levels of literacy and education within the population, a decrease in working hours, the demise of traditional elites and increased mobility all led to the demise of support for parties based on class,

religion or region. Parties became less ideological, more moderate and closer to each other in terms of their political positions. This in turn led to a significant shift in the balance between the three faces of the party. The conflict between the *party in public office* and the *party on the ground* is played out in the *party of central office*. The conflict is characterized by the central role of professionals (focused on electoral competition) but weak vertical connection with the membership base of the party.

The third period of party change begins in 1970 and to date has led to a variety of modified or “post-catch-all” parties, for whom political science has not developed a generally accepted term, or rather has developed too many competing or complementing definitions. One of them is the concept of *cartel party*, developed by Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair in *Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The emergence of the cartel party* (1995).

This new type is determined by the relationship of the parties with the state. Competing for votes on the basis of the qualities of their leaders and the efficiency of their policies, the catch-all parties become vulnerable because of the volatility of their electorate. As a result, they become more and more dependent on state subsidies, thus becoming more dependent on the state. Instead of fighting for electoral victory, they are happy to just gain direct access to power and state resources. For Katz and Mair, cartel parties are no longer intermediaries between civil society and the state (the main operational principle of catch-all parties); they simply become agents of the state.

It should be noted that no ideal and unified model of a political party has existed up to this point. Neither have any of the described types of existing parties developed to their full potential. It seems, however, that a general tendency toward a convergence of the *party in central office* and the *party in public office* can be observed (with a strong emphasis on the latter). Together with the growing alienation of voters from politics in general, and from parties in particular, the growing autonomy of the party leadership from its voters has become a driver for further dissatisfaction with traditional parties, resulting in the rise of populist and xenophobic parties and in the increased appeal of anti-party sentiments.

Hristo PANCHUGOV

POLITICAL SYSTEM

You may not be interested in politics; but politics is interested in you.

Popular graffiti

David Easton, in *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (1965), focuses on the fact that there is a limited amount of resources available. Groups or individuals within society make demands that cannot be fully satisfied. These demands require “a special organized effort on the part of society” to be met. This effort takes the shape of an authoritative decision that produces binding effects on society. Thus the demands that require a decision with such binding effect become what Easton calls *input* to the *political system*.

Through his identification of the political system in terms of meeting demands through authoritative decisions that have binding effects on society, he defines political activity as an “authoritative allocation of values for a society”.

Easton sets out to understand and define the political process by looking into its systematic properties. For him, political life is a system of interrelated activities that needs to be understood not only by looking at its different parts but also by understanding the way that the whole operates. Easton distinguishes between and defines *political systems* on the basis of the properties that they have *as systems*.

He identifies four major attributes of the definition:

1. The *first attribute* for Easton is the “*properties of identification*” that distinguish a political system from other social systems. By establishing the main institutions and by setting up the boundaries of the system, it can then be differentiated from the economic system, civil society and so on. Easton writes that these boundaries can be determined by, and associated

with, such actions as are more or less related to “making binding decisions on society”.

2. The *second attribute* is related to *the way that the system functions*. Since the political system does not operate in a vacuum, it is only natural that it will function as a response to its environment—society in general. Thus it is crucial to understand:

- the nature of the *inputs* (these are the demands that originate either in the environment, or within the political system itself) into the system and the process behind them;
- how these inputs are transformed into *outputs* (*specific binding decisions or policies*);
- then how this process is maintained;
- and what the effect is of the *outputs* on the succeeding *inputs*, that is, how outputs are transformed into support for the system.

The behaviour of every political system is determined not only by its own structure and internal needs but also by the restrictions imposed by the specific setting in which it operates.

The functions of the system may be divided into two groups—*systematic* and *process* functions.

Systematic functions are crucial to the maintenance of the political system and determine how the system responds to challenges. They do not concern the actual policy-making process. These functions transform the outputs of the system into the necessary support to maintain it.

There are three systematic functions: *political socialization*; *political recruitment*; and *political communication*.

Political socialization is the process of creating and maintaining a sense of community and common purpose, of shared values and a shared political culture. This is the process through which members of the community learn their political roles and acquire the desire to perform them. *Political recruitment* is the process of selecting the people engaged in political and governmental activity. Finally, *communication* refers to the information flow through both society and the political system.

The better these functions are performed, the more likely it is that support for the system will endure even if systematic hardship occurs, or

if there is failure to satisfy specific demands for a prolonged time. Easton describes these systematic functions as a process of *politicization*.

Process functions outline the actual transformation of inputs into outputs of the system. That is to say that they describe the actual process of policy making. The systematic functions are:

- *interest articulation*—the expression and articulation of specific demands on behalf of particular groups or some individuals within society;
- *interest aggregation*—the organization and aggregation of the expressed interests into understandable and distinguishable policy alternatives;
- *policy making*—the process of developing and selecting/adopting specific policy options by the government;
- *policy implementation*—the process of carrying out and enforcing public policies; and
- *policy adjudication*—the process of settling disputes within the system.

3. The *third attribute* identified by Easton is the *differentiation within the system*. From the environment come the demands (inputs) that activate the system. As a result, it produces outputs (decisions or policies) that are different from the inputs that enter the system.

In order for the system to be maintained and to answer the variety of demands, both internal and external, at least minimal differentiation between the units of its structure must occur. Based on that differentiation, the literature identifies six general types of political structures that perform specific functions: political parties; interest groups; legislatures; executives; bureaucracies; and courts.

It is only to be expected that various strains and stresses within the political system will threaten it with disintegration. If it is to maintain itself, it must create a mechanism through which its members are integrated or at least stimulated to cooperate to some minimal degree, so that it is able to produce authoritative decisions.

4. Thus, the *fourth attribute* of the system is the *level of integration of its parts*. That is to say that, in order for the system to produce an output that

meets demands, there should be a well-developed process of interaction between the government that develops policy, the Parliament that votes on it and the administration that is responsible for its implementation.

Different systems come up with different arrangements to tackle such challenges. These arrangements are defined through the term *political regime*.

There are a number of classifications of the types of political regimes. One of the most comprehensive is the typology developed by Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan in their book *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe* (1996). They base their typology on five indicators:

- the degree of autonomy of the civil society;
- the degree of autonomy of the political society;
- the degree of development of constitutionalism and the rule of law;
- the standards of professional norms and the autonomy of state bureaucracy;
- the degree of market autonomy and plurality of forms of property ownership in the economic society.

According to these criteria, Linz and Stepan identify four types of non-democratic regimes: authoritarian, totalitarian, post-totalitarian and sultanistic.

Authoritarian regimes are described as systems in which power is highly centralized, with a low to medium level of autonomy of political society. That is to say that political opposition is relatively weak and unorganized; however, in different types of authoritarianism significant levels of civil society autonomy may be observed. Typically, these regimes retain a relatively high degree of market economy and plurality of ownership forms. The typical example that Linz uses is the case of Franco's Spain.

Totalitarian regimes differ from authoritarian by the degree of control that the central power exerts over political and other systems. Central power is dominated by an ideology that is expressed by the one party, thus merging governmental structures with party structures. The government and institutions become an instrument of the party. There is no political opposition and the degree of autonomy of civil society is extremely low.

Furthermore, there is no market economy and no plurality of ownership forms. Typical totalitarian regimes are the communist regimes of the USSR and in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the fascist regime of Mussolini in Italy and Hitler's national socialism in Germany.

Post-totalitarian regimes differ from totalitarianism by the development of more independent structures of civil society. Popular opposition to party control over political and individual life starts to develop, commonly leading to pressure for political reforms that guarantee specific individual freedoms. That is to say that the rule of the party is challenged by the introduction of laws that go against the party's will. One example of a post-totalitarian society is Poland after 1981.

The *Sultanistic* regimes are focused on complete domination by the ruler. Power is centralised in the hands of an individual ruler. There is no political opposition and the degree of autonomy of civil society is extremely low. The bureaucracy and the people in it are dependent on their personal relationship with the ruler, not on professional or other qualities. The economy is entirely dependent on the will of the "sultan". Typical examples of Sultanistic regimes are Iraq under Saddam Hussein and Libya under Muammar Gaddafi.

For Linz and Stepan, the *democratic* regime is a separate and cohesive type, with differences between various democratic regimes not seen as significant. Others disagree. For example, Arend Lijphart, in *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-six Countries* (1999), develops a concept of two ideal types of democracy—*Westminster* and *Consensus*. He bases his typology on the notion that among democratic regimes there are generally two types of logic that are embodied in the heart of any institution.

The first is the logic of *power fusion*—the idea that power is centralized and vested in the hands of a clear majority. And the second is the logic of *power sharing*—the idea that power needs to be restrained and shared among different groups in society and among political institutions, both vertically and horizontally. In order to determine which logic dominates, and into which ideal model each democratic system fits, he develops a typology of indicators along two dimensions—the *executive-party dimension* and the *federal-unitary dimension*.

The ideal type of consensus democracy, one that uses the logic of power sharing, is a system in which

1. there is a balance between the executive power and the legislature;
2. cabinets are formed by larger than minimal-winning coalitions;
3. election systems are proportional;
4. there is a multiparty system that represents the different groups within society;
5. there is a corporate type of interest group representation.

In the federal-unitary dimension, Consensus democracy is a system that guarantees decentralization/regional autonomy and minority rights. Thus it is (1) a federal state; with (2) a bicameral legislature and (3) a rigid/written constitution which is (4) guaranteed by a constitutional court and (5) an independent Central Bank.

According to Lijphart, the system that comes the closest to that ideal type is Belgium.

The countries that come closest to the opposite pole, the Westminster type of democracy, are Great Britain and New Zealand. These systems entail the logic of *power fusion* and represent a state where there is dominance of the cabinet over the legislature, single-party cabinets, a first-past-the-post election system, and a unidimensional, two-party system. The representation of interests is pluralistic and adversarial, unlike the corporate representation under the consensus model. The states are typically unitary with unicameral or strongly asymmetrical bicameral legislatures. There is no rigid or written constitution, and thus no constitutional court. Furthermore, there is no independent central bank.

Hristo PANCHUGOV

POLITICS

The first lesson of economics is scarcity: there is never enough of anything to fully satisfy all those who want it. The first lesson of politics is to disregard the first lesson of economics.

Thomas Sowell

Politics is the manner in which human communities decide what to do together, without visiting violence upon each other.

The objection to the above would be: this explanation is to do with democratic politics, but there is also non-democratic politics. This is where we need to be extremely precise in our definitions. In a non-democratic structuring of power we have “politics” in the sense of *access* (usually via intrigue and nepotism) to the strongman. In the final analysis, however, whatever decisions, binding on everyone, are taken in a non-democratic setting, the will of the strongman is the defining principle. This is why, in situations where power is structured, implemented and held by a strongman, there is no politics in any sense that may be useful to us.

Humans are creatures that do not live as individuals or even as separate families. We live in relatively big *groups*, in order to be able to raise our children.

Unlike the case with most animals, human children do not stand on their own legs within minutes, days or weeks of birth. We need years, during which our children are to be protected, nurtured and trained. This is the key explanation behind the human habit of living in big groups and forming durable communities.

Once a group comes into being, whether animal or human, power appears. Someone must decide what is to be done; and the others must go out and do it, in order for the group to survive. In the animal kingdom, as

a rule, the strongest individual decides what is to be done. He, or in some cases, she, is the leader of the group until enfeebled by old age and replaced by a younger individual. In the first human groups, the hunter-gatherers, the leader was usually the strongest and the ablest hunter.

In such relations of power, things are starkly simple. There is nothing complicated; there is no politics. The strongest individual takes the decisions and the others obey.

But human groups possess another characteristic besides needing an incredibly long time to raise their children. Humans are in possession of very complex and differentiated language, which they use for communication. And they communicate constantly. They spend their time “gossiping”, as Yuval Noah Harari notes in his seminal book *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (2011).

This constant “gossiping” serves some very useful functions. The first, noted by Harari, is the establishment of *trust*. As humans gossip about each other, they come to conclusions as to who is trustworthy and who is not. With people we trust, we do various things together for the good of the community. There is a second important useful function of gossiping, which is to shift the locus of power from individual strength to collective debate. The more we humans “gossip”, the more clearly we come to understand that the best decisions for the entire community are not ones taken by an isolated strongman. They are more the outcome of deliberations between everyone concerned. During such deliberations, everyone can contribute with their own experience, expertise and vision.

In this way, throughout history, the original inequality as regards power (one decides, the rest obey) has been gradually replaced by the assumption of equality as regards the expert potential of every “gossiper”.

Politics, properly speaking, was born at the precise moment when the answer to the question “What should we be doing?” was no longer provided by the strongest individual in the community but by the whole community, following a lengthy and turbulent debate in which everyone’s word carried equal weight. Historically, we can probably trace this moment to the beginning of the agrarian age, when human groups stopped foraging for food and settled down in one place, where they began to grow the food they needed.

Sustainable village communities came into being, where decisions were taken by everyone, or by a group of elders who represented everyone else.

Real politics, we know from Aristotle, comes into being when several villages come together and form a bigger and qualitatively new kind of community—a state. The word ancient Greeks used for “state” is *polis* (πόλις), literally, “political multitude” or “political community”. Even today it is easy to see that from *polis* we get words such as “politics”, “policy”, “police”, “metropolis” and even “politeness” (via the French *politesse*).

According to Aristotle, the father of political analysis, people formed states with specific objectives in mind. Apart from defending its citizens from foreign aggression, the state is expected to ensure for its citizens the conditions for “the good life”, as well as for the citizens themselves to be virtuous. Given this, Aristotle continues, the constitutions of states can be divided into “proper” constitutions, that is, those that serve the common good, the good of everyone; and “deviant” constitutions, under which the rulers serve their own good.

From Aristotle’s heritage we can distill the following pithy definition of politics as being *that activity which is to do with serving the polis, that is, the common good and the good life, while tending to virtue.*

Aristotle notes that humans, living by necessity in communities, also have a natural inclination to build states in order to attain the common good. Humans, writes Aristotle, are by their nature “political animals” (ζῷον πολιτικόν). And he continues: “Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to, and therefore does not partake of the *polis*, is either a **beast** or a **god**”; the corollary is that if you do not live in a community, you are not properly human.

Within a properly constructed *polis*, Aristotle writes, we have *political power*—power between equals. The opposite to this is *despotic power*—power between unequals. The participants in political power are equal citizens, who in effect constitute the state as such (repeatedly, Aristotle points out that the simplest definition of the state is that it is the sum of those official positions—judges, taxmen, policemen, customs officers and so on—that the citizens distribute among themselves). Power is in the hands of the citizens. Under despotic power, we see a division of masters and servants, power being in the hands of the masters.

During Aristotle's time, the *polis* of Athens (where he lived and wrote) contained very few citizens because only a small minority of people actually inhabiting the city enjoyed the status of citizens. They were few enough in number to be able to gather together and debate ("gossip") about what is to be done, by whom and for how long. Today's democratic states are descendants of this kind of way of proceeding, but with one major difference: all of their inhabitants are, in effect, citizens. It is impossible for them to all gather together and deliberate. This is why they empower representatives to deliberate in their stead. These representatives constitute a big "talking shop" (*Parliament*, from the Latin *parabolare*, "to tell stories"), where they debate what is to be done and then shape it by passing binding legislation. To implement their decisions, these representatives appoint an executive body (a government).

Over the last one hundred years or so, we have seen the appearance of alternative descriptions of politics, which differ radically from what we know from Aristotle. These alternative descriptions maintain that politics is not about serving of the common good, nor about securing the conditions for the good life and promoting virtue; rather, politics is simply a method of distributing limited resources among people with unlimited appetites. If, however, we stay with such descriptions of politics, we are liable to fall into at least two traps.

The first trap is that we begin to see politics not as deliberation with a view to serving the common good, as *cooperation*; rather, we begin to grasp politics as a clash between different groups with different appetites that cannot all be satisfied at the same time. This is the Marxist viewpoint, politics as the arena of the "struggle between classes". Today, we see a new version of this in the shape of "identity politics", according to which the *polis* is split into many groups which are by definition unable to come to any agreement and can only struggle against one another.

The second trap is that, were we to judge a state's success solely by how efficiently it distributes resources, we would be unable to conclude (as per Aristotle) as to whether this state is properly or deviantly constructed. We would only be able to judge the efficiency of its distribution mechanisms. What happens to people under this distribution, whether they are being oppressed and persecuted or not—on such matters we would stay silent.

However, unlike geology, for example, which is bound to simply register how things *are*, political science (*politologie*, in French) has the duty not just to describe things as they are but also to judge whether things are as they *should be*. For this reason, the “distributive” concepts of politics do not satisfy us. We find much more satisfying Aristotle’s concepts of “common good”, “virtue” and “justice” not only because they help us deal with politics proper but also because they help us judge whether a state (and its politics) are as they should be.

Which brings us to the arena of *political philosophy*. This kind of philosophy deals with the question of what relations between the individual human being and the *polis* (what we would today call “society”) *should be*, so that this individual can lead a good life.

We can immediately see the prime difficulty here: What is the good life? And further, does the good life include, as Aristotle maintained, some list of virtues? Or is a good life possible without virtues?

Over the past two centuries, two main approaches have been developed in this respect. The first concentrates on the life and activities of the separate individual and maintains that the good life is a life in which society (the *polis*) does not hinder any individual from attaining her happiness as she sees fit. Within this approach, the individual is more important than the community. And, if needs be, the community makes sacrifices (becomes deprived of something) in order not to hinder the individual.

According to the second approach, the community (society, *polis*) is more important than the individual. Thus, the good life is not simply the lack of hindrance over the individuals’ pursuit of happiness. The good life is attained in the community. Therefore, when necessary, it is the individual who makes sacrifices (becomes deprived of something) in order for the community to have a good life.

Which of these approaches is true? Which one of them better describes how a *polis should be*?

The easy answer is that, obviously, both approaches are, to a certain extent, equally useful. Yes, people live in communities; but, no, the community should not hinder its individual members from doing what they deem best, as long as they do not harm anyone else. From the point of view of political philosophy, however, things are somewhat more complicated

because the combination between the two approaches is not as simple as it may sound.

Today's liberal democracies are the products of the first approach—the individual is more important than the *polis*. From here it follows that the good life happens when the *polis* does not hinder any of its members from pursuing their happiness as they understand it. The alternative—when the community is more important than the individual—has, during the last one hundred years, been seen primarily in its ugliest guise, in authoritarian and dictatorial regimes which believe that the nation/state/race is more important than the individual who owes them obedience.

Given that, under liberal democracy, people obviously lead better lives¹ than under any other political construct, our verdict should be easy: those states in which individuals are more important than the whole are as they *should be*.

If, however, this was so easy, why then do we see today's almost universal rebellion against liberal democracy—against the idea that the individual is more important than the group? Why do Hungarians vote in such vast numbers for Viktor Orban, who tells them that human rights are an American subversion and do not apply to Hungarians, whose duty it should be to, above all, obey the state and work hard for its good? Why do the Russians vote for Vladimir Putin, who tells them that the state is more important than the people and that they, the people, should be making sacrifices for its good?

It would seem that there is a real problem inside liberal democracies—and that it lies in the over-concentration on the “good life” (interpreted as “individual happiness”) at the price of something that Aristotle was convinced should be an integral part of the good life—*virtue*. There is no way, Aristotle believed, that a *polis* can attain the good life if that life is not lived by virtuous citizens.

But what is virtue? There is no serious philosophical school in existence that would argue that the attainment of individual happiness is a virtue. To clinch a deal so good that it makes you a millionaire so you can at last get that luxury yacht does not make you virtuous. You may be seen as virtuous,

¹ At the very least, as legendary American thinker Brzezinski reminds us, in liberal democracies people do not get beaten up on the streets by uniformed agents of the state.

however, if you spend the money you would have paid for a luxury yacht on a hospital or university instead.

Here is the crux. Virtue happens when you work for others, when you limit your own desires or sacrifice something that is yours. According to Aristotle, virtue is inextricably intertwined with the good of the *polis*. The virtuous individual would be prepared to sacrifice her time, fortune and energy in the service of the common good. For example: one might disregard the interests of one's home and business for a few years in order to serve as a judge.

Over the years, this understanding of virtue has been lost in the thinking and practices of liberal democracy. The concentration primarily on the rights and freedoms of the individual has led to the abandonment of the problematic of virtue. And with no virtue, as Aristotle would tell us, the attainment of the good life is not possible.

In any case, over recent decades, the priority of the individual has resulted in a generalized distortion of the conception of the good life. Since the early 1980s, the good life has been reduced to this: that separate individuals consume ever more in order to attain happiness. In the end, people have become “consumers”, but have found no happiness. So they feel cheated—and then, angry.

The great political philosophers would have marvelled at our capacity to reduce the good life to ever greater individual consumption. Let's think: if a defining characteristic of humans is that they live in communities; if whoever can live outside of the community is beast or god, but is not human—then the good life must be intimately linked to the community. With it is also connected the key political virtue: the willingness to work for the common good, while sacrificing your own time, energy and appetites.

The divorce between liberal democracy and the problematic of the community is a problem not only because it promises the impossible: the attainment of the good life through personal consumption. We see also serious deformations taking place in another crucial arena of life in community—the arena of *recognition*.

The problematic of recognition arises out of a key characteristic of humans that we have already discussed: their being in possession of well articulated, developed language, which they use in order to constantly

communicate with each other. As philosopher Mark Rowlands notes in his book *The Philosopher and The Wolf*, this conversation literally constructs the world in which we live: “People are the only animals who believe the stories they tell about themselves”. In such a reality, created by conversation (or, as Harari would have it, by “gossip”), every one of us strives to attain recognition from others. Without recognition, we remain shapeless—we do not really know who we are, nor can others identify us as being anyone in particular.

In his *Philosophy of Right*, German philosopher Hegel notes three forms of recognition: love within the family; the fulfillment of contracts within civil society; and solidarity within the state. All three involve facing outward, towards others, and are, consequently, arenas for the attainment of virtue.

What has, however, happened to recognition within liberal democracies over recent decades? If the good life means that the individual attains her aims without hindrance from the *polis* (society, state), then recognition is due to those individuals who have managed to do just this, who have attained personal success. But because, since the early 1990s, personal success has come to be seen as the attainment of increasing wealth, then it follows that recognition is due to those who have become wealthy.

What virtue—what role model—is being created by such recognition? The answer is obvious: everyone begins striving after more wealth. And when this is seen to be impossible, as it obviously is, then those who fail to become rich—those not attaining recognition—become frustrated and furious with the whole political set-up, because they have been left behind; they have attained no shape, have remained invisible and inconsequential. In their turn, the rich come to the conclusion that they do not owe any recognition to those who have not managed to become rich. Why should they owe them recognition if they are obvious failures?

In this way, equality, which is characteristic of political power, is seriously undermined. Some people turn out to be “more equal” than others; and those others remain invisible and non-existent in the game of recognition.

Today’s rebellion against liberal democracy is carried out by these non-recognised, inconsequential people. What they seem to be seeking is some way back into the community, into that human group in which they would find recognition and would become of consequence.

Because big parties and influential politicians remain uninvolved in this process, then the search for renewed recognition is being increasingly headed by extreme and dangerous demagogues who uniformly offer a return to the most basic, pre-political community—the tribe² (the ethnos, the faith, the state). Within the tribe, everyone receives recognition by the mere fact of membership. She does not need to achieve anything, or indeed do anything, in order to attain recognition. From this follows the new fashion of ignorance, replacing the cult of knowledge that has existed since the 18th century. Why, indeed, should you know anything, if you get (tribal) recognition even if totally illiterate? As long as you are seen as “one of us”, recognition follows automatically.

What we are being offered is the replacement of liberal democracy, riddled with distortions as it has become, with an even more distorted version of a tribe, composed of illiterates. Once we become clear on this, we can see what political model we are being offered, to wit: the replacement of political power (i.e. between equals) with despotic power (i.e. between masters and servants).

We urgently need to reinstate politics—the possibility to decide what we do together as a *polis*—without somebody visiting violence upon somebody else. Or, as Mao Tse-Tung once wrote, we need to revive politics as a form of political power “without bloodletting”.³

This revival must, by necessity, involve refocusing on the common good and the virtues connected with it. At the very least, in this effort we would be able to rediscover that recognition which is typical of political communities—the recognition that you have done something for others, sacrificing something that is yours. Once established as a universal rule, such recognition can lead also to the revival of the notion that the good life cannot take place without virtuous people.

Here we briefly leave the terrain of political philosophy and return to the arena of political analysis with the following question: What do we

² This phenomenon is so recent that it has not yet found its agreed name. Most analysts would talk of “nativism” or “tribalism” at this stage.

³ Mao is, of course, a bloodthirsty tyrant and this quote he quite possibly formulated “for foreign consumption”. This does not negate the veracity of the principle involved.

have, as resources in politics, in order to attain such goals? And also: What are the obstacles we face?

Let us begin with the obstacles. Let us take a look at that “talking shop” (parliament), where our representatives are supposed to deliberate what is to be done. Is this “talking shop” working in our interest—is it working as it *should be*?

In modern parliaments it is political *parties* that deliberate in our name (it has not always been thus). Back in the 1990s, however, these parties became deformed. This deformation coincided, timewise, with the deformation of liberal democracy in the direction of consumerism and the recognition of money.

In the early 1990s, Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair⁴ noted that modern parties are not so much citizen associations, presenting different visions of the common good, as cartels, working for their own good. The two analysts even introduced the term “cartel party”. At its most basic, such a party does not represent citizens in the arena of political power, but does the opposite, seeing itself as a representative of power facing the citizens.

The replacement of classic political parties with cartel parties has dealt a shattering blow to the conversation about virtue. Classic parties, as per Ivan Krastev’s⁵ elegant turn of phrase, are “pedagogical organizations”. They educate their members in the different virtues which different parties uphold:

- Liberal parties educate in values such as freedom, creativity and ambition.
- Socialist parties educate their members in values such as social justice, professional dignity and non-acceptance of unjustifiable inequality.
- Conservative parties educate their members in the idea of community, loyalty, patriotism and the value of the nation state.

With the eclipse of such parties, politics has lost an important element of education. And, as Bulgarian philosopher Hristo Todorov rightly

⁴ Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair, “Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: the emergence of the cartel party”, *Party Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1995), 5–31.

⁵ I. Krastev, *After Europe*, Philadelphia: Penn Press, 2017.

notes, “liberal democracy is not for stupid people and its survival depends on education”.

As cartel parties come to dominate parliaments, parliamentary debates are no longer about the good of the citizenry, but rather about the good of the parties themselves. It does not take citizens very long to note this change and to lose their faith in parties. They stop being members of parties, paying membership dues or attending meetings—that is, they pull out of the mechanisms that used to ensure control and accountability of the parties. Decreasing numbers of citizens bother to vote.

A chasm opens between citizens and parties, filled with suspicion and mistrust. Ultimately, the parties come to the conclusion that, this being the situation, they no longer need to work for the common good. “Power” frees itself of its anchors in the citizenry and becomes, in German philosopher Jurgen Habermas’s words, “a free-floating executive”. This is the situation which gave birth to today’s “political class” which finds nothing untoward in using its position for its own profit, in appointing family members to public positions, or in redirecting public funds to numbered bank accounts.

At this juncture, we see the appearance of populism. Unlike classic parties, populist parties do not seek to educate or uplift their members. Such parties accept people as they are, give them easy recognition and do not require any particular effort from them.

The appearance of cartel parties and the consequent alienation of people from politics are the basic obstacles that we face today, together with ignorance and the search for community in imagined tribes. Now we must ask the question: Do we have the resources to overcome such obstacles and reinstate the true meaning of politics: activity for the common good while avoiding violence?

Indeed, we do have such resources. Humans continue to live in communities, to debate everything and to seek recognition. Such activities inevitably lead them to the conclusion that, as regards their relation to power, all citizens are equal; and that the structure of power they would like to live under is, therefore, political rather than despotic power. The question is, how to mobilize these basic human characteristics for the recovery of politics?

Here we return to the field of political philosophy.

The rethinking of the role of community, and of the virtues linked to it, is an obvious starting point. Here, however, the heritage of history is a burden.

The last time in history when the freedom of the individual and the requirements of the community (and the virtues connected with it) were seamlessly fused were the first decades of the existence of the USA, explicitly founded as a republic rather than a democracy. The political doctrine behind this came to be known as “the republican ideal”. It can be seen in Europe, flickering on and off around the middle of the 19th century, in the writings of national liberation figures such as Garibaldi in Italy and Levski in Bulgaria. After this time, however, attempts to determine the requirements of the political community took a worrying turn.

During the 20th century, the political community has been declared more important than the individual by communists, fascists and Nazis, as well as by authoritarian nationalist dictators in Central and Eastern Europe. Today we observe, again, how populist politicians appeal for a return to the primacy of the community at the expense of fundamental individual human rights and freedoms.

Thus, what we have inherited in terms of political history is far from inspiring. Also ambiguous is the intellectual heritage. During the second half of the 19th century, J. S. Mill prioritized the freedoms and rights of the individual, vis-à-vis both the state and the “majority” in society. Ultimately, out of this came some good things in politics: female suffrage; the overcoming of racism; the inclusion of excluded groups such as homosexuals. At the same time, following Mill, political philosophers have tended to view the majority in a society with suspicion, as something dangerous—a suspicion seemingly confirmed by the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century.

This suspicion we note in the most famous and widely read philosophical text on freedom, published by Isaiah Berlin in 1958 under the title “Two Concepts of Liberty”. Following a tradition in English philosophy dating back to Hobbes, he names the first concept “negative freedom”. This freedom is “negative” in the sense that it is reduced to the simple absence of impediments to the free will of the individual. When there is no obstruction from doing what you want to do, that is negative freedom. We can easily

see that this concept closely corresponds to the political emphasis on the individual, as discussed above.

The other form of freedom Berlin calls “positive freedom”. This concept describes a situation in which you are not only relieved of impediments but you are also able to shape society in such a way that, in the end, it helps everyone attain their aims. We can, again, easily see that this concept of liberty refers to the significance of the community, of the *polis*.

In his original text, published in 1958, as well as in its second edition in 1969, Berlin is heavily suspicious of “positive freedom”. The reason for this is not only Mill’s worry about “tyranny of the majority” but also the memory of totalitarianism in Europe. In this way, the problematic of the community was again sidelined, this time by the greatest thinker on the subject of freedom.

Only in 2000 did Berlin⁶ look back to admit his mistake, writing that positive freedom is “a legitimate universal aim”, grounded in the fact that “democratic self-government is a fundamental human need” and a value in itself.

Democratic self-government is, of course, a description of political power (power between equals) in a political community (*polis*). This makes positive freedom as legitimate as negative freedom in constructing a political community. And this brings us back into the arena of politics.

Of course, the question now is *how* to reconstruct our *polis* around the equal legitimacy of the individual and the community. A general kind of answer is to be found in the works of two American political thinkers: John Dewey (first half of the 20th century) and C. Wright Mills (early second half of the 20th century). Both develop the idea that, in order to function properly, a liberal democracy needs to be populated by “deliberating publics”. Such “publics” are the sum of the various democratic groups—from neighbourhood associations to national civil movements—which constantly debate and aim to resolve problems that transcend their individual interest, addressing some greater good.

During the 1920s in the USA, when Dewey was active, and then again in the 1950s, when C. Wright Mills came to prominence, these “deliberating

⁶ I. Berlin, *Five Essays on Liberty: An Introduction*, Oxford: OUP, 2000.

publics” were severely weakened, which worried both thinkers. In the first case, this weakening was overcome by the revival (for various reasons) of small-scale, face-to-face deliberating publics in small communities. In the second case, the deficiency in deliberating publics was seen to be overcome by the appearance, from the late 1950s, of the “new social movements”, such as the student movements, the peace movements and civil rights movements. These cycles repeated themselves during the 1980s in communist Eastern Europe, where opponents of the regime begin to revive politics by reconstructing civil society as a multitude of deliberating publics debating aspects of the common good.

To sum up: the problem which we face today has been faced, and solved, on at least three occasions during the past 100 years. We have examples and we can point to the principles involved.

In order to revive politics, we need to make the effort to construct deliberating publics. This cannot take place on Twitter or Facebook. This needs face-to-face deliberation in physical gatherings of citizens and can take place at various levels: within the local community (town-hall meetings); at the national level (protection of the environment, resistance against monopolies and cartels, pressure on governments for rule of law and eradication of corruption); or at the international level (there are examples of international-scope civil groups working on environmental protection and rule of law). If we take the media to be also a “deliberating public”, then we also need to find ways to recover independent journalism and combat falsifications, untruths and ignorance.

Where there is no politics, there is naked violence. If we do not want to be routinely beaten up on the streets by uniformed agents of the state, we need to revive the kind of politics described in this article.

Evgenii DAINOV

RELIGION

All sects are different, because they come from men; morality is everywhere the same, because it comes from God.

Voltaire

The term comes from the Latin *religio*, meaning “restraint”, or *relegere*, meaning “to unite, to connect”, and on the one hand presupposes the union of Man with God, and on the other the integration of a group of people into a religious society. At the same time, this religious society is distinguished from others principally by the specific religious rites and rituals they perform—in other words, through their religion.

The term is associated with respect to the Divine, the spiritual and the sacred. Every religion shares several common aspects:

A. A well-organized and stable hierarchical structure of god/gods and goddesses, who are unconditionally respected as the supreme power, and most often are supernatural in origin. Because of this, the god/gods cannot be “imagined” by humans, although in certain religions they acquire the visual image of men and women. In other cases, religious rules—the canon—strictly forbid any kind of depiction of divinities. In most religious beliefs, god/gods are the creators of the world; they organize and rule it, and they can bring it to an end.

Despite their supernatural and enigmatic origin, very often god/gods share human characteristics. They can be pleased, particularly by proper behaviour by humans such as ardent worship, as well as the correct performance of rituals and delivery of gifts; at the same time, god/gods can be angry, violent and merciless to those who do not respect

them as prescribed. The Greek philosopher Xenophanes of Colophon (c. 570–478 BC) wrote:

“Mortals suppose that the gods are born and have clothes and voices and shapes like their own. But if oxen, horses and lions had hands or could paint with their hands and fashion works as men do, horses would paint horse-like images of gods and oxen oxen-like ones, and each would fashion bodies like their own.”

B. *A stable and conservative corpus of religious rites and rituals*, mainly dedicated to worship of the god/gods. As the representative of Romantic literature, Novalis, says: “Prayer is to religion what thinking is to philosophy. To pray is to make religion.”

Very often, prayers are led by religious officials of high rank—the priests, who have undergone the specific initiation rituals required by the specific religion. The role of the priests is that of mediators between the religious communities and the god/gods they believe in, but very often they perform many more social roles: taking care of the poor, counseling those in need, providing medical services and organizing the grand festivals which honour the gods.

C. *A system of beliefs*, including cosmogonic theory—an epic narration about the beginning of the world, a story about the creation of mankind, a strong “philosophical” system concerning man’s role and place in life, life after death, models of reincarnation and, finally, a narration about the end of the world (eschatology).

In other words, every world religion provides a strong model of the beginning, development and end of the world.

From this point of view, there are two basic models of religious explanation of “how the world is progressing”. The first model is “linear”—it describes the “way of the world” as a linear continuation, having a beginning, continuation and an end. Such a religion is Christianity. The second model sees the world as a cyclic process—a perpetual birth, life, death and rebirth, having no beginning and no end. Such a religion is, for example, Buddhism.

Concerning humans and their purpose, religions have again two different points of view. According to some, people have a definitive path to follow after their journey through life: Heaven, for those who have led a decent and proper life; and Hell, for those who have committed sins and have not been absolved from them. Other religions see the “human journey” as an everlasting continuum of birth, death and reincarnation, with their position after reincarnation depending on their virtuous (or otherwise) behaviour during previous lives.

D. *Material culture.* Every world religion possesses certain “regalia” belonging to the material culture: churches, temples or sacred places in which religious rituals are performed; visual images of gods and saints, such as icons or sculptures; religious music and songs; very often—an impressive corpus of religious books, such as the Holy Bible for Christianity or the Holy Koran for Islam; as well as ritual attire and ritual objects.

E. *Spiritual or symbolic heritage,* referring to the distinct spiritual philosophies and ideas behind each world religion.

There are three main types of religious attitudes: monotheistic, polytheistic and atheistic. According to *Monotheism*, only one God exists, and He is the Creator of the whole of eternity. Monotheistic religions are Judaism, Christianity and Islam, but elements of this belief are shared by numerous other religions. In Monotheism, God can be experienced as a *mysterium tremendum*—“a fearful mystery”—yet also as a *mysterium fascinans*—“a fascinating mystery”—a mystery approached by humans with attitudes of both fear and love.

Polytheism is the belief in the existence of a number of gods. A variation of Polytheism is Henotheism, the worship of one god in many forms, typical for some Hindu denominations. This attitude was not very common in the ancient world, but a rare example is the Goddess Isis in ancient Egypt.

Atheism is not a religious belief, but rather a religious attitude—the denial of the belief in any god or gods. During the Communist period, atheism was part of the official ideology of the state, and those who practised religious rituals were, in some periods, severely persecuted.

The first written records of religious practices date from ca. 3500 BC and are found in the lands of ancient Sumer. Mesopotamia is considered to be not only “the cradle of civilization” but also the birthplace of human religion. According to its cosmogony, world order has been created out of chaos by the supreme deities and especially by the great god Marduk, who fought against the god of chaos Tiamat. This belief lasted throughout Mesopotamian history from the Akkadian Empire (c. 2334–2150 BC) to the Assyrian (c. 1813–612 BC) and beyond.

Religion in ancient Egypt was a combination of magic, mythology, medicine and science; the most important religious principle was that of harmony in life, known as *ma'at*. Egyptians worshipped many gods, forming a complex religious Pantheon. The greatest god was Osiris, being the Creator of the world and ancestor of all the other deities. Egyptians also believed that there is life after death and that those of them who have pleased the Gods have their places preserved in a better world, called the Field of Reeds. Many artefacts of the religious culture of ancient Egypt have survived up to the present, such as elaborate tombs (pyramids, temples) and funerary inscriptions (the Pyramid Texts, the Book of the Dead) forming a significant part of world cultural heritage.

The main understanding of *Hinduism* is that every human being has her duty, the *dharma*, which is unique to her, the proper performance of which will ensure her place closer to the Gods. In fact, the popular word *karma* means exactly this: the proper following of the prescribed path. On the other hand, those humans who do not perform their duty properly become subject to reincarnations, as many times as necessary for the understanding of their dharma lessons. This belief was proclaimed by Siddhartha Gautama when he became the Buddha and founded Buddhism.

These religious beliefs were strong and popular enough to survive through the ages (with some modifications) and were successfully adopted in ancient China as well.

Chinese religious beliefs were developed early—around 4500 BC—and were a mix of mythology and animism; but by the time of the Xia Dynasty (2070–1600 BC) there were many anthropomorphic (men-like)

gods, with a chief god, Shangti, who was considered to be ancestor of them all. During the period of the Shang Dynasty (1600–1046 BCE) this belief was developed further, with a special accent on ancestor worship.

Characteristic of the religious beliefs in Mesoamerica (ancient America) was worship of the dead, which was ardently practised by the Mayan people. Mayas honoured more than 250 different deities, and religious worship was the single most important part of their lives. They believed in the cyclical nature of life, and that there was no death but transformation into a new form of existence.

The ancient Greeks believed in many gods and goddesses; and religious worship was an integral part of their everyday life. Humans consulted gods on almost every matter—from simple, everyday problems to questions of national importance, such as declaring war. One of the favourite deities to be consulted on such important issues was the famous Oracle of Delphi. There were two main opposing views on the nature of the gods: on the one hand, Plato consistently criticized the Greek concept of the gods and claimed they were created by men to control other men; on the other hand, Xenophanes insisted that this view was completely wrong and that God was unimaginable.

Christianity was born in Palestine, arising out of *Judaism*, the traditional religion of the Jews, with its claim that there was one God and they, the Jews, were His “chosen people” to continue his work on Earth. Building on this, Christianity expanded the message: the one God offered salvation and eternal life not to one special group, excluding everyone else, but to all of humanity. Entering the path of salvation thus became a conscious individual decision. Later, *Islam*, building on both Judaism and Christianity, recognized all Jewish and Christian prophets, but downgraded Jesus from Son of God to prophet. As Christianity, Islam is open to every individual human being. It claims to be the one true religion because its founder, Mohammed, was “the last prophet”, bringing to Earth, as it were, the most up-to-date version of God’s will. There would be, Islam claims, no further prophets; therefore, Islam is the final word of God.

In order to avoid violence between followers of competing religions, modern societies have separated religious from political affairs, so as to

keep religious conflict out of the everyday running of society. In recent years this trend has been reversed, as increasingly vocal (and some, violent) groups of followers of Islam and of Christianity have demanded that societies and states be re-established as religious communities.

Veronika AZAROVA

REVOLUTION

Revolution is our obligation: our hope of evolution.

Ursula Le Guin

There is increasing discord, among political scientists, as to the meaning of this term. Not least, this is due to the mildly surprising fact that, unlike many other fundamental political terms, “revolution” does not enjoy an authoritative text, on a par with, for example, Aristotle’s *Politics*, Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, or Rawls’s *A Theory of Justice*. What texts there are (such as Lenin’s *State and Revolution*) are not of the scholarly, but of the activist variety. The closest we have to a solid scholarly work is Hannah Arendt’s *On Revolution*, originally published in 1963 but lacking in significant follow-on literature.

Much of the confusion arises out of the conflict between habitual usage and etymology. We have come to use “revolution” to denote some kind of all-embracing, sudden (and usually violent) change, aimed at constructing a new future; while the original meaning of the word suggests a return to the past: the Latin *revolvere*, meaning “turn, roll back, return to the beginning”.

This, indeed, is the original usage of the term. In the late 14th century, “revolution” came to be used to explain the trajectory of celestial bodies and, significantly, their periodical return to the point of departure. “One revolution” would mean “the cycle travelled by a celestial body between departure and return to its original position”.

The term entered politics in the 17th century and was used to signify a sudden overturn of an established political system. More closely aligned to its original meaning was its use to denote, in England, the expulsion of the troublesome Stuart dynasty and the transfer of power to William and Mary in 1688. This act came to be known as “the Glorious Revolution”,

because it signified the end of half a century of turmoil and chaos and a return (revolving back) to normality and peace.

This sense of “return” (i.e. to better and more normal times) motivated both the American revolutionaries of 1776 and the French revolutionaries of 1789. The Americans were convinced that they were “revolving” back to a time before the King of England started behaving like a tyrant. Their French counterparts were motivated by the idea of “returning” to the time when, 300 years previously, the King had consulted his people via the regular convening of the Estates General (a proto-parliamentarian representative body)—something that the French crown no longer did in the 18th century, leaving “the people” unrepresented.

So where did the idea of novelty, of a complete break with the past in the name of a better future, come from? The only robust explanation comes from Hannah Arendt. She argues that, prior to modern times, dramatic changes in the political system (i.e. the transfer of power from one group to another) took place only within the elite. “The people” did not exist, because it never entered anyone’s head to think that the poor multitudes had any claim to political power. Since the 17th century, however, the idea has taken hold that *everyone* (or at least—all men), even the poor, were equal in their rights and, therefore, had the equal right to be represented in the power structures of society.

The idea of equality made sure that, once started, both the American and French revolutions did not stay within the strict meaning of “revolving” back to a better past. Instead, they received additional energy from the inclusion of ordinary people, who demanded freedom and, therefore, an unprecedented degree of inclusion into the structure of power. This combination proved explosive, sweeping the revolutions forward way beyond their originally envisaged aims; instead of a return to a better past, “revolution” came to be interpreted as “a leap into a better future”.

This “leap” forms the backbone of the revolutionary theory of Karl Marx, which came to dominate the political landscape for several generations. According to Marx, “revolutions” had always happened—signifying the sudden overthrowing of one “class” by another. This, however, was not a simple cycle of “going back”, because it had a clear end point in the future: when the “proletariat”, being the “universal class” (i.e. representing human-

ity as such) would overthrow the “bourgeoisie” (the capitalists) and thereby bring to an end the story of power as we know it. There would, indeed, no longer be political power, organized in states, institutions and courts of law: all of these would “wither away” because they would no longer be needed. The universal class would govern itself directly.

After Marx, Lenin refined the theory by shifting the emphasis from “class” to “political vanguard”. In Marx’s picture, the proletariat would act, en masse, as the agent of change. In Lenin’s picture, the proletariat would do no such thing, because a political party (its “vanguard”) would do the job for it. Change would come when the party seized power and began to implement revolutionary changes, step by step, from the top.

Various versions of the Leninist theory of revolution dominated the political landscape until the collapse of the communist regimes in Europe in 1989–1991. This collapse was the direct result of “revolutions”, which were in essence:

- non-Leninist (i.e. the majority of the people, led by no party, effected a sudden and general change in society);
- “past-looking” (i.e. motivated by the idea of “revolving” back to the times before the communists); and
- “leaps into the future”, insofar as they were motivated by the desire to “catch up” with the nations of the more developed West.

There was, however, a crucial new element in the East European revolutions: they were not violent. For most of recorded history, revolutions have been violent for an obvious reason: before the spread of democracy and its habits, power could be changed only through violence; there were no solid mechanisms in place for the peaceful transfer of power. With the advent of democracy, political violence decreased dramatically for, as Karl Popper once quipped, democracy is just a mechanism for changing government without cruelty.

Because power could now be transferred without the need for violence, most late-20th-century revolutions have not been violent; but there have been violent reactions to them. In 1953 (East Germany), 1956 (Budapest), 1962 (Novocherkassk in Soviet Russia) and 1968 (Prague), the people rose up, peacefully, against the communist regime, but were crushed by tanks, sent by the Soviet power in Moscow.

With international pressure on dictators dramatically increasing, however, by the mid-1980s it was no longer easy for dictatorships to crush peaceful protests and non-violent revolutions. “People Power” was born in the Philippines, where non-violent protests ousted President Ferdinand Marcos. This example proved contagious and, by 1989–1991, the communist regimes in Eastern Europe were toppled by peaceful civil uprisings, known as “the velvet revolutions”. When, in August 1991, in the Soviet Union itself—the key power of the communist system—a hard core communist coup took place, non-violent popular protest managed to defeat it and restore democratic institutions.

Such momentous events, which effectively destroyed the dominant (Leninist) theory of revolution, resulted in major theoretical disarray. Politicians and political scientists have become prone to call “revolution” any sudden and dramatic change in the relations of power, including mass protests, coups d’état and military takeovers. This creates needless confusion and can be avoided by the use of a simple checklist, derived from events and from Arendt’s writing.

A change is a *revolution* only if:

- a) It involves great masses of people, who deliberately and directly confront the established order in order to break it and transfer power elsewhere.
- b) It starts with a demand for a “return” to a previous “normality” which had, somehow, been perverted by the powers that be.
- c) It continues with demands related to individual rights and freedoms, derived from the idea of the equality of all human beings, irrespective of their attributes (such as religion, nationality, ethnicity or gender).
- d) It evolves a clear goal, situated somewhere in the future, connected to greater freedom.
- e) The change encompasses not only relations of power but also the social structure and the structure of beliefs and values of a given society.
- f) It evolves its own distinctive style in terms of music, images, chants and dress.
- g) Its participants are convinced that they are “making history”.

As wars have become, in the 21st century, less “sudden eruptions of lethal mass violence” and more hybrid, low intensity, localised and longer lasting, so have revolutions. This means that they are difficult to identify, trace and analyse, because what may look like a series of isolated conflagrations could turn out to be one process, strung out over time and dispersed location-wise.

In today’s confused and mercurial world, two generalisations may be useful to political scientists, politicians and activists interested in “revolution”. The first is a word of caution coming from Hannah Arendt:

“Revolutions are the only political events which confront us directly and inevitably with the problem of beginning.”

The second is a principle, formulated by the great anarchist revolutionary Proudhon: “there never has been such a thing as several revolutions; there is only one revolution, selfsame and perpetual”.

Evgenii DAINOV

RULE OF LAW

Certain other societies may respect the rule of force—we respect the rule of law.

John F. Kennedy

Rule of law is an ambiguous term which expresses the principle that the power of all government officials and institutions is subject to the law. This principle requires that government officials exercise their power in a manner conforming to well-established rules, regulations and restraints.

The Oxford dictionary defines rule of law as “restriction of arbitrary exercise of power by subordinating it to well-defined and established laws”.

Most thinkers agree that there are three main principles to the rule of law:

- a) Social equality and equity under the law—the law rules, equally, over institutions of authority and citizens; citizens and government are equally bound by the law.
- b) The law is king—nobody is governed by the personal arbitrary decisions of individual officials; there is public knowledge of stable and evolutionally developed laws and juridical procedures; *habeas corpus* is a means to protect individuals from illegal detention.
- c) Autonomy of the law—the legal system, with its judges independent of all influence, serves everyone regardless of wealth, power or status; the lowliest person in the land can successfully take the mightiest to court.

More specifically, according to the scholar Rachel Kleinfeld Belton:

“...the rule of law is not a single, unified good but is composed of five separate, socially desirable goods, or ends: (1) a government bound by

law, (2) equality before the law, (3) law and order, (4) predictable and efficient rulings, and (5) human rights”.

The rule of law could be seen as a process—a long story of the development and implementation of that package of equity, honesty and integrity which is referred to in the preamble of the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”.

Social equality and equity under the law

The core of the existing principle of the rule of law: that all persons and authorities within the state, whether public or private, should be bound by and entitled to the benefit of laws publicly made, taking effect (generally) in the future and publicly administered in the courts.

Tom Bingham, *The Rule of Law*

The idea that the law should be based on common and well-known rules, standing above the government and applied by judges, dates back to 1954 BC and the sixth Babylonian king Hammurabi. The King is known for the *Code of Hammurabi*—one of the earliest surviving Babylonian law codes. There are earlier collections of law, but the Code is important because it is seen as the first constitution or at least an early example of fundamental principles regulating government.

The Code treats issues of all aspects of life, including contracts (down to the establishment of the liabilities of a builder for a house that collapses), household and family relations, military service and even sexual behaviour. The Code consists of 282 laws and although much of it is severe and retributive justice, based on the premise “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”, it imposes the principle that any penalty imposed should correspond in degree and in kind to the legal breach and violation by the wrongdoer. An important provision imposes a penalty and fine on a judge who reaches an incorrect decision. Finally, the Code requires that both accuser and ac-

cused have the opportunity to provide evidence, which is an early form of the presumption of innocence.

The *Code of Hammurabi* is the first of its kind to subject the government, as well as the people, to its provisions, but is still far from any modern juridical standards. The next step was taken by the classical Greeks, who linked the law with ethical standards.

In ancient Greece, rule of law was based on the assumption of equality between citizens. Aristotle, for example, wrote in *Politics*:

“the same right and the same rank should necessarily take place amongst all those who are equal by Nature...and it is more proper that law should govern than any one of the citizens; upon the same principle, if it is advantageous to place the supreme power in some particular persons, they should be appointed to be only the guardians and the servants of the laws”.

In this passage we clearly see a fundamental element of the rule of law—that the law is stronger than any ruler; that the will of even the most powerful ruler is overruled by law. For the Greek philosophers, this is linked to the power of reason. A reading of Sophocles’ *Antigone* and Plato’s *Apology* shows that, contrary to the then-established hegemony of political authority, the two writers argued for a higher authority—that of the mind and of individual conscience. The individual is deemed to have the right to oppose the government on issues of justice, thus becoming the government’s equal.

In Sophocles’ drama *Antigone*, when Oedipus steps down as king of Thebes, his sons kill each other in battle for the realm. A new king, Creon, ascends the throne and decrees that one of the brothers, Polynices, is not to be buried because he made war on the state. But this war itself was the outcome of his brother Eteocles’ refusal to step down from the throne after a year, as had been agreed. At this point their sister Antigone disobeys the order of the new king, referring to divine law with the words: “For me it was not Zeus [king of the Gods] who made that order, nor did that Justice whom lives with the Gods below, mark out such laws to hold among mankind. Nor did I think your orders were so strong that you, a mortal man, could overrun the gods’ unwritten and unfailing laws”.

The protagonists in this play represent two versions of justice. On the one hand is Creon's, treating the law as his royal prerogative. On the other hand is Antigone's, disregarding the King's order, holding to what she believed to be divine justice, in contrast with man-made laws. Even though Creon and Antigone both feel bound by the law, obviously they are not subject to the same law.

The philosopher Socrates, the main character in the vast majority of Plato's *Dialogues*, is best known for his own execution in 399 BC on charges of treason arising out of philosophical discussions: "(doing) injustice by corrupting the youth, and not believing in the Gods in whom the city believes..." Plato's *Apology* is a defence of Socrates' actions. According to Plato, Socrates honours the supremacy of the law over mortal men, and although he has the chance of minimal concession to avoid the ultimate penalty, he refused to betray his own convictions and, thereby, the law. As Antigone, he measured himself against moral standards as opposed to the established laws. For Socrates, when mortal and divine law are in conflict, he would rather accept the punishment than abandon his principles:

"Gentlemen of the jury, I am grateful and I am your friend, but I will obey the god rather than you, and as long as I draw breath and am able, I will not cease to practise philosophy..."

Socrates and Antigone obey and conform to a standard of justice higher than the laws written by mortal men. Laws are not just rules of convenience; they are better when bound by moral and ethical standards.

Nowadays, equality and rule of law are explicitly linked in Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law".

The law is king

*In America, the law is King.
For as in absolute governments the King is law,
so in free countries the law ought to be king;
and there ought to be no other...
We respect the rule of law*

Thomas Paine

The first example of a theory of justice, based on stable principles and juridical evolution, is the Roman tradition. Following Socrates, the Romans were the first to declare that natural law, or universal human rights, must be the core of man-made law. The Roman thinker Cicero argued that this was simply the application of reason—that natural law embodied reason and should, therefore, overcome non-rational legislation. In his *De Re Publica*, Cicero wrote:

“True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commands, and averts from wrongdoing by its prohibition. And it does not lay its commands or prohibitions upon good men in vain, although neither have any effect on the wicked. It is a sin to try to alter this law, nor is it allowable to attempt to repeal a part of it, and it is impossible to abolish it entirely. We cannot be freed from its obligations by Senate or People, and we need not look outside ourselves for an expounder or interpreter of it. And there will not be different laws at Rome and Athens, or different laws now and in the future, but one eternal and unchangeable law will be valid for all nations and all times, and there will be one master and ruler, that is, God, over us all, for He is the author of this law, its promulgator, and its enforcing judge...”

In practice, this meant that everyone could critically judge man-made laws by comparing them to the higher dictates of reason. In effect, this established every citizen as equal to the most powerful in the land, opening up (furthermore) the possibility of disobedience to laws that were seen as unjust. Although, as the Republic became an Empire, the Roman Emperors tended to declare themselves as the origins of all law and justice, Roman

thinking has survived to this day, in the theory and practice of European law based on the doctrine of natural law embedded in reason.

There is, however, another strand in the rule of law, equally powerful to the inheritance of Plato and Cicero; and that is the English tradition of *common law*. The assumption here is that the law is the common creation of all people who, over the centuries, have tried and found the most reasonable ways of resolving disputes, based on reason and on intuitive concepts of justice as equality and fairness (equity).

The first major step, formulating the core principles of the rule of law within the common law, is *Magna Carta Libertatum*—the Great Charter of Liberties, agreed by King John of England on 15th June 1215. This was the outcome of a conflict between the King and a coalition of 25 rebel barons. As part of England's statute law from 1297, *Magna Carta* is seen as the law of laws and the measure of legality, quoted in courts and petitions, as defence of rights against tyranny.

It is a typically English document, not aiming to distil rules of justice from a grand philosophical enterprise, but simply to resolve a practical political issue related to the increasingly tyrannical actions of the King. Nevertheless, *Magna Carta* sets out the protection of basic universal human rights, including the right not to be sentenced or imprisoned by the government:

“In future no official shall place a man on trial upon his own unsupported statement, without producing credible witnesses to the truth of it...No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land.”

Under another clause of the document, the King renounced a certain set of rights and accepted the principle that his will would be bound by the law.

Subjecting the King to the law of the land made *Magna Carta* the most important guarantee against the misuse of power, dictatorship or oppression. It is on this principle that, in later centuries, the entire modern structure of universal rights and freedoms was built. Lord Denning, one of the

most famous judges in modern history, has described Magna Carta as “the greatest constitutional document of all times—the foundation of freedom of the individual against the arbitrary authority of the despot”.

The four centuries following Magna Carta saw the development of the concepts of common law and natural law: common law being based on positive law (human-made law) and practical solutions to recurring practical problems; while natural law dealt with inherent rights, determined by the nature of universal principles cognizable through human reason. In the thoughts of Thomas Aquinas, natural law comes from the cosmic order, emanating from the mind of God. While common law was expected to resolve things to everyone’s satisfaction, natural law was seen as based on a higher morality, from which human law could be judged and found deficient, leading to changes in legislation.

This was the view of John Locke, leading to his revolutionary conclusion that people could legitimately “rebel” against a government that consistently trampled on the principles of natural law that every reasonable person had knowledge of. This “right to rebellion” against government injustice has been invoked by countless reformers and revolutionaries and was the justification of America’s break with British rule in 1776. The principles of natural law form the basis of America’s Declaration of Independence (1776), the US Constitution (1789), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizens (1789), as well as the British Bill of Rights of 1689 and the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

These rights are the basis of today’s democratic systems, instituting “government by consent” (as opposed to coercion) via the instrument of the social contract. What this means is that people are bound to obey the will of the state only as a consequence of the contract. Nobody, in a democracy, is expected to obey the will of the government only because it is the will of the government. Obedience is due only when the government acts within the social contract, based on universal human rights, themselves based on natural law and the principles of natural justice. This is clearly seen in article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: “The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government”.

Rule of law is firmly associated with the principle that people and governments are both bound by the law of the land, under the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts, and not by the conduct and unpredictable behaviour of officials or special tribunals.

Autonomy of the law

Whoever controls the courts controls the state.

Aristotle

Rule of law is based on the separation of powers, under which the judiciary system (the judges and courts) is independent of the executive and legislative powers. The French thinker Montesquieu, in his *Spirit of Laws* (1748), gave as an example the British constitutional system, where neither the monarch, nor parliament, nor the courts of law could gain complete power. In his view, an independent judiciary is the most important of all powers, because it is there that ordinary people can take their case against the other powers and have a chance of fair trial and justice.

The independence of the judiciary is, simply, a shield against governmental tyranny. When we are not governed by laws, we are governed by some (powerful) person's whims. For Friedrich von Hayek, rule of law is a prerequisite for enabling individuals to plan their actions condition, in which the individual can plan his actions and defend his their rights. Among other things, this means that laws should be stable, known and easily understood—a condition not frequently fulfilled in today's environment of constant legislating.

Not being governed by any person's whims, people under the rule of law enjoy the right to a fair trial, conducted before judges independent of the government. This right is the basis for the rule of law. The right to a fair trial is explicitly proclaimed in Article 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states: "Everyone is entitled in full equality to fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him".

The rule of law requires predictability, stability, enforceability, accountability, transparency and due process. Moreover, it demands timely justice,

delivered by clear, publicly known and stable law, in an accessible, fair and efficient process, enacted and enforced by independent, competent, ethical and accountable representatives in a neutral manner. That is why Margaret Thatcher once said:

“Being democratic is not enough; a majority cannot turn what is wrong into right. In order to be considered truly free, countries must also have a deep love of liberty and abiding respect for the rule of law.”

Tsvetozar VALKOV

SOCIAL CONTRACT

The price of greatness is responsibility.

Winston Churchill

The concept of the social contract denotes the formation of the state as a result of a contract between individuals. The idea is deeply rooted in the classical liberal tradition from the 17th century, and perceives human beings as separate individuals existing in a state of nature before coming together to form a society (state) because of their common rationale. This approach implies equality as a basic principle involving the mutual consent and recognition of identical rights and freedoms of individuals acting willingly and deliberately in contractual agreement.

Social contract theory was introduced originally by Thomas Hobbes in the mid-17th century. His idea that humans are unable to care for themselves properly alone because their natural form of existence is “war of all against all” (“on the citizen”) and their life is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (*Leviathan*, chapters XIII–XIV) gave rise to many opponents of the theory. Building on the viewpoint of Aristotle that the human being is a political and social animal, and that those who live alone are either gods or beasts, Hobbes argued for a social contract between people that would give rise to an absolute power which would punish all those who transgress the rules.

Writing at the time of civil war in England, Hobbes was above all concerned with finding ways to end violence and establish peace. Since he believed that people were equal, he did not see how order could be introduced by the usual expedient of someone declaring themselves King and claiming God’s will as justification. Nobody could legitimately do this if everyone was equal. So the only way order could be achieved was for all people, being equal, to somehow obey themselves, not someone else. Hence the social contract: people come together and agree to transfer to

the state some of their rights and freedoms in order to avoid perpetual war. In return, the state keeps peace and order.

Hobbes was so impressed by the civil war in his lifetime that he imagined a very stern vision of the social contract:

- a) First, the contract takes place only between the individuals establishing it; there is no contract between the people and the state. From this follows that the people cannot hold the state accountable for breaking the contract—they have no contract with the state.
- b) Second, the contract only takes place once. After that, each generation that follows simply inherits it and has no right to demand a new social contract. The reason behind this was Hobbes's claim that "in the state of nature" (i.e. before establishing a state) people had no knowledge of morality, justice and law; only the state produced these things, once in existence. Therefore, any opposition to the state would be immoral and unjust.
- c) Third, the inevitable political outcome of this kind of contract would be a dictatorship outside of the control of the people. On the plus side, there would be order.

John Locke, writing after the end of the civil war, took a less authoritarian view. He was convinced that even in the state of nature—before the state—people would have a basic knowledge of morality and justice. Therefore, they would establish a state not so as to learn what morality and justice are, but for the state to enforce the morality and justice that people were already aware of.

From this followed several very important additions to the social contract theory. Locke argued that, since they already knew what justice was, people did not give away all their freedoms to the state. They kept enough rights so as to control it. Therefore, the social contract, according to Locke, is much more complicated than Hobbes's idea and contains three important elements:

1. First, there is the contract between individuals to establish a state.
2. Second comes a contract between the people and the state itself. This establishes terms of equality between the state and the people (because contracts can only exist between equal partners).

3. Third, if there is a contract between the state and the people, both sides can punish the other for breaking the contract. The state can punish people for breaking the law; the people can punish the state for bad government.

From this point arises Locke's famous "right to rebellion". When the state has been breaking the contract for long enough, the people have the right to break off the contract by rising up in rebellion and dissolving the state.

Directly following Locke, this is the reason used by the Americans, in the Declaration of Independence, for their rebellion against British Rule:

"...when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such a government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Writing after Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau disagreed with such empowerment of the people and returned to Hobbes's view of the social contract. Rousseau argued that if a sovereign people knew beforehand what kinds of laws they should enact through the state, that would mean that the people were not absolutely free and sovereign. Any pre-existing standard or habit that told them what laws they could make would effectively tie their hands. This in turn would strip them of their sovereignty and free will, effectively turning them into slaves from the day they were born.

Rousseau's answer to this was that the state, once established, would act as Hobbes's state—it would be the originator of all knowledge of morality, justice and law. It would then impose its justice on the people, irrespective of the people's own notions of justice. But Rousseau went further than Hobbes, arguing that the state must be absolute, leaving no social structure in place. There would be no society, because it reproduced those notions that people had and that were wrong, because the state knew better. Children would be taken from their families and brought up by the state, in order to protect them from the erroneous notions that they would learn from their parents. Schools would be taken from their communities and brought under the control of the state; and the state alone would decide on the content and method of education. Schools would become completely isolated from

the communities around them—again, in order to protect pupils from the erroneous beliefs of those communities.

As frequently happens with political ideas, the concept of the social contract has ultimately resulted in contrasting political realities. Locke's concept brought about liberal democracy. Rousseau's theory gave birth to the totalitarian dictatorships of the 20th century. Ultimately, Locke's "right to rebellion" was transformed into the system of democratic elections prevalent today in the democratic part of the world. In keeping with Rousseau's ideas, on the other hand, totalitarian dictators claimed that the social contract takes place only once (i.e. at the moment when dictators come to power), that the state should control all aspects of social life (in order to protect the people from erroneous beliefs) and that full obedience to the state is due, from the people, at all times.

Locke's contractual theory became influential in England and the Anglo-Saxon world for many reasons, the most important of which is probably the Magna Carta of 1215 ("the Great Charter")—a contract between King John and his barons, which ended a long-lasting dispute over taxation and the nature of the king's prerogatives and rights. In practice it limited royal power and extended the number of those who had rights against the King, providing guarantees against future actions and against punishment and denouncement of the Charter. Despite being a document defining relations between aristocrats and not concerned at all with common people, the Charter became an almost iconic symbol of asserting political rights and freedoms. It inspired liberal philosophers from John Locke to John Rawls; and it is seen by many scholars as the document behind the establishment of the United States of America and the legendary Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson (1776).

Inspired by the US revolution, Anglo-Irish parliamentarian Edmund Burke would expand the notion of social contract. He agreed with Locke that the American colonists had every right to rebel against British power, but went much further by expanding the participants in the social contract. Burke wrote that the social contract must include not only the interests of those now living who put it together, but also the interests of those no longer alive and of those yet to be born.

As with most ideas that base freedom on equality, the social contract originally included only a limited number of people—men of a certain age, enjoying wealth and stature in society. This excluded women, the poor and, in the US, black people. It would take close to 200 years for black people to attain equal rights in the US; all European men attained citizen status (the right to elect and be elected) around the time of the First World War, while women became part of the social contract in some countries only in the 1970s.

In the beginning of the 21st century, the social contract is under attack from many sides. Populists increasingly claim that there is no equality between people and that therefore some groups should be excluded, such as foreigners or people with different religious beliefs. Libertarians, in their turn, see people less as authors of the social contract than as simple consumers in the market, who should not become concerned with “politics”. Various dictators claim that the social contract is a “Western” invention that does not fit in with their national traditions—and that, therefore, such dictators must not be judged in terms of the social contract and its main elements, such as equal rights.

Lyubomir STEFANOV

SOCIETY

He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god.

Aristotle

The term *Society* comes from the Latin word *societas* and is usually used to describe a large group of people sharing the same geographical or social territory and interests; very often this comprises characteristics such as national or cultural identity, social solidarity and language. Societies tend to be structured hierarchically and politically—there exist bands, tribes and state societies, and there are also different social strata and subgroups. These structures may have political power, depending on the cultural, geographical, and historical conditions. According to the Scottish economist Adam Smith, a society “may subsist among different men, as among different merchants, from a sense of its utility without any mutual love or affection, if only they refrain from doing injury to each other.”

The term originates with the Latin *societas* (“fellowship, association, alliance, union, community”), itself rooted in *socius* (“companion”). By the early 16th century, *société* (French) came to mean “companionship, friendly association with others”, while a century later the term was taken to mean “people bound by neighbourhood and intercourse aware of living together in an ordered community”.

A sub-version of society is *civil society*, a notion formulated in the 18th century by Scottish thinker Adam Ferguson and revived with particular force in recent times, above all in Eastern Europe, where anti-communist dissidents employed it to denote the sphere of civic association, where the state had no legitimate presence. It is today considered that civil society is

the space of voluntary civic association, a space lying in between the private (family) sphere and the public (political) one, where the state is dominant.

There are several main types of *society patterns* recognized through history, which are mainly classified according to the degree to which different groups within a society have unequal access to “social benefits” such as resources, prestige or power. This inequality is common to every known society in history, being the result of the process of stratification, sometimes leading to social revolutions.

The main types of societies are usually divided into three broad categories: pre-industrial (traditional), industrial (modern) and post-industrial (post-modern). This classification is based on considerations such as mode of production (e.g. agricultural or industrial) and the structure and legitimacy of political power. In recent decades, however, it has been demonstrated that this kind of division does not completely give us the understanding that we need in order to grapple with the challenges of the postmodern world.

We have, therefore, been forced to turn to classifications of society based on key mentalities and attitudes, rather than modes of production and methods of government. Within this approach, which can be called anthropological, we are able to divide societies along other lines: Eastern and Western. This division could be summed up as follows:

Basic mental archetypes

Western: the archetypal image is of a conquering hero, “Prometheus unbound”, who subdues the whole world to his will.

Eastern: the archetypal image is of

- the hero-liberator, who saves the world after struggle with evil and restores global justice and social harmony (in Orthodox Christianity);
- the “noble man”, maintaining order and harmony in society (in Confucianism);

- the dancing Shiva, the metaphor of “cosmic dancer”, symbolizing the mystery of the universe and its harmonious dynamics (in Hinduism);
- the warrior, fighting to the death for the faith (in Islam).

Sociocultural identity

Western: “blurred” sociocultural identity, due to the belief that in an era of globalization the person is a “citizen of the world”, in which national and cultural differences disappear gradually as the individual stands at the centre of the sociopolitical stage.

Eastern: “strengthened” sociocultural identity because of the belief that in an era of globalization it is important to protect one’s cultural identity, which is a guarantee of success and progress in the world of competition between different cultures.

Ethos of the society

Western: the idea of “morality of success”—striving for victory, prosperity and progress in all spheres of private and public life.

Eastern: the idea of keeping harmony in the world, in nature and in society. This is achieved through:

- the path of service (in Orthodox Christianity);
- the path of reverence for life (in Hinduism);
- the path of the golden rule (in Confucianism);
- the path of Allah’s wars (in Islam).

Dominant value orientation

Western: material value priorities, inviolable private property. The political sphere is almost independent of moral and religious traditions, which stems from the separation of church and state.

Eastern: sacralization of political power: religion in most cases is an integral and official part of the state's political tradition; inheritance and "ownership of power"; politics and moral/religious norms are much more connected.

Mentality specifics

Western: anthropocentric (human-centred) principle of argumentation. The person is the "centre of the universe", who endeavors to subdue nature, the world, and anything that, according to him, has not been conquered. Orientation towards a rational path towards the truth.

Eastern: theocentric (God-centred) principle of argumentation. The transcendent will, which man must obey, is at the heart of the universe. Thus, the main task of the person is to recognize this will and act in accordance with its principles. Orientation to an intuitive path towards the truth.

Dominants of political behaviour

Western: tendency to use extreme transforming and modernizing techniques in politics. Sense of a linear course of time, including political time, which flows to infinity. Orientation to the future—their own, that of future generations, of their nation, of mankind.

Eastern: tendency to use "soft" techniques in politics, not conflicting with natural and moral laws. Sense of cyclical time, including political time, which suggests the possibility of variation in each new cycle. Orientation to the standards of political behaviour in the past—that of their ancestors, of their nation, of mankind.

While we viewed societies through the classic division of pre-industrial, industrial, and post-industrial, we could conclude that every society everywhere had the same path to follow; and that what local elites needed to do was to organize things in such a way that society could move up to the next step. As we increasingly employ anthropological explanations, we now understand that such a view can not only be misleading but also dangerous. There are societies which are not prepared to climb the pre-industrial,

industrial, post-industrial ladder, because they do not see it as having any relevance to what they believe people should be doing. This explains the failure, for example, of American attempts at “nation-building” in “Eastern” societies such as Iraq or Afghanistan; and the speedy reversion to traditional modes of life in countries such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan once they exited the Soviet Union and its modernizing agenda.

Veronika AZAROVA

SOVEREIGNTY

True republicanism is the sovereignty of the people.

Marquis de Lafayette

The concept of sovereignty has been at the heart of describing the modern notion of *political authority* embodied in the *state*. The meaning of sovereignty has varied across history to reach the contemporary definition of *supreme authority within territory*. Each of the three elements of that definition—territory, authority and supremacy, describe an important aspect of that concept. These aspects are discussed in further detail below.

The word is rooted in the Old French term *soverain*, meaning authority, rule, supremacy of power or rank; it started being applied to states at the beginning of the 18th century.

The concept of sovereignty may be examined as a result of the development of a system of sovereign states that was established by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 and within the writings of the contemporaneous authors Niccolo Machiavelli, Martin Luther, Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke.

Two major processes that had an impact on the formation of the system of sovereign states were the Reformation, on the one hand, and the decline and fragmentation of the Holy Roman Empire on the other. As Holy Roman Emperor, and thus a champion of the Catholic Church, Charles V agreed to a major concession in the Peace of Augsburg. It gave the German Protestant princes the right to enforce their faith within their territory. That was a revolutionary act, given that until then European states thought of themselves as Catholic and assumed that one of their key duties was to uphold Catholicism. Suddenly, even the lowliest German princeling could choose the religion to be practised (and protected) on his territory.

This caused a series of wars, culminating in the Thirty Years' War, which concluded in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia. The Westphalian Peace Treaty replaced the central authority of the Holy Roman Empire and of the Catholic Church by the sovereignty of about 300 princes, confirming their right to enforce their chosen religion within their territory.

This act had a dual consequence. *It confined the concept of authority within specific territory.* By doing so, it broke with the principle of universal authority of the Church over all domains of human life, including matters of state. It also linked power to territory, as opposed to dynastic lineage, as previously. From this point on, states were no longer seen as simply the possessions of Prince so-and-so or the nephew of the Archduke so-and-so. States, in this perspective, were seen as inherently unequal—after all, how could the principedom of so-and-so be equal to the kingdom of so-and-so when the ruler of the first was from a lesser European dynasty than the ruler of the second? The outcome of this shift from ruler to territory had the effect of making all existing states equal.

Furthermore, the “peace of Westphalia” *made the authority of rulers supreme*, that is to say superior to any other authority (especially over religion) within their territory. These two consequences paved the way for the complete secularization of politics in the centuries to follow and for the end of feudalism as the main political system. It is easy to see how that happened: feudalism is a system of obedience and loyalty that is built on inequality; whereas the idea of sovereignty is built on the idea that all states are equal.

It is accepted that the Westphalian treaty established a system of sovereign states that developed over the next three and a half centuries.

There are three important aspects in the definition of sovereignty.

First, a holder of sovereignty possesses political authority. This means that the person or entity does not simply wield *coercive power*, defined as the ability of person A to cause person B to do something that she would otherwise not do. It is not enough that one rules simply on the ground that one can (having the power, intelligence or will to do so), but has the *right* to do so. That is to say that person A's ability to cause person B to do something that he would otherwise not do comes from B's conviction that A has the *legitimacy* to do so.

Thus, a holder of sovereignty derives authority from some mutually accepted source of *legitimacy*. The consensus around the sources of legitimacy has been different across history—natural law, the possession of knowledge of the positive consequences for the community, divine right, hereditary law, a social contract, a constitution, and so on.

Second, having authority alone is not enough. The notion of supreme authority means that the holder of sovereignty has superior authority over all other authorities under it.

The concept was extensively developed by the French philosopher Jean Bodin in *Les Six Livres de la République*, which he wrote in 1576. Bodin aimed to strengthen the authority of the French King at a time that France was divided by civil war between Calvinist Huguenots and the Catholic monarchy. The idea expressed in Bodin's work was that the rulers and the ruled should be integrated into a single unitary body of politics that is above any other human law, introducing the concept of a supreme authority bound by natural and divine law. Therefore, next to God, the King could exercise absolute power in complete legitimacy.

Bodin was the first to express the concept of *sovereignty*, but not the first to express its basic features. Observing the politics of the city states in Renaissance Italy, Machiavelli described what a prince should do in order to wield supreme authority over his territory. He was not to be bound by any natural or canon laws, moral or legal norms that obligate other members of society. He should be guided only by the obligation to the well-being of a single unitary body—a principle that became known as *raison d'état* and was later attributed to the politics of Cardinal Richelieu as foreign minister of France during the Thirty Years' War.

The concept was further developed by the British philosopher Thomas Hobbes who, writing in a period of civil war, saw the notion of sovereignty as the solution to the problem of political violence. For Hobbes, the people established a sovereign authority through a social contract, transferring all their rights to the Leviathan. Being an abstract notion of the state, the Leviathan then reigned supreme and represented the will of those that have alienated their rights to it.

For both Bodin and Hobbes, the notion of sovereignty was not restricted by any form of constitution or obligation to a third party.

Later, through the writings of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the concept evolved into a doctrine of “popular sovereignty” where the legitimacy came from the unchallengeable will of the people.

The third aspect is that sovereignty is exercised over physical territory. This principle is guided by the way that the members of the community are to be defined. The source of the definition is not *identity*, but *residence* inside definite territorial borders.

Encompassing different identities within the same territory, the notion of sovereignty circumscribed alternative forms of political authority such as nation or religion. The principle of territoriality gave birth to the concept of non-intervention in the affairs of a sovereign, confirming his supreme authority as independent of both internal and external factors.

Sovereignty leads to an international system that is composed of states that are defined territorially; it is not regulated by a higher authority. More recently, this notion has been challenged by the idea of shared sovereignty—states giving up on their sovereignty for shared political and economic benefits. The European Union is the most prominent example of shared sovereignty.

Since the definition of sovereignty almost always relates to a specific historical context, in order to better categorize and understand it we can apply a distinction between three dimensions: the holders of sovereignty; the absolute or non-absolute nature of sovereignty; and the relationship between the internal and external dimensions of sovereignty.

As already described, there has been a diverse understanding of who should hold sovereignty. The character of the holder of supreme authority may vary. It may be a single individual or an institution. Even though sovereignty can be found within different loci: whether we think of kings, dictators or entities ruling through a constitution, the principle of supreme authority over a territory remains the same.

Another distinction is whether sovereignty is absolute or non-absolute. This does not concern the superior character of authority, but rather the scope of matters over which the holder of sovereignty has authority. Both Bodin and Hobbes imagined sovereignty as absolute, extending over all matters unconditionally. The European Union is an example of sovereign states exhibiting a non-absolute authority over specific matters—such as

trade, taxes or border control which they regulate in cooperation with EU institutions.

Sovereignty can be described, finally, by introducing the distinction between “internal” and “external”. In order for “internal” sovereignty to be exercised within borders, it has to be accepted by the other sovereigns. Thus sovereignty relies on the recognition of “external” actors as well. The Westphalian system has established the principle of the unitary state as being the main holder of external sovereignty (i.e. with regard to other states). Thus, interactions between *equal and unitary states*, based on the mutual recognition of external sovereignty, became the main organizing principle of international relations. Interference in matters of state by outsiders became illegitimate.

However, there was no regulating principle of these interactions other than anarchy. That is to say that there is no higher authority, no Leviathan, to uphold any moral or legal imperative over the equal sovereign states. Thus, the survival of the state became the ultimate national interest and the major focus of foreign policy in the years after the Westphalian Peace Treaty. Building military capabilities and alliances and increasing power to achieve security and survival became the dominating principle of the ages to follow, culminating in the First World War.

The period after the end of the Second World War saw the fall of the last colonial empires, with a great number of new states coming into being and in need of recognition. In order to include them in the world order and avoid the kind of anarchy that had led to the world wars, an international institution to moderate the system of sovereign states was created—the United Nations Organization (UN).

As a reaction to Nazi aggression, the UN Charter contains clear respect and defence of territorial integrity and the sovereignty of the state. At the same time, in the aftermath of the Holocaust, the Charter contains commitments to individual fundamental rights and the right of self-determination of groups.

This Charter bound member states to respect the rights of their citizens. These rights were further elaborated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), adopted by the majority of states, the Genocide Convention, and consequently the European Convention for the Protection of Human

Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, as well as the two Covenants—the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Recognition of individual fundamental rights and the right of self-determination of groups raised the question of what actions states are willing to take in order to guarantee these rights. Thus arose the paradox of the need to intervene from the outside in order to protect human rights against sovereign governments. This paradox became especially acute after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union, with territorial disputes and civil conflicts occupying the agenda of the UN Security Council. Consequently, the debate on what constitutes a *just* intervention in the sovereignty of states has been the central theme in international relations from the end of the 20th century.

In this way, the commitment to the protection of human rights became the *first major challenge* to sovereignty after the Treaty of Westphalia, with the UN Security Council passing numerous resolutions on military or police intervention (“peacekeeping”) in order to remedy injustices within sovereign states without their consent. Such intervention has happened in Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia and Rwanda, to name a few. In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty produced a concept of sovereignty that included the “Responsibility to protect” on the part of the state towards its citizens. Should the state perform mass injustice or be unable to protect its citizens, that responsibility may be assumed by outsiders.

Two more factors challenge the concept of sovereignty: economic globalization and supranational organization (European integration in particular).

Economic globalization places significant limits on the state’s ability to perform its basic function. Economic interdependence, the strength of multinational corporations unaccountable to any nation state, the work of international organizations created to manage the global economy—such developments undermine the ability of the state to successfully extract and distribute resources and deliver on public policies, causing states to willingly share sovereignty in order to address such challenges. At the same time, citizens increasingly protest against shared sovereignty and want

some portions of it back—as seen in the process of leaving the EU, started in the UK under the slogan “We want our country back!”.

The emergence of a range of transborder issues, such as economic globalization, terrorism, environmental crises, and also the appearance of non-governmental international organizations have raised the debate on the suitability of the nation state to deal with such issues. This is to say that, while keeping their sovereignty in principle, states are more and more engaged in sharing their sovereignty in order to attain substantial functional benefits. At the same time, there is no visible solution to the frustration of different societies with this sharing of sovereignty.

Hristo PANCHUGOV

S TATE

The end of government is the happiness of the people.

Thomas B. Macaulay

The state is the *political* organization of human societies, *politics* being the place where issues of power and order are settled for the whole of society; and where decisions pertaining to the common good of the whole community are decided.

Aristotle thought that states arise “naturally”, as a part of a process encoded in nature, without regard to what people thought or did not think. He described the way families coalesced into villages and villages united into states. We now know, however, that there is more to it than that. States are more artificial than “natural”: resolute human intervention is needed to establish a state and then maintain it. If this resolution slackens, states disintegrate, as we have seen repeatedly from the end of the 20th and into the 21st century.

The meaning of the word “state” has migrated from its original “condition, status” to its current usage, passing through a Latin interpretation (late 14th century) of “condition of a country” (*status rei publicae*). Ultimately, the word is rooted in the Proto-Indo-European root “sta”—“to stand”, as is the suffix “-stan” in the names of some Muslim and Asian countries (such as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan or Pakistan).

Today we habitually say “state”, but this habit is no more than three centuries old. Before that time, people used a variety of words, most of them referring not so much to the state as such, but to the form of its political construction: “Empire”, “Realm”, “Republic” or “Commonwealth”. The ancient Greeks used πολιτεία (“polity”), while the ancient Romans coined

res publica (“the public thing”, or those things that concerned all members of the community).

The state is public not only in the sense that it deals with “public things”, but also in the sense that its “owner” is the public; that is, everyone who is a citizen of that state and who therefore has the right to be represented and to represent others. This has not always—indeed, has rarely—been the case. The ancient Greeks and Romans aside, for most of history most states were “traditional”, in the sense that the private and public sphere were not clearly differentiated. The ruler of a traditional state would see it as his personal property, coming to him as an inheritance from his forefathers; and would pass it on to his son, or divide it as an inheritance between several sons, which today is unthinkable. In extreme cases, rulers would treat not only the country but also its inhabitants as their private property, as was the case with the Muscovite Czar, Ivan the Terrible, who treated his country as “votchina” (“father’s plot of land”—*вотчина*).

Unlike traditional states, the modern state is a very public thing: “owned” by its citizens rather than rulers; governed by rational analysis rather than personal whims; in which decisions are taken by impersonal bureaucracies based on publicly known rules, rather than by identifiable persons implementing their subjective understanding of situations and tasks. Indeed, the evolution from “personal” to “impersonal” states is, according to Max Weber, at the very heart of the process of modernization. A “personal” state is a non-modern, traditional one; whereas if a state has an “impersonal” bureaucracy, this means that it has managed to cross over to modernity.

Conversely, in the opening years of the 21st century we have seen how modern states can begin to revert back to traditional by personalizing the machinery of state. By 2016, this process had been completed in countries such as Uzbekistan and Belarus; and is well on the way in great regional powers such as Russia and Turkey.

Seen in this light, the ancient Greek polity and the ancient Roman Republic must be recognized as modern states, unlike the traditional states established in Europe after the fall of Rome. We see the modern state reappearing, after an absence of more than a thousand years, with the establishment of the “absolute” monarchies of Europe, such as France, England,

Denmark and Prussia around the 17th century. In these “realms”, kings were no longer seen as the private owners of a country, rather as the guarantors of security and justice for all inhabitants. These states were modern in another sense also—in that, once the kings crushed the autonomous powers of the great aristocrats, the state no longer faced power challenges within its borders. Baronial courts of law, ducal armies and local coinage disappeared as all power became centralized in the state.

Not long after the appearance of such monarchies, major thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau constructed the philosophical basis of the truly modern state—the theory of the *social contract*. According to this theory, the state is the result of people’s transition from the chaotic and unruly conditions of a “state of nature” to the settled, civilized and law-abiding condition of *civitas*, or “civil state” (“civil society”). In this sense, the state is seen as a decisive step towards a greater degree of civilization. It is around the time of such thinkers that the term “state” gradually begins to take over from previously used terms.

By the end of the 19th century, most states in Europe were “modern”, in the sense that their business was conducted not by great personages such as kings and barons, but by the law, working impersonally through an increasingly complex network of institutions and bureaucracies. Indeed, the existence of a great and permanent administrative apparatus, engaged in the work of impersonal institutions, is one of the most visible differences between modern states and their pre-modern predecessors. Conversely, the cold complexity of the modern administrative apparatus gave rise, in the first decades of the 20th century, to the works of writers such as Franz Kafka, depicting citizens as insignificant, confused and fearful victims of the bureaucracy, rather than as proud owners of the state.

The absolutist states of the 17th century provided the basis for the emergence of the modern nation state, the state in which people feel loyalty (and have an obligation) not to the king, or to a locality, or to any religion, but to “the nation”. The absolutist monarchs achieved this through standardization and unification: weights and measures were standardized over the whole country; local laws were overruled by national legislation; local currencies were superseded by a state currency, coined only by the King; local feudal rights and privileges were suspended, as was the right of

local aristocrats to levy their own taxes. Not least, the absolutist monarchs imposed an “official” language over the whole of the country, by the simple expedient of making it the language of state administration. Once unity of language and law was achieved, the nation state was not long in appearing.

While this was taking place, in more advanced countries such as Britain and France the monarchs faced various challenges to their absolute powers, coming from both the aristocracy and the common people. The outcome of this was the appearance of representative government, a government which feels responsible to the people, rather than to the Crown, and in which government the people are represented in various ways. By the end of the First World War, most representative governments had become democratic: they were formed as the result of free and fair elections in which all adults were able to vote.

The modern state has much greater material and political resources in comparison with its predecessors. It is capable of maintaining a sizeable army and navy to guard against external aggression and protect world trade. It has the capacity to build roads, ports and railways, as well as to fund various forms of education, public health and social security.

Throughout history, most thinkers and legislators have been convinced that the state is a very high form of organization of power in society, serving the good of all and maintaining the conditions for people to achieve “the good life” (as Aristotle wrote 2,300 years ago). In the 19th century, however, communists (e.g. Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels) and anarchists (e.g. Mikhail Bakunin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon) thought differently. They were convinced that the machinery of state was, in effect, a committee for the advancement and protection of the sectional interests of the ruling class. This meant that the interests of the majority of people were left out of the state.

What both communists and anarchists recommended was the abolition of the ruling class by a popular revolution, which would make the state no longer necessary (no ruling class—no need for a state to protect its interests). The state would disappear, and only then, when there was no state, would the common good begin to be served by the people themselves, and the good life could be achieved. Such ideas are no longer taken seriously because all attempts, by both anarchists and communists, to abolish the state have resulted in the centralization of power in the hands of a dictator.

Throughout the 20th century, the modern state has greatly expanded its sphere of activity. The great political philosophers who wrote on the subject of the state, from Aristotle to Locke, Mill and Weber, were convinced that the job of the state was simply to provide security (from violence and aggression, both internal and external) and to maintain the kind of law and order under which people could go about their business and prosper in safety. These philosophers never imagined that a time would come when states would do so many other things, such as provide education, health care, social security or even run whole industries, as was the case after the end of the Second World War. This “overreach” led, in the 1970s and 1980s, to serious economic problems in advanced countries, as people began relying on the state to provide them with “the good life”, rather than constructing their good life themselves.

As Margaret Thatcher pointed out at the time, people stopped thinking in terms of “initiative”—asking themselves “What can I do to get a better life?”—and started thinking in terms of “entitlement”: “What can I get out of the state?” Loss of initiative meant loss of dynamics in the economy and the need arose to “roll back” the state, freeing the economy to develop along market principles. Modern states withdrew from much of the economy and services, under an overarching set of ideas known as “the Washington consensus”.

This process was helped by the collapse, in 1989–1991, of the system of communist states in Europe, headed by the USSR. This system was based on the belief that the state should do everything, including producing turnips, tin buckets and computers. The spectacular disintegration of communist economies further encouraged states to “get out” of the economy.

By the first years of the 21st century, however, it had become clear that states cannot simply abandon the economic field. If the state does not regulate the conditions of economic activity, then the economy becomes a jungle in which the strong oppress the weak (as Margaret Thatcher warned reforming ex-communist societies in 1990). The strong form oligarchies, monopolies and cartels that distort economic logic; and in the end the result is more or less the same as under the “entitlement” state of the 1970s: lack of development and the spread of poverty. By 2008, the new approach of

“too little state” led to a catastrophic worldwide financial collapse, followed by economic depression.

It is now mostly agreed that “the state only *underpins* the conditions for a prosperous and fulfilling life. It does not *generate* them.” Given this, the state should concentrate on doing several basic things, leaving the rest to people’s initiative and self-organization:

- secure external defence;
- secure law and order and the defence of private property;
- maintain the integrity of money and the conditions for individual economic achievement;
- provide the basic conditions within which people can build a good life, such as basic education, basic health care and social security;
- combat special interests, prevent the emergence of privileges and maintain the conditions for solidarity based on justice.

Or, as pointed out by Margaret Thatcher:

“A well ordered society would be one where the State only had a negative action, comparable to that of a rudder: a light pressure at the right moment to counteract the first suggestion of any loss of equilibrium.”

Ultimately, the state exists in order to maintain *justice*. If it does not maintain justice for all, then it becomes a committee for the advancement and protection of some sectional interest at the expense of the common good.

Or, as St Augustine put it in the twilight of Roman civilization:

“Remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms?”

Antonii TODOROV,
Evgenii DAINOV

TOTALITARIANISM

*War is Peace
Freedom is Slavery
Ignorance is Strength*

George Orwell, 1984

Very rarely in the history of the human race has political power been total. It is in order to deal with this rare phenomenon that the term “totalitarianism” was coined, to denote a concentration of power more absolute than tyranny, dictatorship or authoritarianism.

Some social trends tend to concentrate power into a few people, or even a single individual, while others tend to disperse it. Aristotle observed that after the chaos of a democratic revolution, power usually goes into the hands of a single demagogic tyrant. Two thousand years later, the German sociologist Robert Michels made another observation, which, though contradicting Aristotle’s on the mechanisms of power concentration, came to roughly the same conclusion: an organization might be democratic and diverse, but it will always tend to concentrate power into a small ruling elite—either because there will always be people who are better “political animals” than others or because of the objective necessities of structure, hierarchy and leadership. This idea is called *The Iron Law of Oligarchy*.

There is a huge leap from an *oligarchy*, which is a state of distribution of power in which a larger group is ruled by a smaller group in the interest of the rulers, to *totalitarianism*, in which either a small group or a single individual has nearly complete power over all aspects of the *social* and the *personal* lives of all members of society.

Let us not forget that power also has another tendency—to get dispersed among the people. People are, for all practical purposes, more equal than unequal. As another political philosopher, Thomas Hobbes,

observed—people are fragile. Almost anyone can murder almost anyone else. Thus, even if political power should be total, it can only stem from the consent of the people. And the people will generally be smart and rational enough not to allow complete control over themselves. When we add to this the fact that power is not only political but also economic, cultural, personal, traditional, familial and so forth, we realize that a very unique set of conditions is necessary for power to become total. But before we look at these conditions, let us define what *totalitarianism* is.

Defining totalitarianism

The most popular dictionaries seem helpful, but surprisingly incomplete, when defining totalitarianism. The website www.dictionary.com tells us that *totalitarianism* is “absolute control by the state or a governing branch of a highly centralized institution”. While mostly true, this definition fails to mention over what this absolute control is exercised. In this regard, the *Cambridge Dictionary* give us an interesting twist on the definition: *totalitarianism* is “the belief that a government should have total power over its citizens”.

By merging the two definitions, we come to something useful. First, *totalitarianism* is *absolute* control. Second, it is control over *absolutely* everything—over all citizens; over all aspects of social life such as politics, culture or the economy; and most importantly, over thought. Third, *totalitarianism* is not only a political system but also a belief—the belief that total power is just.

But it would be extremely difficult for a political system to become so total. After all, societies are by definition diverse. Every single individual has different goals and desires. People organize themselves in groups of interests. More than that, huge social classes exist. Some people work in the fields, others in factories. Generals lead their soldiers, intellectuals write books, often with conflicting views about the world. Aristocrats, we are told, are lazy, while traders and business people are greedy. So what does an inspiring totalitarian ruler need to do in order to overcome diversity and achieve his goal of total control?

First, he has to have political power. This is obvious. But in order to control every aspect of the lives of the citizens, political power should also exercise huge influence over economic and cultural matters.

Second, control over the economy needs to be established. But a fledgling totalitarian dictator cannot simply confiscate the possessions of his or her citizens because that would lead to economic chaos and inefficiency. Instead, he or she should try to use different class interests within society in order to establish state control over production. Unsurprisingly, this is exactly what the first attempts at establishing totalitarianism started with. In Italy, Benito Mussolini argued that only a corporatist state was able to limit the conflict between the classes of the workers and the owners of property. In Germany, Adolf Hitler found identified common ground between industrialists and workers, by investing in infrastructure and rearmament.

Third, *cultural hegemony* must be created. In the field of culture, managing otherwise opposing interests is not easy. If two parties have different views over a certain matter, finding the mathematical mean is rarely good enough for either side. More than that, most probably there is already a third group which has adopted that mathematical mean as their own view. Thus, aspiring totalitarian dictators should take a different route—all opposition and diverging opinion must be silenced. In this regard, Mussolini never managed to completely eradicate all intellectual opposition. Hitler, on the other hand, persecuted anyone who dared to question his ideology and successfully destroyed any divergent opinion. In Soviet Russia, Joseph Stalin went even further by not only killing or imprisoning non-communists but also by doing the same to communists who seemed strong enough to question his own power within the state.

Thus, we come to the main characteristics of totalitarianism:

- complete control over political power by a single individual or a very close group of people;
- complete cultural hegemony over society;
- either complete control over the means of production, or a widely accepted primacy of the state, or of state ideology, over economic matters.

In order to preserve these characteristics, totalitarian regimes also need to:

- establish a system of terror in order to inflict fear of disobedience;
- establish a monopoly over the means of communication in order to preserve cultural hegemony;
- create the myth of a strong, but inferior, enemy, who is to be fought at *all costs*.

Examples of totalitarianism

Italy

The first major modern attempt at establishing totalitarian rule took place in Italy.

While Italy was on the winning side in the First World War, the failure of the army to win significant victories, together with the great cost of the war, led to general discontent in Italian society. These circumstances turned out to be favourable for a young political activist, newspaper editor and soldier named Benito Mussolini. He was at first an active member of the Socialist Party, but was ousted in the years before the Great War for his vocal campaign for Italian intervention in the war. Thus, his political views moved away from the class struggle that socialists advocate, towards an all-class national struggle against the enemies of state and nation. This idea resonated well in a post-war Italian society that suffered the embarrassment of being unable to secure its geopolitical interests because of an incoherent foreign policy and disastrous military performance.

By 1922, the Fascists—the movement established and headed by Mussolini—had gathered serious political support from important groups in Italian society and were generally seen as something of a middle ground between conservatives and left-wing revolutionaries (communists, socialists and anarchists). On the night of the 27th October 1922, the Fascist Party led the so-called “March on Rome”, in which about 30,000 supporters rallied onto the streets of Rome and demanded that Mussolini be appointed Prime Minister. King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy, fearing Mussolini’s support

in including the army, industrial and agrarian elites, succumbed to these demands.

In order to achieve totalitarianism, Mussolini introduced some important political innovations.

First, he created a unifying vision of a future glorious Italian society in which the different classes would work together to serve the aims of the state. The state, of course, needed to be personified by a single person. For this to happen, Mussolini made great use of one of the innovations of the modern world—mass media. By using newspapers, radio and even the cinema, Mussolini managed to create his larger-than-life persona and incorporate it in his vision of the new and glorious Italian state.

Second, unlike other political parties at the time, the Fascist Party claimed to represent the whole of society. To achieve this mass representation, the Fascist Party created different clubs and organizations for the different social groups.

Third, by using the mass representation that the Fascist Party achieved, and also a few assassination attempts as a pretext, Mussolini secured control over most of the political power in Italy. By 1926, all other political parties were outlawed, and the democratically elected parliament was removed in favour of a Grand Council consisting of members chosen by the supreme leader himself. The only body able to oppose Mussolini's leadership was this very Council, appointed by him. Thus, effectively, a one-man rule was established.

While Italian fascist rule was the first attempt at creating a modern totalitarian state, two significant factors prevented it from becoming a fully fledged totalitarian system.

First, Italian culture had no pre-existing obsession with order and efficiency. Thus, attempts at instilling a system of terror by the use of violence and the secret police were generally chaotic and inefficient.

The second great obstacle to creating a full-blown totalitarian state was the general inability of the Italian military to secure enough strategic objectives in order to sustain Mussolini's vision of Italy returning to the glorious days of the Roman Empire. Both major offensive campaigns of the Italians, the invasion of Egypt in the summer of 1940, and the invasion

of Greece in the autumn of the same year, failed because of inadequate strategic planning and outdated military equipment.

The news of strategic military defeats significantly weakened Mussolini's support in the Army and the general population. By 1942, the military situation had become unmanageable, and labour strikes swept the country in early 1943. In July Mussolini suffered a vote of no confidence by his own Grand Council and was imprisoned by the King of Italy. The would-be totalitarian state degenerated into anarchy.

Germany

While Benito Mussolini failed to create a truly totalitarian state, his political innovations and methods proved to be an important influence on Adolf Hitler in Germany. The roots of Mussolini's totalitarianism lie, again, in the circumstances of the First World War.

By 1918 the war effort had become unsustainable and the country was swept by a socialist-inspired revolution in November 1918. This prepared the ground for significant support for anyone who, like Mussolini in Italy, would be able to stand up against the "Red Menace". In June 1919, the post-war Treaty of Versailles was signed. The conditions of the Treaty were extremely harsh on the German state, including large concessions of territory, unaffordable reparation payments in gold and humiliating military restrictions.

Like Mussolini, Adolf Hitler used the widespread sense of humiliation and unfairness within society in order to create a simple yet easy-to-remember version of what had happened. Hitler's explanation placed great emphasis on their great military successes and insisted that, even in 1918, the war was winnable. What failed Germany was the so-called "stab in the back" by the revolutionary socialists, helped by Jewish capital. In his political speeches of the 1920s, Hitler attacked Marxists, Jews and the Treaty of Versailles, while slowly evolving his expansionistic doctrines of *Heim ins Reich* (Back to the [German] Empire) and *Lebensraum* (Living Space [for the German people]). These ideas resonated well with a humiliated German people.

In the late 1920s, the effects of the Great Depression plagued Germany, and support for the Nazi Party rose from about 3% in 1928 to 18% in 1930 and 37% in 1932. In 1933, amidst a major political crisis, Hitler was appointed Chancellor with the hope that he would be able to rule without a strong parliamentary majority. In February 1933, the building of the Reichstag (national parliament) was set on fire. Hitler used this opportunity to outlaw all other political parties (the same parties that had given him the right to impose laws) and suspend civil rights.

Even before gaining complete political power, the Nazi leadership used terror and intimidation to achieve political goals. When, in 1933, all political parties except the NSDAP (the Nazi Party) were outlawed, Hitler's paramilitary organization, the SA, launched mass attacks on political rivals in order to prevent them from continuing operations in secrecy. In 1934, during the Night of the Long Knives, a new paramilitary organization, the SS, murdered more than 80 suspected political enemies of the new regime, including the leader of a wing within the Nazi Party which opposed Hitler, Gregor Strasser, and the leader of the SA itself, Ernst Röhm. After the purge, the Chancellor used his legislative power in order to provide a legal basis for the mass killings, by stating that they were an act of self-defence by the State and were thus legal. This meant that a system of terror was institutionalized.

From 1935 to the end of the Second World War in 1945, the totalitarian regime used this system of terror to exterminate more than five million Jews, more than three million prisoners of war mostly from the Soviet Union, millions of civilian Poles and Russians, thousands of Catholic and Protestant priests, homosexuals, gypsies and Slavs.

Authoritarianism is different from, yet strongly related to, *totalitarianism* as a concept. In the cases of Spain and Italy, authoritarianism was the end result of a failure to establish *totalitarianism*. In other cases, such as today's Russia, and also states as diverse as Egypt, Portugal, Argentina and South Korea, to name but a few, no attempt at establishing totalitarian rule was made, though these states did end up under authoritarian rule. Let us compare the different characteristics of the two types of regimes:

| | Authoritarianism | Totalitarianism |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| <i>Ideology</i> | Either no official state ideology, or an ideological mix between political ideologies reflective of the different social groups. Usually a mix between conservatism in social issues and socialism in the economic sphere. The main goal of the ideology is to ensure the conservation of power of the ruling elite. | Official state ideology. Either a revolutionary ideology, or a mix between ultra-conservative and ultra-progressive ideas. The official ideology is never rooted in contemporary social reality. Instead, it is either based on an imaginary past (Nazi Germany), an inevitable future (Soviet Russia), or some sort of belief in the divinity of the ruler (contemporary North Korea). |
| Legitimacy of the ruling elite | Medium to Low. Historically, authoritarian regimes generally lacked legitimacy but existed due to the careful balance of power between different social groups. Contemporary authoritarianisms generally thrive on the political apathy of their people. | Extremely high. Totalitarian ideologies create a special place for the ruling elite (the Nazi Party in the case of Nazi Germany, the Revolutionary vanguard and the Party in Soviet Russia, the ruling family in North Korea). Mass propaganda is used in order to reinforce the belief that the ruling class is legitimate. Legitimacy is lost only after a huge political failure—losing the Second World War in the case of Nazi Germany, and economic collapse in Soviet Russia. |
| Role of a Supreme Leader | Entirely personal. Authoritarian regimes are created by a person, for a person. Authoritarian regimes are rarely, if ever, continued after this person has either lost power or died. | Ideological. Totalitarian regimes are able to continue their existence after the Supreme Leader has died or stepped down. In Soviet Russia, the death of the leader always resulted in a power struggle. In North Korea, political power is inherited. Had Nazi Germany managed to get through the Second World War without collapsing, most probably a power struggle between Goebbels, Göring and Himmler would have ensued after Hitler's death. |

| | Authoritarianism | Totalitarianism |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Pluralism | Allowed to some extent. Authoritarian regimes generally tolerate some amount of pluralism in the social organization. Different social organizations are used to aggregate interests and by either mediating or pitting them against each other, political power is preserved. | Not allowed. Any form of organization that is not directly sanctioned by the ruling elite might lead to ideological diversion. Thus, all forms of organizations are tightly controlled and a part of the official ideology. |
| Goal of the regime | Preservation of political power of the leader. All political action is directed towards this goal. Everything else is negotiable. | Achieving the goal of the official ideology. In the case of Nazi Germany—world domination of the Aryan race. In the case of Soviet Russia—world revolution of the working class. |

Given the current state of technology, it is very hard to imagine a major totalitarian regime existing in the contemporary world. Authoritarianism, on the other hand, seems to be on the rise. As authoritarian rule is by definition flexible, many states take on some form of a mix between democratic and authoritarian rule. Examples of this would be:

- a) Russia under Vladimir Putin, where many democratic institutions are officially kept, but by carefully managing them the President has managed to practically establish an authoritarian regime.
- b) Iran, where after the Revolution Khomeini tried to establish religious totalitarianism, but in failing to achieve his goal, managed to create a unique mix between an official state ideology (publicly accepted, while privately completely neglected), authoritarian rule (Khomeini and his successor Khamenei have the ultimate power) and a functioning democracy on the local level. This mix seems, at this point in time at least, to be an extremely stable form of authoritarianism that can actually survive a change of leadership.
- c) China, where the peculiarities of cultural tradition allowed the Communist Party to give up on the idea of a worldwide revolution

and create a sort of corporatist consultative authoritarian regime in which economic life follows the rules of capitalism, while in politics a mix between typical authoritarianism and meritocracy secures general stability.

Contemporary authoritarianisms seem more diverse, flexible and in conformance with the basic cultural, economic and political circumstances of the societies they rule. Thus, while totalitarianism seems to be a thing of the past, authoritarian rule is on the rise.

Peter STURM

T RANSITION

Life is pleasant. Death is peaceful. It's the transition that's troublesome.

Isaac Asimov

We Americans think, in every country in transition, there's a Thomas Jefferson hiding behind some rock or a James Madison beyond one sand dune.

Joe Biden

After the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, “transition” became a widespread word, especially in the social sciences. G. O'Donnell and Ph. Schmitter (in their 1986 paper “Transitions from authoritarian rule: tentative conclusions”) broadly defined a transition as “the interval between one regime and another”. According to them, transitions initiate processes of dissolution of an authoritarian regime and parallel to that the installation of some form of democracy, return to some form of authoritarian rule or the emergence of some form of revolutionary alternative.

In turn, J. J. Linz and A. Stepan, in *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation* (1996), provided us with another, more goal-orientated and specific definition:

“a democratic transition is complete when sufficient agreement has been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a free and popular vote, when this government de facto has the authority to generate new policies, and when the executive, legislative, and

judicial power generated by the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies *de jure*.”

According to them, a transition to democracy is successful “when democracy becomes the only game in town” and all actors become accustomed to the fact that conflicts in the political arena will be resolved through constitutionally established norms and regulations.

Linz and Stepan state that their approach to democratic transitions provides a synthesis of structural and actor-based approaches. They divide non-democratic regimes into authoritarian, totalitarian, post-totalitarian and sultanist, according to the degree of pluralism and mobilisation, on the one hand, and the type of official ideology and the nature of leadership on the other.

Because the collapse of communism as a political regime looked like—and actually was—the victory of the West over the East in the Cold War, the transition in the countries from the Central and East European region was fully expected to cement the superior statute of western liberal democracy even further by proving its merits in places which communists had left in ruins. To many scholars and politicians it looked like a historic opportunity to prove the legacy of Marx and Lenin not just wrong but completely mistaken and full of chimeras. This is probably the major reason why transition became a synonym for the movement from communism towards democracy in the minds of many.

It is, however, often forgotten that transition is not a single act but a process. Professor Georgi Fotev has cautioned that the subject of transition should be approached under specific conditional clauses, otherwise it would mean that we have “built” some ideal form of democracy.

Starting from the understanding that the nature of transition looks more like a never-ending evolutionary process rather than a one-off act, one finds it easier to approach and think about it in a manifold manner. Claus Offe and Pierre Adler, in a 1991 paper called “Capitalism by democratic design?”, suggest that transitions in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have a three-dimensional mode of transformation of the whole system of socio-economic and political relations with regard to (1) democratic political governance, (2) liberal market economy and (3) completion of the process of building a nation state and identity.

His arguments are mainly based around observations concerning the differences between societies under communism and those governed under democracy. The first are “flat”, class-based societies, structured around the domain of one party with a command economy and limited, if any, national self-esteem or distinguishable national identity. In contrast, democratic societies are individualistic, with constitutionally guaranteed rights and freedoms, rule of law and many parties, a market economy and long-established (in most cases) national identity.

A fourth dimension can easily be added to this classification, as almost all former members of the Soviet area from CEE initiated at some stage a process of European Union and NATO membership parallel to their natural integration into the post-Soviet globalizing world.

The challenges which post-communist states face, and the paths and modes of transition they opted for, stem mainly from the variety of possible combinations between exogenous (external) and endogenous (internal) factors. Linz and Stepan find that the role and character of the communist party determine to a great extent whether a society is inclined to enjoy more economic, political or social freedom. Such freedoms are almost non-existent under totalitarian regimes and only start to evolve in a post-totalitarian context. The longer a totalitarian regime endures and the harsher it is, the less the likelihood of such freedoms being quickly re-established after its demise.

Transitions from *sultanistic* regimes face different challenges. No parallel form of society exists under such a regime. There is no rule of law, institutionalisation is limited and progress within the state is dependant solely on one’s proximity to the ruler and degree of involvement in the glorification cult of that persona. The challenge of transition here is to move from a personal to an institutional model of power.

An *authoritarian* regime is noted primarily by its lack of any official ideology and by having no extensive political mobilisation. It is also personified but has a certain institutional structure, and large sections of social life are not strictly controlled by the state. Transitions from this type of regime have been less difficult than has been the case with some totalitarian and sultanistic situations.

A country's institutional background, measured according to such variables, shapes the available transition paths. According to Linz and Stepan, a negotiated goal-orientated transition (*reforma-pactada, ruptura-pactada*), or rule by an interim government after regime termination is only available to post-totalitarian regimes in which a moderate wing of the ruling party and moderate opposition groups can negotiate (Spain, Hungary). Another possible transition path is that of starting from scratch in a severely conflicted environment, such as Czechoslovakia, or within regime-controlled and manipulated post-totalitarian politics, such as Bulgaria. In such circumstances, negotiated transitions are far more difficult and unpredictable.

In "What democracy is... and is not" (1991), T. L. Karl and Ph. Schmitter offer another viewpoint to the transitional setting. According to them, regimes change into various "modes of transition", which in turn determine the outcome of transition:

"Transitions are "produced" by actors who choose strategies that lead to change from one kind of regime to another...they may be constrained by the choices available to them by prevailing social, economic and political structures and the interaction of strategies may often result in outcomes that no one initially preferred; but nevertheless we believe that actors and strategies define the basic property space within which transitions can occur and the specific combination of the two defines which type of transition has occurred".

Thomas Carothers, in "The end of the transition paradigm" (2002), criticized linear progression models of transition, suggesting instead that it is a multidimensional parallel interplay of social, economic and political modes and times. According to the usual logic of transitology, any transition from a dictatorship has "three mandatory stages—opening, breakthrough and consolidation" ("transition paradigm"). For this to happen, it is necessary for a society to develop a deep conviction in the structural importance and significance of elections. This is followed by a sound understanding of the need to reform the institutional framework, that is, maintaining state authority in all of its dimensions, but based on the new political ideas—those of democracy.

This transition paradigm, which Carothers declared outdated, has one last, quite controversial, element, noted by Dankwart Rustow as long ago as

1970. According to him, the “structural factors”—economic development, political history, institutional environment and socio-cultural heritage—are not so important for the outcome and the progress of transition. What is decisive is the determination of the political elite to take the necessary actions and be consistent in their application over time.

It is undeniable that, in the last 25 years, transitology has contributed much to the understanding of the processes of democratization in CEE; however, due to its tendency to excessive overgeneralization, it has become heavily compromised. As Ivan Krastev very aptly noted in 2002, the validity of the hypothesis of a “transition paradigm is related closely to its normative character and its teleology”, as it has openly presupposed that all emerging democracies follow the same standardized development model. According to him, transitologists have been mistaken to simply measure the level of institutionalization under democracy, rather than study the quality of the relations between political representatives and their constituents.

A contemporary definition of a democratic state by the Economist Intelligence Unit from the *Democracy Index 2013* report defines a democratic country as one “in which not only basic political freedoms and civil liberties are respected, but these will also tend to be underpinned by a political culture conducive to the flourishing of democracy. The functioning of government is satisfactory. Media are independent and diverse. There is an effective system of checks and balances. The judiciary is independent and judicial decisions are enforced.”

This understanding of democracy as a fragile equilibrium between a myriad of variables illustrates, if not the end goal of a transition, then a state of interrelations and direction for the development of the countries attempting to transit to democracy. It is arguable, though, whether Egypt, Libya, Tunis, Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam and even China will arrive at this point over time.

Lyubomir STEFANOV

VIOLENCE

People with power understand exactly one thing: violence.

Noam Chomsky

Violence is the intentional use of physical force in order to cause harm, injury or death. Violence is generally studied in psychology, sociology and anthropology. Usually, when we talk about violence in the political sciences, we talk about war. War is the systematic and ordered use of violence, and thus harm, injury and death, in order to achieve political goals. Recent developments, though, have clearly shown that the political sciences need to understand the concept and philosophy of violence in new ways.

As major military powers are currently less likely than ever to go to war with each other, and novel ways of using physical force to achieve political goals are becoming more popular, the political scientist needs to broaden her understanding of collective and political violence. First, we will take a look at the issues of collective violence and warfare. Then we will consider the broader concept of political violence. Finally, the foremost contemporary issue of terrorism and violence will be reviewed.

Collective Violence and Warfare

While anthropologists study violence on the level of interpersonal interaction, political scientists are interested in group or *collective violence*. When collective violence is officially sanctioned by a functioning and legitimate state, it is called war.

Collective violence and war, unlike interpersonal violence, are generally goal-oriented and motivated. Throughout history, groups of people have gathered and taken up arms for self-preservation, or for economic

or political gain. While collective violence usually starts with clear goals in mind, it also frequently morphs into simple violent hatred. In the case of Nazi Germany, the anti-Semitism of the regime combined with the routinely dehumanizing brutality of the Second World War resulted in the Holocaust—the state-sanctioned and largely unprotested mass murder of millions of Jews and other groups. Rarely has a war been fought without at least some amount of either immoral or criminal behaviour accompanying it.

Collective violence unsanctioned by an official state is usually related to the notion of *structural violence*. It is exercised by a larger group of people against either individuals or smaller groups. Cases include institutionalized nationalism and racism (as is the case of anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany), elitism (when a group within society has a monopoly on bearing arms, as in medieval Europe), and state and police violence (when the rules of a generally legitimate monopoly of violence have been corrupted in order to fulfill the interests of the group of people who has been given the monopoly).

This notion, of a monopoly on violence, is central to the philosophy of statehood. At least three important political and social philosophers based either their definitions or understanding of the state on the idea that only the state can and should possess a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force.

First, Jean Bodin proposed that without a legitimate use of violence law enforcement was impossible; thus, no order could be kept within society. Then Thomas Hobbes proposed that, as people are by nature self-interested, the only way to ensure security within a society, and against outside threat, is if the state has complete power and a monopoly on violence. Finally, the sociologist Max Weber observed that the main characteristic of the modern state is its monopoly on violence over a given territory. Unlike feudal times, when private warfare and religious violence existed outside of state power, modernity has brought about the existence of a single legitimate source of coercion—that of the State.

Political Violence

Political violence is the broadest concept related to violence in the political sciences. It allows us to differentiate between different cases of

violence in the process of violent exchange. For example, collective violence by a non-state actor against the state would be either a rebellion or a revolution. When the non-state actor claims state legitimacy, it becomes a civil war. Another type of civil war is when two or more groups of people, generally divided on an ethnic principle, fight inside the borders of either a functional or dysfunctional state.

Civil wars have become a hot topic in contemporary political studies, given the length and impact of the ongoing Syrian and Libyan civil wars. Civil wars generally have clear political, social and cultural goals.

When violence is initiated by a state against non-state actors, we generally speak either about genocide (violence against a group of people) or torture (violence against individuals).

The last type of political violence is when the violent actor is either a non-state actor, or an individual working without the sanction of a larger body. This is called *terrorism*.

Terrorism and Violence

The hottest contemporary issue related to violence is terrorism. The meaning of terrorism has shifted and changed considerably in the last hundred years. While at the start of the previous century terrorism meant an unprovoked act of aggression, and during the Second World War it was mostly used to denote strategically inexplicable violence against a civil population, today by “terrorism” we mean the use of violence, intimidation and fear by either individuals or non-state collective organizations in order to achieve political goals. Terrorism is a sort of bargaining chip—using the threat of, or the actual, destruction of one group of people (a civilian population, for example) in order to persuade another group of people (a parliament, political leaders, a military command, or the population of a whole state) to pursue a course of action of profit to the terrorists.

Thus, the contemporary discussion of violence has shifted from actual violence to both violence and the threat and fear of violence. Actual acts of terrorism have minor strategic impact. The threat of more terrorist attacks is what can persuade a state to change its policy.

In *What's Wrong with Terrorism?* Robert Goodin gives an even wider definition of terrorism: “a political tactic, involving the deliberate frightening of people for political advantage”; and adds that in order to be involved in an act of terror, one does not need to use either physical force, violence, or even a threat. The very act of starting a conversation that will instill fear into society is itself an act of terrorism.

Peter STURM

It has become a truism that "you may not be interested in politics, but politics is interested in you". Politics is inescapable because the term denotes, in its widest sense, the way in which relations of power are constructed in a given society. And there is no escaping power in the relations between human beings.

In this volume we have attempted to unveil the origins, evolution and meaning of key political terms, as well as to outline the debates around each one. It is our conviction that this effort will help not only our students but also the general public to become fruitfully involved in current politics—in the effort to cure our ills.

What is it exactly that you did not understand?



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