Democracy and Democratization

Edited by

Geraint Parry and Michael Moran

ROUTLEDGE

Democracy and democratization

With the collapse of the former communist and authoritarian regimes in Eastern and Central Europe and Latin America many heralded the triumph of liberal democracy. More than ever democracy has become the ideology of the age. Few countries disavow democracy in principle; and for a while it seemed that fewer countries than in the past betrayed it in practice.

But is democracy also the 'illusion of the epoch'? The democratizing countries are experiencing real problems of stabilization and survival. At the same time, tensions between 'liberalism' and 'democracy' have led to dissatisfaction with the liberal model in countries such as Britain and France.
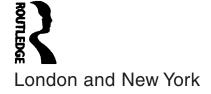
This timely collection examines questions of central concern to scholars and practitioners of politics. It looks at both the concept of democracy and the process of democratization, combining theoretical chapters by historians of ideas and political theorists, with empirical chapters on the process of democratization in Eastern Europe, China, the Middle East and Latin America, as well as in established democracies such as Britain and France.

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London and New York

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Acknowledgements

Introduction: problems of democracy and democratization

Geraint Parry and Michael Moran

This collection of essays is about a concept and a process: about the concept of democracy in all its varied meanings, and about the process—democratization—by which democracy might be attained. Its appearance is prompted by a convergence in the interests of scholars and of practitioners. Scholars have long been concerned with the meaning, the limits and the possibilities of democracy. The turbulent political changes at the end of the 1980s, notably but not exclusively in Eastern Europe, meant that these concerns escaped from the library and the study out to the world of practical political struggle. Sustaining and creating democratic political practices suddenly became an urgent political priority. This collection examines the theory and practice of democracy and democratization. In these introductory pages we do three things: we discuss the contested concept of democracy itself; we sketch the problems of democratization; and we provide an overview of the contributions in the body of the collection.

PROBLEMS OF DEMOCRACY

The vocabulary of politics is nowhere fixed. There is not—and there certainly should not be—a learned Academy whose task it is to construct a dictionary of political terms which lays down how they are to be used in perpetuity. Or, if there is a form of Academy, it comprises all the users of political language which, in a democracy in particular, should include every citizen. The task of political thought has been in large measure one of such definition and reconstitution. As Sheldon Wolin has put it:

> The designation of certain activities and arrangements as political, the characteristic way we think about them, and the concepts we employ to communicate our observations and reactions—none of these are written into the nature of things but are the legacy accruing from the historical activity of political philosophers.
>
> (Wolin 1961:5)

But, as Wolin acknowledges, the political philosophers do not simply make things up as they go along. Before we have political thought there are arrangements and practices to think about. In this way the realm of politics is created by both practitioners and thinkers.

If this is so in the case of the most general concept of 'the political' it is all the more true of more specific terms. Of these, the word 'democracy' has undergone as extensive a course of construction and reconstruction as any. The story of this process of the creation of democracy has often been told. Yet, as the contrasting, yet equally compelling accounts of Sartori (1987) and Held (1987) indicate, it is a story from which very different morals may be derived.

Most such stories begin, in a significant way, not at the beginning but at the present day—which is far from saying that they begin at the end. They point out (e.g. Benn and Peters 1959:332; Hanson 1989:68) that democracy has become the uniquely valued political system of the age. Virtually every country in the world proclaims itself to be a democracy. Occasionally military regimes seize power but they lack a distinctive legitimacy and often claim that they are cleansing the state in order to restore a rightful democracy. Other regimes have made pretensions to establish some higher or more real form of democracy, and strange formulations have emerged such as 'guided democracy', 'people's democracy' or the 'people's democratic dictatorship', as the Chinese People's Republic officially terms itself in the Preamble to its Constitution.

This hegemony of democracy was not always the case. Amongst the ancient Greeks, the inventors of the word, democracy was one amongst several political systems. Whilst it was the system evolved in Athens, the most powerful of city-states, it was regarded by Plato and Aristotle, its greatest political philosophers, as a deviant case, an aberration from the standard

of good government with which popular self-government was not to be identified. Indeed, as Wokler's contribution to this volume demonstrates, our knowledge and understanding of Greek democracy is for the most part indirect and fragmentary. Democracy meant the direct rule of the assembled people. This definition held the field until around the time of the American and French Revolutions. Accordingly, for a period of over two thousand years, when no such forms of direct popular rule existed, no person could be said to have lived in a democracy.

The major period of re-creation of democracy began with the revolutionary era when, gradually and hesitatingly, the word came to be applied to systems of representative government in which a sizeable proportion of the male population had the franchise. (The extent of those hesitations is illustrated in, for instance, Wokler's account of Madisonian doctrines of representation.) But these systems, and their modern descendants, differed from the Greek democracies not merely in being representative. They were, for example, far larger in scale; they were much more pluralistic in their social organization (societies rather than communities); there was a sharper division between the apparatus of government and the citizen body. In short, they were states. Thus the gradual re-description of these systems as democracies involved a remarkable process of political re-creation. So extensive is this process that some commentators have held that there is little more than the word in common between democracy in its original and in its modern incarnation. As Sartori expresses it, we have an example of 'homonymy, not homology' (1987:178). For these reasons Sartori argues that '… ancient democracies cannot teach us anything about building a democratic state and about conducting a democratic system'. Yet, as he also acknowledges, 'a considerable literature currently recalls the Greek experiment as if it were a lost and somewhat recuperable paradise' (Sartori 1987:279).

The ambiguities of the notion of 'the rule of the people' lie at the root of different views about the extent to which the idea of democracy has been re-created. The current univeral acclamation of democracy might suggest that Marx's vision has been attained in reality. Democracy is, Marx asserted, 'the essence of every political constitution'; it is the 'Old Testament' in relation to other political forms; it stands as the genus to the species (Marx 1970:30). It, alone, recognized man in his human existence as distinct from

merely according him a status in law. Now, clearly, Marx was not here writing about the incipient representative governments of his day. Nor would he, in all probability, have applied these remarks to the liberal democracies of our own time. Marx was thinking, in teleological terms, of a democracy which had realized its full potential. He offered few details but it is possible to surmise in general terms some of what he had in mind (Held 1987:105–39; Levin 1989). It would be a system in which the rule of the people would entail equal opportunities for all to participate in making decisions not only over what are conventionally termed governmental issues but over matters affecting the workplace and leisure activities.

A conception of participatory politics somewhat along these lines, but not necessarily either Marxist or socialist, has permeated democratic theory during the last thirty years (to cite only a few in this vein, Pateman 1970; Barber 1984; Keane 1984; Held 1987; Gould 1988). Each shares the view that democracy is, or should be, still undergoing a process of creation. A truly democratic society will be one which permits and perhaps also encourages every man and woman individually or with others to choose the course of his or her life, subject to recognition of the right of others to do likewise. The practical logic of positions such as these entails that arrangements for individual and collective choice are established within the place of work (Pateman 1970; Dahl 1985) or the family (Phillips 1991). It might require new institutions of representation, permitting those most affected by decisions a special voice (Offe 1984; Young 1989). Some consider that it requires the introduction of new communications technology in the form of voting machines permitting instant referendums (McLean 1986; Arterton 1987). Almost certainly such democracies would need a political culture, and accompanying political arrangements, which enable the citizen to acquire information, to advance arguments and to communicate in debate (Barber 1984; Habermas 1987; Held 1987; Miller 1989; Dryzek 1990).

Clearly on this set of views (and we have not only simplified them but, indeed, amalgamated into a set, positions which differ in various ways) democracy is not a condition which has been achieved, but one which still must be striven for. Ranged against this set of positions is one which presents a much more limited view of what democracy may 'realistically' achieve. The prime protagonist of this conception was Schumpeter (1943) but it has

been elaborated in recent years by Nordlinger (1981) and, most notably, by Sartori (1987). The major claim of such thinkers is that they take greater account of the realities of modern politics which, they argue, render unfeasible many of the aspirations of the participatory democrats. At the same time they deny that they are merely presenting a conservative defence of the liberal-democratic practices of Western countries as some critics have alleged (Parry 1969; Held 1987; but see Bellamy 1991).

The central feature of modern society which this set of thinkers emphasize is its need for leadership. For them we are unavoidably in the world which Max Weber delineated—one of complex arrangements, requiring organization, bureaucracy and expertise. The only way in which such a world can be governed is by political leadership. And the only way in which it can be governed democratically is through a system of *accountability* which thus becomes the guiding concept rather than 'participation'. The liberal democracies have evolved a satisfactory method of accountability in the form of competitive elections in which rivals for the political leadership campaign for the votes of the electorate. Politics is professionalized and the system is one in which, as the economist Schumpeter put it, there is a 'division of labour' between the political actors and the people at large.

Democracy becomes 'the rule of the politician' (Schumpeter 1943) rather than of the people in any direct sense. The politicians make possible some significant choice between packages of policies. The successful leaders gain from the election at least the authority to govern for a period of years. It allows the electorate to veto other rivals (Riker 1982). The system is thus, at the minimum, a mechanism for designating a set of persons as having governmental status (Barry 1979:193). These are some of the justifications for accountable representative democracy which have been current.

Most of the apologists for such a view of democracy do not, moreover, regard it as a second best to a more participatory vision. The distance between political decision-makers and public is not necessarily a matter of regret. The professionals can commit their lives to developing a knowledge of policies, to debating and reflecting upon issues which cannot be expected of the average member of the demos. This is not to endorse Schumpeter's view of the person in the street as descending to 'a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field' (Schumpeter

1943:262). It is merely to acknowledge the multifarious interests, additional to politics, which compete for the attention of contemporary men and women. It would be foolish to expose them to the responsibilities of decision-making which the professional politician should expect to assume. For Sartori the *reductio ad absurdum* of participatory or, as he prefers to call it, 'referendum' democracy is the home voting-machine.

> …the idea that the government of our fantastically complex, inter-connected, and fragile societies could be entrusted to millions of discrete wills that are bound to decide *at random,* with a *zero-sum instrument*—this idea is a monumental proof of the under-comprehension that is menacing us.
>
> (Sartori 1987:247).

This comment pitches the contrast between the competing visions of democracy too sharply. However, it illuminates the situation modern democracy now faces. At the moment when liberal democracy has seemed most triumphant there has been intense dissatisfaction with that liberal model (see Holliday and Lovecy below). New forms of democracy have become an aspiration prompted very often by new social movements such as feminists and ecologists (Held and Pollitt 1986).

Yet in every instance the new democratizing countries in East and Central Europe and in Latin America have 'opted' for the security of liberal democracy rather than for any experimentation. In contrast to earlier revolutionary moments, including previous eruptions in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, there appears to have been little temptation to establish decentralized participatory political units or councils (Arendt 1963:217–85). This was so despite Central European intellectuals having over the twenty-five years since the 'Prague spring' reflected on the possibility of alternative political and economic orders to either the past authoritarianism of the communist bloc or the liberal Western model (Sik 1976; Bahro 1977; Ascherson 1992; and the discussion by Barnard 1991). Moreover, as Geras argues in his contribution, the collapse of these regimes does not necessarily imply that the resources of the Marxian tradition are exhausted when discussing the character of democracy.

There are several possible reasons why the former communist states rejected experimentation. One might be that the pseudo-

participatory mobilized practices of these regimes had alienated the population from political involvement—an escape from participation, as the contributions of Ionescu and Waller both testify. Liberal democracy might seem a safe, if unexciting, alternative to a society sick of experimentation—'democracy by default' as some in Latin America have termed it (Whitehead 1992:148). The defenders of realistic politics might argue that there was no option. In broad terms the representative, competitive model of democracy is the only feasible one in the modern complex world. There could be some element of political choice as between forms—presidential or parliamentary, consensual or majoritarian, federal or unitary (Lijphart 1984)—but, in the last instance, the tried and tested Western system is the only one that fits the time. Less Weberian and somewhat more Marxist versions of such an argument would seek to establish that liberal democracy is indeed the only political shell for advanced capitalism, whilst acknowledging the triumph of that capitalism.

Coupled with this is the possibility that the interdependence of the modern world, so much emphasized in Ionescu's contribution, may gradually be rendering it more difficult for a country to embark on a 'deviant' political path just as economic 'deviance' has become more difficult. The growth of world markets in goods and services, of round-the-clock and round-the-globe securities trading, of multinational companies, of institutions (such as the World Bank, IMF, the committee of the G7 countries) to regulate this economic order mean that national economies operate under significant external constraints. To some degree these same forces—and world-wide instant communications constitute a linking factor—may be operating in such a way as to encourage at least conformity to liberal democratic practices. On the one hand the closed society is more difficult to maintain. On the other hand existing democracies are more confident in offering economic and political rewards, whether aid or promises of association with the European Community to those nations that are prepared to democratize. This may prove to be a sad case of optimism and one may recall the failure of predictions of 'convergence' between Eastern and Western systems. Yet 'interdependence' is a factor which can scarcely fail to affect not only economic policies but the institutional frameworks within which these policies are made.

Is the apparent triumph of liberal democracy therefore a matter of this being the best form of government we have got? Is it a practical ideal to be refined and reformed, certainly, but whose broad outlines are proven to be congruent with the modern economy? Or do the current experiences of democratization suggest that it is possible to go beyond these conventional arrangements and find ways in which the rule of the people can be made manifest at levels from the locality and the workplace up to the institutions of interdependence in which so much of our lives are shaped? Could it even be that, with the collapse of the communist 'alternative', the liberal democracies can no longer complacently congratulate themselves on their superiority but must examine their own democratic credentials more thoroughly?

PROBLEMS OF DEMOCRATIZATION

We have seen that the meaning of democracy has been contested in recent years. It is ironic, then, that at the very moment when there was theoretical uncertainty about the nature of democratic institutions and practices the democratic creed itself should have swept all before it in the world of practical politics. The 1980s saw the apparent triumph of democracy as a system of government. Within the pluralist democracies of Western Europe the best organized and best supported opponents of democracy, the communists, began to fade away: the French communists experienced a catastrophic fall in popular support; the Italian party completed its transformation into a reformist social democratic institution; the Marxist-Leninist movements of some smaller European countries, such as Holland, were overwhelmed by new radical movements, like feminism and environmentalism (Waller 1989).

It was apparent early in the decade that the Marxist-Leninist challenge inside the established pluralist democracies was on the wane. But this decline, though significant, was soon reduced to the status of a sideshow by what happened in Eastern Europe after 1985. The story of those events is recounted in Waller's chapter in this volume, and its outlines are so well known that they can be summarized in a sentence. The great Marxist political bloc, which had originated from the success of Bolshevism in 1917, and which had been extended and consolidated by Stalinist

military success in 1945, collapsed; the collapse was completed by the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself in 1991. As we write in late 1992 the most significant challenge to democracy, Marxist communism, has all but disappeared across the globe, even in nominally Marxist regimes. In this book, for instance, Christiansen manages to write about China with barely a mention of the party. The comparative study of communist regimes in the 1990s now virtually amounts to the comparative study of North Korea and Cuba; by the time this volume appears even these grisly regimes may have become historical curiosities.

Nor have the changes in the fortunes of democracy been confined to the eclipse of Marxism in Europe. Other parts of the globe have also seen an apparent resurgence of democratic politics. As Cammack's chapter demonstrates, since the late 1970s authoritarian regimes have collapsed across Latin America, in both the poorest and the better-developed countries. The continent seems to have escaped from its historical tradition of authoritarianism. In Africa likewise the authoritarian regimes that swept away the first generation of constitutional systems established after independence seem themselves in retreat. The most significant change took place at the southern tip of the continent. In South Africa the most powerful authoritarian regime on the continent abandoned its ideology of racism and began to dismantle its authoritarian institutions.

The collapse of authoritarian political regimes was accompanied by the collapse of authoritarian economic institutions. The most dramatic example was, of course, provided by the Marxist-Leninist autocracies, where the dissolution of command economies was both a cause and a consequence of the collapse of political dictatorship. Elsewhere the trend was less dramatic but still noticeable: the 1980s was the decade of privatization and economic deregulation (Moran and Wright 1991). The triumph of liberal politics was accompanied by the triumph of liberal economics.

To describe these changes only in terms of the collapse of authoritarianism is of course to tell only half the story. An equally striking feature of recent events was the way the opponents of authoritarianism grounded their opposition in the ideology of pluralist democracy. More striking still, the regimes which have succeeded authoritarianism have turned to the language of pluralist democracy to legitimize their new political arrangements.

Across the world there is apparently occurring a large-scale process of 'democratization'.

Is there then nothing left to do but to celebrate the triumph of democracy and 'the end of history' (Fukuyama 1992)? Even to pose the question is to see that it must be answered in the negative. Numerous problems exist in both understanding and in achieving democratization. Three are worth distinguishing here because they recur throughout the pages of this book.

The first concerns our understanding of the conditions under which democratization can take place. Encouraging democratization in the former autocracies is now a top policy priority for the governments of the leading established democracies, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Yet despite a generation's systematic social science research we now seem less certain than ever about how to create and sustain democratic political institutions. In this volume Edwards pitilessly analyses the weak links in the explanatory chains fashioned in recent decades by the major schools developed to explain why and how democracy develops. Cammack focuses his fire more narrowly on one set of approaches, but is equally pitiless. Quoting the pessimistic observations of some of the central figures in the 'behavioural' study of democracy, he remarks

> It is both curious and instructive that the flowering of democracy in the 1980s in Latin America and elsewhere coincided with the collapse into incoherence of the behaviouralist effort to place the understanding of politics in general, and democracy in particular, on a new scientific footing (p. 174).

Even those who do not agree with the full terms of Cammack's critique cannot deny that the more we have studied democracy, and the more we have witnessed efforts to democratize, the less confident we have become about our ability to produce general explanatory accounts of democracy and democratization.

The second great problem concerns, not analytical understanding, but practical realization. Nobody pretends that democratization is an automatic or easy process. Just how difficult it is to achieve is emphasized by our growing knowledge of conditions in the former Marxist-Leninist autocracies of Eastern Europe. The problems are graphically recounted in Waller's

chapter. The domain of civil society that exists in the pluralist democracies was largely destroyed by the communist regimes. The destruction of civil society is relatively easy to accomplish; the reconstitution of a complex and autonomous associational life is immensely difficult. The problem is summarized in Waller's 'aquarium' image. It is easy to turn an aquarium into fish soup, but not so easy to turn fish soup back into an aquarium: the dissolution of civil society was accomplished successfully by the Stalinists, but its reconstitution is an immensely more difficult project. Christiansen's pessimistic account of the chances of creating a sphere of civil society in China further emphasizes the problem of transition: if China looks less and less like a Marxist-Leninist regime, it also does not look much like a system on the road to democratization. From the accounts offered by Waller, Christiansen and Pool we can also observe that, even at the level of rhetoric, the triumph of democracy has been far from complete. If nations turn away from Marxist authoritarianism there are no intellectually coercive reasons why they should look to democracy as an alternative source of legitimacy. They can turn instead to authoritarian nationalism, plainly a powerful force in the old communist regimes; or they can turn to theocratic authoritarianism, as Pool shows.

The third problem in achieving democratization concerns what is happening to 'democratization within democracies'. It is natural to assume that the problem of democratization is one which faces those systems now attempting to make the transition from authoritarianism. But the systems which made the transition to democracy in the previous historical 'waves' of democratization in this century (Huntington 1984) did not stand still. Even where democratic institutions were imposed in a relatively short period (like post-war Germany) 'democratization' was not a once and for all event: the imposition of democratic political institutions was succeeded by a longer process designed to reshape popular and elite attitudes in ways that would support democratic practices. Even the long-established democracies have continued to experience substantial political change, and this political change bears in highly complex ways on the question of democratization.

The point is most obvious in the case of the United Kingdom, the subject of Holliday's chapter. In the 1980s there occurred fundamental changes in the United Kingdom in the structure and scope of the state, in the relations between the machinery of the

central state and sub-national systems of government, and in the relations between the state and the sphere of civil society. Did these changes amount to a process of further democratization; were they, alternatively undermining democratic political life; or were they, while important, neutral in their impact on the character of British democracy? Holliday's examination of the various proposals to reform the British political system shows that the answers given to these questions depend heavily, not just on the conception of democracy we hold, but also on our view of the appropriate role of the state: what to one person will appear as political reforms designed to limit the arbitrary power of the state to another will seem to be measures designed to restrict the responsibilities of democratic government. Thus if the meaning of 'democracy' is problematic, so is the meaning of 'democratization'. The problematic character of the latter is obviously linked to the problematic character of the former, but democratization also presents its own independent difficulties both for the scholar and for the practitioner: problems of explanation, of realization and of interpretation.

STATES OF DEMOCRACY

We deliberately commissioned the contributions to this book with diversity in mind. Anticipating that both democracy and democratization would prove to be problematic concepts we wanted to ensure as varied a set of examinations as possible. That variety is most obviously conveyed by the way our central concepts are analysed from the perspectives of different sub-disciplines of political science. We have ordered the contributions to reflect both the diversity of the contributions and the common themes that unite them. It is natural to begin with the historical excavations by Wokler, by Parry and by Geras. These chapters are very different in substance, but one striking theme recurs in all three. It concerns the opposition between two different conceptions of democratic politics—an opposition that in turn is linked to opposing conceptions of the nature and purpose of political action itself. The opposition is anticipated by Wokler's Procrustean and Promethean images: an opposition betwen democratic politics conceived as a fixed pattern, and democratic politics conceived as a process of development and learning, where change and contingency are the watchwords. 'At issue in

these dichotomies', in Wokler's words, 'are not only different ideas of liberty but also diverse perceptions of human nature' (p. 38).

Edwards's chapter provides a bridge between the two main sections of the book, because while it is written from within the field of political theory it critically analyses the explanatory pretensions of a large body of empirical literature on the conditions sustaining democracy. Edward is himself sceptical of the arguments of some later contributors: note, for instance, his critical remarks on Cammack's arguments on p. 100. But there is an important continuity between his contribution and the succeeding empirical chapters, because his emphasis on the sheer difficulty of arriving at any general understanding of the process of democratization recurs continuously in those chapters. The note of uncertainty is sounded from the beginning in Ionescu's contribution. This is placed at the head of those chapters dealing with the 'real world of democratization' because its sweep offers a comprehensive set of reflections on the origins and significance of the momentous events that took place in Eastern Europe in 1989—events that, more than anything else, took the issue of democratization out of the confines of the scholarly seminar and placed it high on the agenda of practising politicians. It also serves to remind us how the fates of nations are now bound up with one another more completely, and instantaneously, than ever before. The experiences and examples of one country are there for all to see. After Ionescu's grand survey Waller looks in more detail at the East European terrain. Any reader left in a state of pessimism by Ionescu will have that pessimism partly reinforced by Waller. The reinforcement is only partial because some of Ionescu's more gloomy interpretations are viewed in a brighter light by Waller: for instance, while Ionescu interprets low turnout in competitive elections as an unambiguous sign of disillusionment with the political process, Waller argues that the evidence of turnout is open to a variety of less gloomy interpretations. Nevertheless, the central message of Waller's chapter makes chastening reading for any friend of democracy. He argues that the crisis of the old Marxist-Leninist political order was part of a wider crisis of the economic and social order which Marxism had created. Democratic institutions in Eastern and Central Europe cannot be built upon any viable social foundations, because those very social foundations were a victim of Marxist autocracy. Alongside

the creation of democracy has to go the re-creation of the civil society so badly damaged by the communists.

Our opening chapters by Wokler, Parry and Geras remind us of the role of contingency and creativity in creating and sustaining democratic institutions. But Waller's account also reminds us that creativity and the desire to democratize are not enough: the appropriate structural conditions have to be present. The significance of structural constraints is revealed even more clearly in Christiansen's chapter. Something complex is happening to the old communist system in China; but after Christiansen's exploration of the problems of developing and sustaining a sphere of civil society in China we must reluctantly conclude that, whatever this complex process amount to, it does not amount to anything like democratization. Contingency and creativity are pushed even further to the margin in Cammack's robustly materialistic account of Latin America. 'Capitalism', says Cammack,

> is a mode of production in which a minority who own the means of production confront a majority who do not… Democracy is a form of rule in which non-capitalists potentially enjoy an unassailable majority… In general, capitalism and democracy will be compatible only if majority rule produces governments committed to continued capitalist reproduction. Otherwise, something has to give (p. 178).

Cammack's view of what has 'given' in the various democratic experiments in Latin America is summarized in his title. Latin America has managed to produce democracy without citizenship. Evidently democracies at the periphery of the modern capitalist economy have a particularly tough time. That lesson is reinforced by Pool's chapter. Pool argues that we cannot understand the limits of democratization in the Middle East without an understanding of how the economies of that region have fitted the wider world capitalist order. Yet there may be a straw for democrats to grasp in Pool's account of some of the indigenous notions of liberalism and populism within the region and within Islam.

If countries occupying peripheral parts of global capitalism have difficulty in creating and sustaining democracy, what of those nations that are simultaneously at the heart of advanced

capitalism and at the heart of the established network of democratic nations? The contributions by Lovecy and by Holliday examine two 'classic' examples of these. The problems encountered in maintaining a stable democratic order are plainly very different here from those encountered in the other parts of the globe examined in our volume. It is obvious that, relatively speaking, democratic institutions and the entitlements of democratic citizenship are well established in the United Kingdom and in France. Yet our opening themes of change and contingency reappear in both these chapters. Lovecy documents how the democratic history of the French Fifth Republic is a history of tension between a majoritarian and a more consensual notion of democratic decision-making; while Holliday demonstrates in his examination of competing proposals for constitutional reform in the United Kingdom that the nature of British 'democracy' is both contested and is subject to continuing revision. Both these contributions reflect on the old tension within liberal democracy between the element of 'liberalism', which seeks to constrain the will of government, and 'democracy' which upholds the right of a 'people' to determine its own life as it wills.

Both also emphasize the central place of constitutions and constitutional theories in democracy and democratization. In the case of France, Lovecy shows, the constitution and its associated institutions have played an important substantive part in the evolution of democratic processes. In the United Kingdom, as Holliday's chapter makes plain, the constitution has assumed great symbolic importance, for the fractures and tensions in the political system have partly revealed themselves as arguments about our constitutional arrangements.

Our contributors disagree on much—a not surprising outcome since we chose them for their diversity; but they apparently all do agree that despite its apparent triumph as the ideology of the age 'democracy' is an uncertain state and democratization an uncertain process.

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Part I
Theories and explanations

Chapter 1

Democracy's Mythical Ordeals: the Procrustean and Promethean paths to popular self-rule

Robert Wokler

More than any other form of government, democracy is nurtured by illusion, its mysteriously compelling principles deemed both unattainable in theory and at the same time inescapable in practice. So extensive is its prevalence in the modern world that it apparently cannot be overcome by any ideological dispute, not even between capitalism and socialism, since the People's Democracies of the East and the liberal democracies of the West have proved indistinguishable and interchangeable in terms of it, inspiring the steadfast loyalty of their subjects, as well as the fervent zeal of dissidents determined to be rid of them, each in its name. This all but universal triumph of democracy over the past half-century or so may seem bewildering, since the predominant political doctrines that have shaped world affairs since the French Revolution, together with the great upheavals which in this age have scarred our history, owe their origin in large measure to the perceived failure of democratic policies and institutions. The parties and movements of modern nationalism, liberalism, socialism and communism, that is to say, were in each case built from the frustrations which democracy had spawned— for nationalists, with superficial systems of election bearing no relation to the real allegiances of kith and kin; for liberals, with the social uniformity and tyranny of majority rule which popular sovereignty engendered; for socialists and communists, with the abuse of ostensibly impartial state power in the interests of a predominant class. When the fascist, national socialist or imperialist regimes of Europe and the Orient took root in the 1920s and 1930s, they won a mass following in opposition to the democratic governments of the period, whose political decline and economic weakness after a relatively brief ascendancy made

them seem already defunct, unsuited to the needs and aspirations of a new world order. Even today, when the cold war's rival versions of democracy have almost everywhere, apart from China, been supplanted by the victorious West's single system of competing parties in periodic elections, the fate of that system appears less and not more steady in consequence, the great fault lines of international politics having fractured in numerous cleavages of nationalities, class, race and religion which putatively democratic governments managed to conceal just a few years ago. Democracy's undoubted triumph in the contemporary world, although impressive, does not really seem to be the fruit of durable conviction.

Part of its lack of truly profound credibility may well be due to its own character, since to subscribe to democracy is to accord equal respect to the views of others such that a person is bound to accept their judgement and hence the defeasibility of his or her principles in the face of superior numbers. This preference for an electoral victory even over one's own beliefs—sometimes rather misleadingly termed the paradox of democracy[1]—may seem to make fidelity to it a matter of procedure only, and therefore weaker than one's attachment to substantive points of principle. But to value a legitimate procedure over the accomplishment of one's own will is not irrational, and it may be just as likely that such forbearance and toleration add to democracy's attractions as that they diminish it. At any rate, a conception of democracy as merely procedural rather than fundamental begs certain questions that will here be at issue and must not be prejudged. The broader and simpler point with which I should like to begin is that democracy has had a more ephemeral hold upon the public imagination than its institutional prevalence suggests because it depends so much upon disparate and all too commonly latent notions of what it is and should be. To subscribe to democracy is to hold certain views of human nature—of its essence or plasticity, its base or noble motives, its confined or limitless prospects—and these perspectives, ranging from sceptical mistrust of that nature to unbounded enthusiasm for it, generally distinguish democracy's conflicting denominations.[2] Perhaps no other political doctrine or practice is so infused by diverse underlying beliefs which inform its principles and expectations of how they work or fail. Allegiance to or suspicion of democracy provide fundamental clues of the ways in which

we interpret the whole nexus of men's moral, social and political relations and the manner in which individual and collective goals may be realized or must be frustrated. They are formed from illusions about human potentialities or about the unavoidable constraints which curtail them. They depend upon myths, some so deeply ingrained in our civilization that they are taken for granted and their details forgotten except by others who contest them, even while subscribing, perhaps with equal oblivion, to alternative myths. All myths, in their extravagance, articulate and embellish only fragmentary truths. In highlighting certain features of a moral landscape, they flatten and obscure the rest.

Among the most striking of such myths is the widespread conviction that democracy as we know it is of ancient Greek, predominantly Athenian, derivation, epitomized perhaps in Isocrates' *Areopagiticus,* where he describes the Lacedaemonians as the best governed, because most democratic, of all peoples, or in Pericles' illustrious funeral oration for the first victims of the Peloponnesian War, as reconstructed by Thucydides in his account of its history. There, apparently, can be found the *locus classicus* of democratic theory and practice—a constitution which, according to its leading citizen, applauds talent, rewards merit, tolerates diversity but disregards poverty; a political association in which persons are free and equal under the law; above all, a government which entrusts power not to a minority but to the whole people, whose public-spirited and well-informed deliberations give Athens its peculiar strength and make it a model worthy of imitation by other states. What a splendid spectacle, acclaimed by all mankind! Nothing owed to Greece by modern civilization— not our debt to its philosophy, art or science which by contrast have exercised only a parochially Western influence—seems so universally applauded as are the exemplary democratic practices of ancient Athens.[3]

But is this really the case? How many states in human history have emulated the principal institutions of that democracy—the popular law courts, the rotating Council of Five Hundred selected by lot, the outdoor assembly of an adult male population whose citizenship and freedom depended in no small measure upon a politically excluded economic infrastructure of slaves, women and permanently unenfranchised residents? Although our term *democracy* is derived from the Greek for 'popular government', some of its central features may have been of ancient Phoenician

origin[4] before they came to be adapted and modified by the Greeks, and since the ultimate demise of its classical Athenian form in 322 BC, hardly any of its exceedingly few manifestations have acknowledged even the remotest debt to its Greek sources in the course of their own brief and fitful democratic careers. Neither the Italian republics of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with their principles of elective government under officials of limited tenure, nor the *Congregatio fidelium* of a Church which embraced the laity in General Council as endorsed by Marsilius and others in the fourteenth century, drew inspiration expressly from the example of Greece, although the predominantly small-scale, urban settings and commercial systems of the first, and the public assembly characteristics of the second, might have been expected to suggest Athenian models and parallels. But before Aristotle's *Politics* came to be recirculated in Latin in the mid-thirteenth century, little was known in Europe of the government of Athens, and his strictures on democracy, which Aristotle identified as a corrupt form of rule by the multitude, did not offer good grounds for emulating its achievement. Medieval republicanism owed much to the civic culture of ancient Rome as illuminated by Cicero and recorded by Sallust and Livy, but precious little to the democracy of classical Athens.[5]

Neither did the Levellers of the seventeenth century in their advocacy of political equality. They sought the abolition of ranks, if not of property, and subscribed to what would today be called the principle of 'one man, one vote'. For these reasons above all they have often been judged democratic; yet they found little to applaud in Hellenic civilization, never addressed their attention to Athens and never even termed their ideal a *democracy*. The subjects of Rhode Island, with more modest aspirations of a freeholders' voluntary association, did do so in their 1647 constitution, which may thus be said to mark the birth of democracy in America. But these religious dissenters, inspired more by faith in Providence than by any attachment to the civil rights of man, aspired to a strictly regulated government of a kind which neither ancient nor modern democrats have approved, and which exercised precious little influence upon the framers of the American Constitution 140 years later.[6]

By and large, for two thousand years after the golden age of Athens, democracy seemed a spent force, a generally discredited

form of government, unstable, unprincipled, specially subject to violence, corruption and revolution. Even the democratic constitution of Athens was perceived at best as a decidedly mixed blessing. Notwithstanding the praise lavished upon it by Isocrates and Pericles, its most memorable achievement for educated persons of liberal temper appeared to be its judicial murder of Socrates. Its chief adherents in ancient Greece had not been the great philosophers—Plato, who abhorred its disorder and assignment of authority to the ignorant, or Aristotle, who mistrusted its abuses under the covetous poor—but rather some of the Sophists that thrived within it, among them Protagoras and perhaps Gorgias, as well as Gorgias's pupil, Isocrates, whose reputations have never recovered from Plato's portrayal of their collective deference to common opinion and in certain instances even their unprincipled glibness as spokesmen on behalf of the people instead of the truth.[7] It may seem odd that the idea of democracy, that is, the subjection of government to popular control, long predates the modern invention of the state. But it is salutary to recall that until the Enlightenment it was a form of government only seldom deemed worthy of esteem. Democracy may have been nurtured in ancient Greece, but in the modern world there was no influential class of persons who zealously campaigned for or subscribed to it—there were no truly notable *democrats*, that is—until the late eighteenth century, when the term *democrat* itself first gained currency.[8]

Its resurgence in that period accompanied the two great political movements which have most shaped modern history—the establishment, in America, of the first new nation in a New World, and the comprehensive transformation, in France, of an old into a new social order. With the revolutions that gave birth to these new republics, ancient democracy was recast in a fresh framework, whose resilience in accommodating the massive forces of industry, commerce and class conflict over the succeeding two hundred years has given it a viability and international dominance which the precariously isolated and beleaguered democratic outposts of antiquity and early modern Europe never enjoyed. The democracies of America and France, however, did not take on the attributes of an atavistic system in belated rediscovery of the Greek experience. They did not spring fully armed like the goddess Athena from Zeus's head. They were, rather, mutant or hybrid varieties—a compound such as

Montesquieu introduced with his conception of the democratic republic, or 'representation ingrafted upon democracy', as Paine remarked about America[9]—established piecemeal from ingredients unknown to the democrats of antiquity. When the American colonists of the 1760s and 1770s called for freedom from English tyranny, they pursued their cause in terms of the authentic meaning of *representation* and not of democracy; they sought, that is, to be actually represented by their own members of Parliament rather than virtually represented by persons with unaccountable authority to act on their behalf. When in 1787 they framed a federal Constitution for their now liberated state, they aspired to protect their freedom, not by invoking ancient principles of democratic engagement, but rather, in following Montesquieu's ingenious account of the political institutions of modern England, by distinguishing and separating the branches and functions of their government, so as to ensure that political power could never be concentrated and abused. Their constitution did not pass power to the people but instead diffused it as thinly as possible among the people's political officers. It owed next to nothing to the constitution of Athens, which its American counterpart resembled only in its deliberate exclusion from citizenship of most of the people who inhabited that country—above all, slaves.[10]

The newly-constructed democratic institutions of France proceeded along almost the opposite path, towards a concentration of power in the hands of the people as a whole, whose collective identity as *the nation* was acknowledged by the third article of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man to be 'the source of all sovereignty'. As Robespierre proclaimed to the Convention on 5 February 1794, 'Democracy is a state of affairs in which the sovereign people…effects for itself all that it can do well'. This notion of sovereignty, devised in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Bodin and then Hobbes principally in defence of monarchical power against threats of civil war, owed as little to the Greeks as did the separation of powers in America, and Robespierre, quite aware of his countrymen's innovation, plainly took pride in the fact, as he put it, that 'the French are the first people in the world to have established true democracy' (Robespierre 1956–58: iii.113 and 115). But in accordance with that idea of popular sovereignty, democracy embraced representation as well, and especially under the Jacobin Committee of Public Safety, the sovereign nation of France found that its government,

acting on behalf of the people and their true interests, promoted a regime of terror for the sake of virtue, which was soon to cost Robespierre his own life and would thereafter colour the popular perception not only of the French Revolution but of the despotic tendencies of democracy as well. The founders of modern liberalism—Constant, Mme de Staël and their followers—perceived the Jacobin experiment as a misguided attempt to rekindle the enthusiasm of public commitment which had fired civic virtue in ancient Sparta and Rome, *les engagés* having all too quickly become *les enragés* when confronted by recalcitrant political practices that failed to yield to the zealous enthusiasm of their ideals. Within the complex network of interpersonal relations characteristic of commercial society, freedom required, not solidarity, but security and protection, they supposed. It necessitated a respect for human differences and for individual rights whose inviolability it was one of the primary functions of the state to ensure. But the exercise of popular sovereignty did not safeguard such rights; it overran them.

Thus was French Revolutionary democracy confronted by modern liberalism.[11] Yet it was not construed correctly by liberals when they identified it as a graft of a pure species of government transported from the ancient world, unfit for contemporary civilization's denser soil. The idea of popular sovereignty which lies at its heart depends upon a certain conception of the state and the extent of its legal powers which may invert the form but still accepts the substance of the arguments of Bodin and Hobbes. It is a predominantly modern doctrine, whose articulations accompanied and were designed to grant legitimacy to political institutions unknown to the Greeks. The separation of the powers of government in America, equally, was of recent invention, intended to secure liberty in quite another way, of course, but again with reference to spheres of competence and patterns of authority which reflected the development of the contemporary state. Systems of representation so central to both American and French democracy had no place at all in the political world of the ancient Athenians. Theirs was a democratic constitution essentially because it was direct, and the inescapable prevalence today of indirect or representative forms of government only confirms the fanciful nature of the debt which these modern democracies are said to owe to classical Greece.

Since the slumbering Athenian dog has proved reluctant to bark its acknowledgement of a filial tie across two thousand years, commentators have sometimes sought to rouse it in another fashion, by inventing an alternative myth, according to which its principles inspire the visionary ideals of certain modern thinkers, who are then deemed, by proxy, as it were, to stand for democracy in its purest form. Rousseau, Mill and Marx, in particular, both separately and together, have been granted canonical status as exponents of what is taken to be a classical theory of democracy, through their encouragement of the most active participation of citizens in the management of their own affairs; for Rousseau, as legislators in a sovereign assembly of the whole people; for Mill, as self-directing agents of progress with a free press under representative government; according to Marx, as freely cooperative members of egalitarian workers' communes—images which in each case have been deemed 'the real equivalent', as Mill once put it, of the Pnyx (the hill on which the Athenian assembly congregated) and the Roman Forum (*Considerations on Representative Government,* ch. 1, Mill (1963–91), XIX.378).

Yet it is a fiction to suppose that Rousseau, Mill and Marx were stirred by similar longings or shared a common dream. As a collection of classical democrats they make incompatible bedfellows when laid to rest together, everywhere their incongruities protruding like Achilles' heels. Each expressed profound misgivings about democracy, was unconvinced by the achievement of Athens and doubted whether its political system was fit for export and adoption elsewhere. Democracy according to Rousseau was, strictly speaking, a form of government which had never, and could not ever have, existed, since it was 'against the natural order', he asserted, 'for the many to govern' and 'unimaginable that the people should remain continually assembled in dealing with the business of public affairs'. He yielded to no ancient critic of democracy in his perception of its tendency towards 'civil war' and 'internecine agitation', and no modern elite theorist has ever been more sceptical than he was of a form of government 'so perfect that it is not fit for men'.[12]

Commentators who find in Rousseau's political writings the purest expression of democratic ideals confuse his account of sovereignty, which he claimed could never be represented, with government, or the sovereign's executive power, which by its nature dealt with individuals and particulars and accordingly

could not reside in the hands of the legislative sovereign as a whole. In his political vocabulary, the term *democracy* refers predominantly to the idea of popular government and not to that of popular sovereignty, each by definition and necessity exclusive of the other. When Rousseau contemplated Pericles and Athens, he identified a man and a civic culture that had aspired to more factitious greatness than real virtue, and a city whose freedom had depended on slaves. His praise of the ancient Greeks was never unqualified, but to the extent that he applauded their public spirit and engagement, it was the example of Sparta and not Athens which he addressed most, and that especially in so far as it served as a model for more durable citizen assemblies that arose elsewhere and later. Among the ancient Greeks, it was above all to Plato that Rousseau was drawn rather than to any democrats, and Machiavelli was to excite his even greater veneration for the Republic of Rome, whose mixed constitution could scarcely be called a democracy, though its civil religion and militia, together with other institutions, long rendered its citizens more patriotic still, in his judgement, than were the Athenians.

Mill, by contrast, had relatively little to say about republican Rome and held Sparta, on account of its lack of respect for individuals, to be the object of 'exaggerated admiration'; Rousseau's attachment to that city's frugality, asceticism and disdain for culture he would most likely have deemed just further proof of this generally misguided thinker's mindlessly dutiful Calvinist faith. Neither did he warm unreservedly to the constitution of Athens, whose conception of self-government by way of an open assembly of the people he held to be totally unsuited to large states with complex administrations, and whose citizens had convicted and put to death for impiety and immorality the person he regarded as the most wonderful teacher of virtue who had ever lived, Socrates. Mill did love the Greeks for their delight in human nature as a noble and beautiful object of contemplation, and, on balance, he allowed that their democratic institutions had nourished such enthusiasm. But the Greeks' real genius and strength of character, as he understood them, were not to be found in their potentially dangerous practice of democracy so much as in their ideal of self-development. Their vigorous notions of individuality and spontaneity had borne fruit in a remarkably flourishing culture, but they could be stifled and made prey to democratic forms of despotism as much as to any

other tyranny, he thought. Indeed, in the modern age of the democratic republic, he supposed that a social tyranny more formidable than political oppression had become manifest—a tyranny of the majority 'penetrating…deeply into the details of life…enslaving the soul itself'. This hazardous tendency of majoritarian democracy had already been recognized by Tocqueville, from whom Mill drew much of his own mistrust of the sometimes too ardent, more often too timid and conformist, egalitarianism of popular assemblies; Tocqueville, in turn, would no doubt have agreed with Mill's contention that the self-government which we suppose ourselves to have achieved has too often become 'not the government of each by himself but of each by all the rest'.

Small wonder, then, that even while advocating universal suffrage and the widest possible participation of persons in affairs of state, Mill was anxious to safeguard the minority of individuals with special ability, enterprise or wisdom from the mediocrity of the mass. In *On Representative Government*, he accordingly addressed a number of ways in which political expertise and talent might be protected from democracy, thus putting both the classical liberal case for comprehensive public engagement, on the one hand, and, on the other—stemming from a quite different aristocratic distinction between the base and refined metals of the human soul—the case for rule by a community's superior elements. His advocacy of a system of plural voting so as to counterbalance the weight of an ignorant majority, together with a system of professional administration, ultimately accountable to the people but not continually subject to their incompetent control, were both inspired by a wish to keep democracy in check.[13] His scheme was in its details as much concerned to ensure sound leadership as to safeguard individual freedom, and in neither instance did it emulate the democratic constitutions of ancient Greece.

Marx, for his part, had no respect for political expertise of the kind Mill so greatly admired, not least because he understood officialdom in terms of privilege and service to class interest rather than of competence and adherence to an anyway fictitious notion of the public good. As distinct from the legally ritualized qualifications necessary to pass into the British or Prussian civil service, he remarked, in his *Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'*, 'No one ever heard of the Greek or Roman statesmen taking an

examination' (Marx 1970:51). By contrast with Mill's concern for professionalism, his reliance upon the virtue and common sense of ordinary working men and women seems decidedly more democratic in the classical mould, and there are indeed occasional passages in his writings, especially in *The Communist Manifesto* and with respect to the Paris Commune in his account of *The Civil War* in France, in which he comments on the proletariat's aspiration to establish 'really democratic institutions', acting on behalf of the 'vast association' of the nation, so as to achieve political ascendancy over the usurpers and expropriators and thus 'win the battle of democracy'.[14]

Marx's exhilarating portrait of the Paris Commune in particular could conceivably be read as an updated transcript of Isocrates' *Areopagiticus* or Pericles' oration, recast in a more social and economic idiom for a post-capitalist age, and as a matter of fact it has been interpreted in this fashion by at least one notable commentator, who has proposed that 'Periclean Athens served Marx as a general model…of an ideal society' (Hunt 1974–84: i.84). But there is as little evidence to support this claim as would warrant a suggestion that Milton's *Paradise Regained* had been modelled upon an idea originally conceived by God. The short-lived form of government of the Paris Commune which won Marx's praise was not a full assembly of citizens on the Athenian model but a municipal council whose members were to have been elected by universal suffrage, and to have acted as the people's delegates for limited periods. It was a representative system serving as a prototype for a complex pyramid of rural, district and national councils, each layer forming the appropriate constituency of the deputies above, with powers and responsibilities diminishing as the apex rose. However it might have worked—presuming that it could work at all—its political structure bore no resemblance to the direct democracy of Athens, and neither did its character as a working assembly comprised of self-governing producers, which Marx contrasted favourably with the parliamentary or legislative bodies characteristic, not only of bourgeois states, but of the ancient Greeks as well.

He showed no patience for the distinctions between political and economic values in Greek philosophy and practice, no respect for what he understood to be a Hellenic attachment to the ideals of a public domain which excluded the organization of daily life and the participation of most of the truly productive classes. To

the extent that other socialists put forward merely political demands, they failed to go beyond 'the old democratic litany familiar to all', Marx stated in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. They failed, that is, to demand more than 'universal suffrage, direct legislation, popular rights, a people's militia, etc.'. Their programmes were to that degree not truly socialist but only echoes of bourgeois people's parties. Their principles were merely those of the democratic republic, shaped round the idea of popular sovereignty, which for Marx meant nothing more than 'police-guarded military despotism' (Part IV, Marx and Engels, 1969–70: iii.25–7). Such was the last refuge of bourgeois societies. They would become vulgar democracies, pointing to a participatory millennium that would obscure but not delay the class struggle which would put paid to them. It would have been difficult for Marx to look nostalgically upon Athens while seeking to promote the dissolution of the state.

As if it were not enough to be haunted by the spectre of democracy's eternal return and the apparition of alleged disciples whose professed objections to it merely betray their real allegiance, a substantial number of twentieth-century commentators have redefined its principles in such a way as to refute everything that had been imagined about its nature and operation before. Early liberals merely portrayed its collectivist values and consolidating political focus as unsuited to an age of individual rights and the market-place bustle of commerce. Modern empirical theorists of democracy, by contrast, have condemned its classical form as a utopian myth, unrealizable in any coherent system of government. According to Joseph Schumpeter's statement of this thesis as expressed in his highly influential *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* dating from 1942, its previous ideal formulations postulated an inconceivable image of the common good, on the one hand, and an incoherent notion of a popular will, on the other. Such naive concepts were without foundation, he claimed, since irreducible differences of interest and value made it impossible for persons to acknowledge any unique formulation of the common good, while the idea of a popular will implied a general propensity to pursue political objectives which individuals never displayed except when prompted in one direction or another by already established parties. Political judgements had to be manufactured and political conduct coordinated; when such manufacture and

coordination took effect, the outcome was not consensus but a politically mobilized conflict of aims. Classical democracy was thus doubly implausible, in envisaging uniformity of judgement arising from spontaneously collective choice.

Schumpeter developed these ideas partly from the work of Max Weber and partly, too, from the so-called elitist theorists before him, among them Pareto, Mosca and Michels, who had expressed similar doubts with respect to democracy's unfounded assumptions about human nature and impracticable means of operation. His arguments also recapitulate certain themes in the history of communism after the First International, dealing with the political organization of mass movements. But whereas Weber and many Marxists were alarmed at the bureaucratic tendencies of modern organizations, and whereas elitists spoke of the inevitability of dominant classes, party government and minority rule, Schumpeter and his disciples saw the same centripetal tendencies of political life as tempered, in the age of the democratic republic, by the need for elites to win popular support in periodic elections. The people, if not the authors of public policy, were responsible, through their mandate, for instating or turning down the persons who governed them. Real democracy could therefore mean much the same as rule by the politician—government *of* the people effectively translating into rule by officials, acting on the people's behalf.

The so-called pluralist theorists of democracy who followed Schumpeter after the Second World War largely subscribed to his account of the competitive struggle for authority of elites and parties, with some merely providing a fuller picture than he had done of how parties seek electoral support, and of how indeed they are comprised of diverse coalitions of fluctuating membership, in such a way that their power may be disaggregated and found to be more responsive to popular sentiment, itself inconstant and diffuse. Even when the people may appear to lack initiative and fail to make their voices heard, it has been argued, most notably by Anthony Downs, this may be as much by design as by default—individuals who are not spurred by discontent having rationally elected to take little part in public affairs. With respect to their own subject, modern empirical theorists of democracy, moreover, are themselves rather like such individuals, unperturbed by the conduct of factions and officials, in the ceaseless effort of minorities to manipulate the public interest for

sectarian ends. Democracy, they have claimed, was not a populist alternative to factional rule but rather government by way of multiple and overlapping minorities. Properly understood, according to David Truman and Robert Dahl—two of this doctrine's leading exponents—it encapsulates Madisonian principles of the fragmentation or multiplication of factions which form 'a basic rationale of the American political system' (Truman 1951:503–16 and Dahl 1956:5). Democracy, or polyarchy (as Dahl sometimes terms it), can thus be identified as rule by minorities, in contrast with dictatorship, which is rule by just a single minority.

By such legerdemain, not only in academic discourse but in popular parlance as well, has democracy come to acquire a meaning opposite from that which prevailed for nearly two thousand years. Perhaps no major figure in American history was in fact more hostile to democracy than Madison, whose principal contribution to *The Federalist* was to argue against the inclusion of any democratic principles in his nation's Constitution. Representative government, he claimed, was 'a substitute for a meeting of the citizens in person'. The new American Republic was be distinct from ancient republics in its 'total exclusion of the people in their collective capacity from any share' (*The Federalist*, nos 52 and 63:355 and 428). The chief aim of Madison's political philosophy, so much admired by modern democratic theorists, was to secure the disjunction of legislative power from the people themselves and its deposition instead with their representatives. By act of the Founding Fathers of their Constitution, the American people were separated from power, as it were, while the branches of their government were to be similarly curtailed in their powers through being placed in separate hands. Democracy was deemed too dangerous, too potentially despotic, for them. Since indirect rule appeared the best antidote to this threat, Madison and his associates framed their new Republic in such a way as to exclude it. They would have judged Mill's, Marx's, Schumpeter's and Dahl's ideas of representative democracy to be self-contradictory schemes of tantalizing nonsense.

For the same reason that representative government was designed to exclude democracy, moreover, democracy—until the term came to be misappropriated—was largely meant to exclude representation. Representatives, if they are true to their calling,

always stand in for persons or powers which are not themselves present. By appointment they speak for others who remain silent, and in modern political systems it is, as a rule, the people—some or all of them—whom they represent. Every form of representative government may thus be taken to mean government *for* the people, but government for the people is not democracy. It has long been a central argument of true democrats that representative government, whether exercised by popes, kings or members of parliament, is despotism. To be represented by another person, however much his power may be specified or voluntarily entrusted to him, is to lose one's freedom in the appropriate area of that person's competence. Self-mastery, which lies at the heart of—indeed is equivalent to—the Greek notion of autonomy excludes representation, for which by contrast the Greeks in fact had no term and no political use, lacking perhaps even any grasp of its meaning.[15]

While excluding democracy as an impracticable form of government, Rousseau was adamant that a people could not rule itself and at the same time be represented. His chapter on this subject in the *Social Contract* is now generally best remembered for its claim that the people of England are free only during the brief moments of their election of members of parliament, but its central theme is that the idea of representation is modern, drawn from feudal government, unknown to the citizens of antiquity. In ancient republics, the people had no representatives, he contends—the tribunes of Rome, for instance, never seeking to usurp the plebiscitary authority which properly belonged to the whole people. Of course, the routine management of government was not a matter for everyone, and it would therefore be absurd to imagine the people continually assembled in the administration of affairs of state. But on issues of public importance, in the determination of laws, it was the populace and not its officers which reigned supreme. Then, though only then, did citizens fly to the assemblies, as Rousseau put it, in their well-ordered cities. This idea of the plebiscite figures at the heart of his notion of the inalienable sovereignty of the people, and it lies as far from Madison's defence of representative 'substitutes' for the meeting of citizens as any conception of popular rule will permit. What Madison requires is indeed already identified in the *Social Contract* as an innovative perversion of a classical principle. As Rousseau remarks in the same chapter, moreover, the substitution of

deputies for direct self-rule has been accompanied by a second revolutionary idea that has transformed our political world, namely finance. Whereas citizens once performed their public duties in person, they now prefer to serve the state with their purses, to pay the troops and stay at home. Instead of bearing arms, they hire them, through taxation allowing their money to serve in their stead. Taxes are deemed more destructive of liberty even than enforced labour, and finance—which like representation is said to have had no place in antiquity—is thus introduced as a novel and slavish word.[16]

Such characteristically extravagant claims illuminate an ideal of ancient liberty which, according to Rousseau, mankind has lost. Whereas once liberty had been linked with equality and fraternity, political representation had destroyed fraternity, while equality had been ruined by finance and the craving for wealth, so that in the modern world, liberty, thus shorn of its ancient associations, had in effect come to mean nothing more than the pursuit of private gain. These two concepts, *representation* and *finance,* moreover, together with their attendant institutions, were taken by Rousseau to be the fundamental attributes of the modern state. The representation of voters in elections was just a periodically ritual reaffirmation of the terms of the social contract by which the subjects of such states were assumed to have acceded to the authority of their rulers. As Grotius, Hobbes and Pufendorf had put this notion in a variety of ways, the people were obliged to obey their sovereign because they were bound by their own words, having collectively transferred their rights to just that representative or deputy, thereby investing it with their powers.[17] For Rousseau, however, such voluntary subjection to one's representative was illicit, as much within the electoral system of existing states as at the time of their establishment, since no person could willingly surrender his freedom and still remain human. Through its displacement of priorities from the public to the private domain, the state also corrupted its subjects' nature in another sense, estranging them from one another, making them acquisitive, restlessly ambitious, envious and mistrustful, while committing itself to a programme of national aggrandizement under a regime of political economy that enriched governments by impoverishing citizens. Whereas most political thinkers in the social contract tradition had imagined that selfishness and the competitive desire for gain were fundamental attributes of human

nature which had motivated persons to seek the security states could offer, Rousseau contended that these traits arose with the state and reflected its essential principles, which thereby had debased the human characteristics of its members.[18]

It was along such lines that he put his case for popular sovereignty against representation. Although apparently legitimated by consent and elections, the modern state could not be truly democratic, since it expropriated its subjects' freedom from them, even while masquerading as an expression of their will. Understood in this fashion, the age of the democratic republic did not have to wait for its inception until the American Constitution of the late eighteenth century. Its essential values were enshrined in the principles of the social contract first articulated in Reformation and Counter-Reformation political thought of the late sixteenth century, which, by the mid-seventeenth century, had come to be sufficiently elaborated to provide a philosophical bulwark of the sovereignty of the modern state. Its defenders professed to see this state as freely established, in contrast with such regimes as claimed authority by divine right. For Rousseau, however, its structure destroyed rather than protected freedom. Once established, the powers within it tended to become ever more brutally concentrated in the hands of its government, progressively less and less accountable to the persons who had authorized its rule by manufacturing their own chains.

In his bleak recognition of that tendency, identified even within the republic of his own native Geneva, Rousseau anticipated Michels's iron law of oligarchy, expressing as much scepticism as any elitist about the prospects for democracy in the modern world.[19] He was in this no less an empirical realist than his critics. He never supposed that popular sovereignty as inspired by ancient liberty was likely to triumph against the modern forces of oligarchy; it was at best a weak antidote, distantly recollected, lingering in the imagination. He most certainly would not have agreed with pluralists who suppose that we already have a sufficient abundance of minorities to ensure the survival of real democracy. In their predominantly vacuous conceptions of classical democracy, elitists and pluralists alike have as a rule failed to grasp its central principle—which was never the spontaneous realization of a unique common goal, but rather the vigilant protection of the

liberty of citizens against the despotic propensities of government. The exercise of such liberty was easily abused, either by the people themselves or through the instigation of demagogues, and it often endangered the maintenance of public order, according to Plato and Aristotle; by its strength, it lent vigour to the Republic of Rome, according to Machiavelli. Rousseau, who was a close reader of the classics, saw the merits of both of these arguments and would have counselled Schumpeter to take greater note of the practice as well as the mythology of ancient democracies before proffering drearily stipulative definitions of its meaning.

Of course, this portrayal of ancient liberty as a form of collective self-rule without representation or finance was an illusion, drawn from the fanciful reverie of a political thinker aptly described by James Miller as a *Dreamer of Democracy*. It illustrates not so much the world we have lost as the world to which fundamentally disenchanted souls such as Rousseau's might flee, abstracted from the present, cleansed of its contaminations. Yet like the myth of the state of nature which, he tells us, 'no longer exists, perhaps never did exist, and probably never will', the illusion of ancient liberty is on his account a necessary condition for our forming a 'proper assessment of our current state'.[20] It points to the fact that we inhabit political systems which Rousseau understood to thwart and distort the potentialities of our nature. Communitarian critics of both the theory and practice of modern democracy, attached to more public-spirited images of freedom than is permitted by the negative doctrine of liberty that prevails today, are also drawn to it, as was Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition* several decades ago. Indeed, much of the debate over the past twenty years or so between participatory and elitist conceptions of popular government has been waged around it. While pluralists have characteristically rejected the notion of ancient liberty in their conceptions of leadership and competition, communitarians, by contrast, have often embraced it, sometimes seeking as well to lend new life to its associated ideals of virtue and citizenship.

At issue in these dichotomies are not only different ideas of liberty but also diverse perceptions of human nature, and that in at least two senses. On the one hand, modern democratic theorists, or pluralists, seem more inclined than classical democrats, or communitarians, to believe that there are

inescapable features of human nature which governments must somehow both control and accommodate. Communitarians tend to suppose human nature malleable or perfectible and governments, correspondingly, as at least potentially capable of improving their subjects. Mill—himself in part communitarian as well as pluralist—adopted a more expansive view of human nature than most modern democratic theorists after him, and was more sceptical about the abuse of power by elites in government. But, as a rule, his followers in the pluralist tradition have rejected notions of the limitless capacities of human nature, holding this idea to be utopian, unsubstantiated by the evidence of how people actually behave. On the other hand, it is communitarians who seem most inclined to suppose that the state itself shapes human nature, infusing citizens with the values of political systems they already inhabit, such that their apparent wants and needs reflect what their governments require. On this point descendants of Plato and Aristotle, they generally believe in the political determination of morality and from that belief draw the conclusion that the constitutions of existing states misshape their subjects, encumbering them with ambitions and animosities they would not otherwise display.

Pluralists, by contrast, whom I have here portrayed as descendants of the modern contractarian tradition of political thought, assume that individual preferences and differences are formed independently of their states' constitutions, which instead of determining their natures reflect, incorporate and hence represent them. From this perspective, governments must seek to conform to their populations' needs and wishes, for the chief merit of pluralist democracies is that they are accountable, through elections, to their subjects' fluctuating demands. They provide orderly clearing houses for the resolution of diverse aims and conflicting objectives—an impartial rule of law which lubricates friction and permits individuals to accept political outcomes they would not originally have sought. Democratic governments, on this interpretation, render what is tolerable superior to what is preferred. But communitarians perceive no such impartiality, no lubrication, no structure of ordered tolerance in modern democratic states. Committed to the fulfilment of human nature's most sociably uplifting potentialities, they seek to establish constitutions that would liberate rather than regulate their citizens' deeper and nobler sentiments.[21]

Broad issues of this kind to do with the relation between human nature and politics have always lurked behind—sometimes informing, at other times obscuring—the principles of government to which we subscribe. When they have not been expressly articulated, they have quietly escorted arguments which presuppose them. They have coloured and shaped our ideals of political life and been implicit in myth. And whereas the actual institutions of the Greek *polis* and of Greek democracy, as I have tried to show here, have long passed out of the collective memory of persons who live in differently constituted worlds, fragmentary images of Greek mythology have survived, snatched from oblivion,[22] not least because, until quite recently, in many of our schools and universities, the study of classical literature was deemed indispensable to a liberal education. On inspection, these images can be found to illuminate not only Greek but also modern notions of democracy. Whereas democratic pluralists, as I understand them, are secretly and even unwittingly wedded to the philosophy of Procrustes, communitarians are by and large stirred by the myth of Prometheus. Procrustes, it will be recalled, from the various versions of his story passed down to us by Apollodorus (putatively), Ovid and especially Diodorus of Sicily,[23] was a thief who offered hospitality to weary strangers of diverse size by cutting off the legs of travellers too tall for his iron bed and stretching the short ones by hammering them down until they made a better fit. According to some versions of the myth, Procrustes entertained his guests in two beds, one long and one short, but the outcome of what might thus have appeared greater choice was much the same, since his tall guests were assigned the short bed and the short ones the long bed, each person's limbs measured up for their fate as if there were only a single bed. Eventually, Theseus slew him.

Prometheus, as depicted above all by Hesiod, Aeschylus, Protagoras and Apollodorus,[24] was by contrast a fallen god, a Titan, who took pity on our species' frail constitution and ignorance, first by making men upright in the image of gods and then, in stealing a heavenly torch for them, by giving them fire. This gift granted the human race a great advantage over other creatures, for it enabled our forebears to invent all the arts and crafts of civilization. But it enraged Zeus, who had neither wished mankind so improved nor welcomed such flouting of his authority. He had Prometheus bound upon a rock in the Caucasus

where an eagle feasted on his liver, and he then punished mankind by, among other things, making his own, sinister, gift to it of the beautiful Pandora, who out of curiosity opened a sealed jar or box entrusted to her, releasing all the plagues of sorrow and misfortune but holding back one item, hope. Prometheus was eventually freed by Hercules.

The essence of the myth of Procrustes is its uniformity, its inflexibility, its application of unbending rules, which make those who are subjected to them yield to a single principle that, of necessity, disregards all their differences. No society comprised of diverse elements can endure without methods of apportionment determined by Procrustean intransigence, and in representative systems of government that intransigence is deemed democratic because it embraces, as well as a transfer of power from the people to their delegates, a fixed set of formal rules of public accountability through the medium of periodic elections. The essence of the myth of Prometheus turns round his gift of fire, which allowed mankind to develop its faculties in ways that would otherwise have been outside human reach. Whereas Procrustes aimed for made-to-measure order, Prometheus brought change. Whereas Procrustes resided on earth, in one place, there accommodating strangers in his stern fashion, Prometheus flew to man from the heights of Olympus, and was himself the stranger, transporting hope. Instead of cutting men down to size, his spark of civilization opened the skies to them through an apotheosis of the intellect; it was the catalyst of their liberation from the veil of ignorance they could not have swept away unaided. It pointed citizens towards a path of self-development through self-government in pursuit of a civic education conceived less as obedience to rules than as engagement in ruling, with rulers henceforth instructing themselves. To mankind Prometheus offered what is sometimes termed 'a sporting chance', heralding a playful principle of taking part as more significant than winning, which a British public school ethos and the modern Olympic movement sought to sustain, until a craftier notion of gamesmanship, and a more enticing god, Mammon, took precedence.

Ancient constitutions, like those of Lycurgus for Sparta and Solon for Athens, as well of course as of Moses for the Jews, were conceived as predominantly Promethean gifts of divine inspiration brought by great legislators to man. Modern constitutions,

like the Federalists' for America, have been more sharply tailored for a close fit to human nature, more Procrustean. Utilitarians as well, Hobbes and Bentham foremost among them, have similarly devised constitutional schemes for the establishment or preservation of modern democratic states in a Procrustean mould. The populist ideals of Rousseau and Hegel, on the other hand, in which legislators and world-historical individuals map the way to more collectivist forms of freedom, have in effect proved visionary schemes devised by modern Protheans, whose *hubris* in seeking to recast human nature finds its most fiercely striking example in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, which is indeed essentially a romantic transcription of that legend. The myth's appeal lies at the very heart of early nineteenth-century romanticism, shaping much of its literary form and flourishes, as well as its political theory, including its conceptions of democracy. In reworking Aeschylus's version of the tale of *Prometheus Bound*, Mary's husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley, in *Prometheus Unbound*, spoke elegiacally of the recovery of hope from infinite woes, creating 'from its own wreck the thing it contemplates' (Act IV, lines 570–5). Prometheus has always carried with him a spark which lights up the path of escape from Procrustes' bed. If even a deliberately stricken god might rise again, he brings to all mankind eternal hope of passage to another world.[25]

NOTES

1   Originally by Richard Wollheim (1962). This essay has occasioned a wide debate, mainly in academic journals, over the past thirty years.
2   Among notable introductions to democratic theory and practice in all their varieties, see especially Dunn (1992), Held (1987), Lively (1975) and Macpherson (1977).
3   On classical Athenian democracy, see especially Farrar (1988), Hansen (1991) and Loraux (1981). For Isocrates on democracy, see his *Areopagiticus*, 61; for Thucydides, see his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, II.xxxv–xlvi.
4   On the Phoenicians and democracy, see Bernal (1987–91) and Springborg (1992).
5   On medieval republicanism, see especially Skinner (1978, vol. I) and Waley (1988). On Marsilius, see Damiata (1983).
6   On the Levellers, see especially Brailsford (1961), Hill (1978) and David Wooton, 'The Levellers', in Dunn (1992).
7   On the Sophists and democracy, see especially Isnard (1977).

8 For introductions to the history of the use of the terms *democracy* and *democrat,* see Russel L.Hanson, 'Democracy' in Ball, Farr and Hanson (1989) and Palmer (1959–64), I.13–20.

9 For Montesquieu, see *The Spirit of the Laws,* II.ii, III.iii, V.iii–vii and VIII.ii, in Richter (1977), pp. 179–82, 190–1, 203–8 and 224–6. For Paine, see *The Rights of Man,* Part II, in Paine (1989), p. 170. 'What Athens was in miniature', the text continues, 'America will be in magnitude'. Paine, like Rousseau and Madison, insistent upon the absence of representative government in antiquity, took Burke to task (see p. 167) for confusing one with the other in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

10 On representation and democracy in the American Revolution, see especially Pole (1966), Wills (1981) and Wood (1991).

11 On democracy in the French Revolution, see especially Baker (1990), Part III; Lucas (1988); Palmer (1959–64), vol. II; and Philippe Raynaud, 'Démocratie', in Furet and Ozouf (1988). On modern liberalism's confrontation of the French Revolution, see especially Holmes (1984).

12 These remarks all appear in Book III, ch. iv of Rousseau's *Social Contract* (see Rousseau, 1959–, III:404–6). For other, briefer, discussions, in some of which he appears to mean by *democracy* a popular, as opposed to artistocratic, form of republic, see especially the seventh and eighth of his *Letters from the Mountain* and his *Constitution for Corsica* (ibid., pp. 816, 837–8, 844 and 906–9).

13 See Mill's 'Rationale of Representation'; his reviews of 'De Tocqueville on *Democracy in America,* I and II' and of 'Grote's *History of Greece,* I and II'; *On Liberty,* chs 1 and 3; and the *Considerations on Representative Government,* chs 1, 3, 8 and 14; in Mill (1963–91), XI. 19–23, 70–78, 170–80, 300–3, 324–8; XVIII.219–20 and 265–6; and XIX.378–80, 411–12 and 472–81.

14 See Marx, *The Communist Manifesto,* Part II, and *The Civil War in France,* Part III, in Marx and Engels (1969–70: i.126 and ii.219–23). For a notable treatment of Marxism with respect to democratic theory, see Graham (1986: ch. 9).

15 On the idea of representation, see especially Pitkin (1967).

16 These reflections all appear in Book III, ch. xv of Rousseau's *Social Contract.*

17 This idea, central to mainstream social contract theory, is today most familiar by way of ch. xvi of Hobbes's *Leviathan.*

18 'A people is everywhere what its government makes of it', Rousseau remarks in Book IX of his *Confessions.*

19 Rousseau's anticipation of Michels's 'iron law of oligarchy' is noted by Plamenatz (1973:53).

20 See the preface to Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality.*

21 As Macpherson (1977:98) puts this point, 'The main problem about participatory democracy is not how to run it but how to reach it'.

22   'As ancient peoples lived their previous history in the imagination, in mythology, so the Germans have lived our future history in thought, in philosophy', writes Marx in the introduction to his *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Right'* (Marx 1970:135).

23   See Apollodorus, *Epitome,* i.4; Ovid, *Heroides,* ii.69 and *Metamorphoses,* vii.437; and Diodorus of Sicily, *The Library of History,* iv.59.5.

24   See Hesiod, *Theogony,* 506–16; Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound;* Plato, *Protagoras,* 320c–323a; and Apollodorus, *The Library,* I.vii.1 and II.v.11.

25   For directing me towards essential reading on this subject which, on balance, only obscured my line of argument, I am indebted to Geraint Parry, Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Hillel Steiner. For correcting some of my ancient history and mythology, I am grateful to David Raphael.

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Chapter 2

Making democrats: education and democracy

Geraint Parry

'Now we must educate our masters' may not rank as high as 'Play it again Sam' in the list of best-known quotations which were never uttered but it carries a distinct resonance in discussions of political education. It was supposedly uttered by Robert Lowe on the occasion of the passing of the Reform Act of 1867. What he said was phrased less dramatically: 'I believe it will be absolutely necessary that you should prevail on our future masters to learn their letters' (*House of Commons:* 15 July 1867). Lowe was here giving voice to a connection between ruling and education which has been addressed by almost every major political philosopher since Plato. At every era of the development of government, thinkers have pointed to the need for an appropriate form of political education which will induct new rulers into the arts of government.

One traditional role of education has also been to transmit to new generations a continuing image of the community. It promotes cohesion and continuity. John Stuart Mill said that education in its stricter sense was 'the culture which each generation purposely gives to those who are to be their successors, in order to qualify them for at least keeping up, and if possible for raising, the level of improvement which has been attained' (J.S.Mill 1984:218). In a wider sense of education Mill praised the view which found 'in the character of the national education existing in any political society at once the principal cause of its permanence as a society and the chief cause of its progressiveness' (J.S.Mill 1969a: 140).

Mill recognized the way in which 'a system of education, beginning with infancy and continued through life' could sustain an independent national community. He suggests that

national education could instil a discipline according to which selfish interests which threatened anarchy would be subordinated to the ends of society. It would also promote a feeling of allegiance to the principles of the society, to 'some fixed point'; something which men agreed in holding sacred'. Finally, a system of education would help to form 'a feeling of common interest among those who live under the same government, and are contained within the same natural or historical boundaries' (J.S.Mill 1969a: 135; see the excellent discussion in Garforth 1980:41–3). It is an element in democratic nation-building (Green 1990).

In every case there is expected to be some 'congruence' between the educational system and the nature of the political community.[1] The form of rule requires a particular personality which the education through its curriculum and method of instruction is expected to provide.

In the case of democracy it is the whole population which has to acquire the appropriate democratic personality. What is involved is not merely teaching literacy and numeracy. It is also a matter of acquiring a set of political attitudes. Some of these attitudes—tolerance perhaps—are held to be fundamental to any understanding of democracy. However, the democratization of the people by education also hinges on the vision of democracy which one holds. Accordingly this essay will look at styles of education which are designed to produce a range of different democratic personalities—the 'controller' (James Mill), the individual 'activist' (John Stuart Mill and John Dewey), the liberal 'neutral' (Bruce Ackerman), the self-conscious subscriber to 'democratic virtue' (Alan Bloom and Amy Gutmann). What divides politicians and political thinkers concerned with education in democracies is often not merely a dispute over curriculum or teaching method but over the idea of the democratic citizen which will be the product of schooling.

This was apparent early in the evolution of popular institutions in nineteenth-century Britain. Father and son, James Mill and John Stuart Mill, provided two models of education which correspond to two conceptions of the role of the democratic citizen. One model is of a controller—someone who by his or her vote exercises the ultimate say in affairs but who is not deeply involved. The other model is of the activist for whom democratic citizenship requires positive intervention in public affairs (Parry and Moyser 1984).

The controller is closer to James Mill's ideal of the citizen, the activist is closer to the vision of John Stuart and each persona can be seen as the likely product of their respective approaches to education.

Their two approaches have, however, a common root in associationist psychology. Ultimately this was derived from Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, and more immediately from the systematization by Hartley in his *Observation on Man* (1749). According to associationism our knowledge ultimately derives from sense experience. Sensations give rise to ideas which can be associated together in a train of mental events which, however complex, could be analysed back into their component elements. Some of these associations are, however, so vivid, regular and habitual that they are virtually indissolubly connected (fire and heat, for example). Not only do some such associations correspond to the order of nature, some can be artificially created. Persons may be placed in a situation where two ideas are met together with such regularity that they can hardly be kept apart in the mind. If people, from the moment they are conscious, find that infringements of rules always meet with punishment and pain or that wealth is always associated with power, they will come to regard such ideas as almost inseparable from one another.

EDUCATING THE CONTROLLER

Setting aside the complexities and difficulties of this empiricist psychology, its attractions to an educationist are immediately apparent. If our knowledge stems entirely from our experience of the environment in which we live and are brought up, then our knowledge can be reconstructed, in principle at least, by reconstructing our environment. The utilitarians were, to somewhat varying degrees, all 'environmentalists' in the sense that, necessarily, individuals could not help be shaped and re-shaped by the world surrounding them. This led them into a very wide definition of education in which it was virtually equated with the environment. It is in this sense that James Mill, in the article on 'Education' for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, subscribed to the proposition of Helvétius that *'l'éducation peut tout'* or, as he himself put it,

Everything, therefore, which operates from the first germ of existence, to the final extinction of life, in such a manner as to affect those qualities of mind on which happiness in any way depends, comes within the scope of the present inquiry.

(J.Mill 1931:1–2)

The whole environment thus plays a formative role. More specifically, education emerges as a process in which the environment is manipulated so as to produce a beneficial effect on human conduct. Human beings are to be surrounded, as it were, by sources of sensations which will stimulate them to formulate certain trains of thought which will be conducive to the happiness of the individual and of society at large. According to James Mill:

As the happiness, which is the end of education, depends upon the actions of the individual, and as all the actions of man are produced by his feelings or thoughts, the business of education is to make certain feelings or thoughts take place instead of others.

(J.Mill 1931:11)

Thus education exists to replace some ideas by others. Without the intervention of the educator certain sequences of ideas would have occurred which might not have led to the maximization of happiness. James Mill was not therefore inclined to let nature take its course in educational matters. More pertinently perhaps, since he believed that self-interest and, especially, sinister interests permeated human behaviour and institutions, existing social environments would, if not counteracted, educate people in ways which were not conducive to the greatest happiness.

The implications of James Mill's approach for an education to democracy is that the system would (or at least could) be so arranged as to achieve the displacement of what the established order of society regarded as anti-social associations of ideas by those which were conceived to be to society's benefit. The approach appears well designed to transmit certain pre-stated knowledge and values to passive recipients. Critical as he was of the establishment, Mill had little doubt that the values of the meritocratic middle class were the pillar of society. In the *Essay on Government* he states that those below the middle rank have their opinions formed and minds shaped

by that intelligent, that virtuous rank, who come the most immediately in contact with them…to whom they fly for advice and assistance in all their numerous difficulties…to whom their children look up as models for their imitation, whose opinions they hear daily repeated, and account it their honour to adopt.

(J.Mill 1978:94)

So although Mill proposed a full boyhood education and an almost full manhood suffrage the education would be designed to ensure that all, and especially the sons of the labouring classes, would be taught that social approbation (and hence happiness) is habitually, almost indissolubly, associated with middle-class values and life styles. Mill *was,* in relative terms, a democrat. He *did* believe that every mature, adult male was the best judge of his own interests and should exercise the vote. But these would be adults who since childhood had been re-educated, in the sense of having their feelings replaced, so that their use of the vote would never be disruptive. They are controllers because society is safe in their control. This is not an education which would make them active citizens who are constantly reassessing their priorities because they have been brought up to reassess their own education.

EDUCATING THE ACTIVIST

For an activist educational theory we have to turn in part to John Stuart Mill, and beyond. It is a moot point as to whether John Stuart is to be considered the greatest success or the most dramatic failure of his father's educational theories. His had been an educational upbringing as carefully controlled as anything in Rousseau's *Émile*. John Stuart did not play with other children, was entirely taught at home and not allowed to take up an opportunity to attend classes at Cambridge. He was to be the torch-bearer for utilitarianism, someone whose mind had been habitually subjected to the correct sensations. Yet he was to reject some crucial elements of his father's ideas and to subject important aspects of his own education to stringent criticism.

Nevertheless the relation between father and son is not one of generational rejection. As much was absorbed as rejected and many of the difficulties in John Stuart's positions arise because of

his attempts to construct philosophically buildings which his intellectual foundations did not strictly permit. In particular he sought to promote a developmental conception of human character which does not fit happily with the conception of human nature which he had derived from James Mill and associationist psychology.

I have suggested that the danger of James Mill's account of education is that it treats the pupil as a malleable subject—training as much as education. Now, John Stuart denied that his own education was quite like that. He had to repeat his lessons but rote learning was not required. His prime complaint was that he was not taught to 'feel', including in the last resort even to feel a commitment to his own system of values. Although the association of ideas might appear to be an efficient method of establishing lasting attitudes '…there must always be something artificial and casual in associations thus produced. The pains and pleasures thus forcibly associated with things, are not connected with them by any natural tie…' (J.S.Mill 1981a: 141). He had to find a way 'to begin the formation of my character anew'.

Mill universalized this personal problem into an account of the continual self-reformation of character which had considerable implications for education and democracy. As Garforth has neatly expressed it, in education he switched the 'focus from the teacher and the teaching to the pupil and his learning'; in politics he switched it 'from government to governed' (Garforth 1980:179– 80). Both father and son believed in the malleability of character but John Stuart stressed the capacity of individuals to reshape their own characters. This required a partial (and not very satisfactory) retreat from the strong determinism implicit in associationist psychology. He argues that whilst character is formed by circumstances one's own desire to mould that character is itself one of the circumstances. It is true that the desire to mould one's character can itself be shaped by one's background and education. Nevertheless one can choose to reform oneself and commit oneself to a set of values. This is essential to self-improvement. Without it one would, indeed, be a passive recipient of external influences whether good or ill and, in any case, not a progressive human being.

Unlike his father, John Stuart did not write a treatise on education in general. His main contribution is the Inaugural Address (as Rector) at St. Andrews which is on university

education. Otherwise one has to put together his account from a variety of sources. Moreover, most of these take education in the widest possible sense of the total environmental impact on the person. In that sense the idea of education permeates his thought and in a very consistent manner. Throughout, the stress is on active learning. The purpose of education is 'not to *teach*, but to fit the mind for learning from its own consciousness and observation' (J.S.Mill 1981b: 338). The greatness of the Greeks, Mill argues, almost in the later manner of Hannah Arendt, arose through an active education. 'Every man had to play his part upon a stage where *cram* was of no use—nothing but genuine *power* would serve his turn' (J.S.Mill 1981b: 336).

The implication of Mill's argument is 'discovery learning'. One learns by doing. 'As the memory is trained by remembering, so is the reasoning power by reasoning; the imaginative by imagining; the analytic by analysing; the inventive by finding out' (J.S.Mill 1981b: 338). This is a theme John Stuart hammers home in all his discussions of the education process. Learning the facts of natural science had undoubted utility but science was far more important as a training 'to fit the intellect for the proper work of a human being' (J.S.Mill 1984:234). This is especially true of politics which was not, in Mill's view, then in the condition of a science to be professed. Instead, people should and could only be taught how to think about it: 'What we require to be taught on that subject, is to be our own teachers' (J.S.Mill 1984:244). People should acquire a knowledge of political history and of the civil and political institutions of their own and of other advanced countries—even though only the beginnings could be made at school and universities.

The reason for these studies was their 'bearing on the duties of citizenship'. We are caught up in a chain of causes and effects, a conflict between good and evil to which we all contribute in however an apparently insignificant way and for which we cannot escape the responsibility (J.S.Mill 1984:244).

This educational style is, of course, all of a piece with Mill's approach to political participation. Again and again in *On Liberty, Representative Government* and elsewhere Mill refers to politics and government as a school. One cannot learn political responsibility unless one wields it. In and through political action one learns more about one's own interests and one is moralized by encountering and coming to appreciate the aspirations of

others. The nature of democracy must be *congruent* with the schooling that citizens had received. It must continue to permit discovery. Otherwise the (mis)educative force of environment would counteract the effects of early schooling—however powerful these are.

Democratization thus required an inculcation into democratic practice. Those outside the constitution could never learn how to be democratic by observing those inside. They had to exercise the vote, take part in local government (which is a 'Normal School' for representative government) or perform such citizen obligations as jury service. But Mill faced the nineteenth-century difficulty that the newly enfranchised had not only had no practical adult education in popular politics, but also little in the way of schooling and certainly none of the democratic schooling he advocated. They could not therefore simply be let loose on the existing system. Hence also Mill's so-called 'elitism' which in part was a method of control and in part a way of easing people into the system. This would include his system of plural voting related to educational qualifications. One consequence of this would be to introduce the very elite of the country into Parliament whose function would be to raise the quality of political debate. It would also include the role he allocated to a meritocratic civil service, the legislative commission entrusted with drawing up legislation and the second chamber recruited on the basis of merit and experience.

This directive and controlling aspect of political education is also paralleled in Mill's treatment of schooling. He may have switched attention from teacher to pupil but his is not a model of pupil-centred education in which the child 'follows nature'. Mill, as his brilliant essay on Nature shows, was no admirer of such an injunction, to the degree that he could make any sense of it. All human action modifies nature: 'If the artificial is not better than the natural, to what end are all the arts of life?' (J.S.Mill 1969b: 381).

Self-culture is, therefore, despite what Mill says elsewhere about discovery learning, neither fully possible nor desirable. Self-culture requires guidance from the 'general sentiment of mankind delivered through books, and from the contemplation of exalted characters, real or ideal' (J.S.Mill 1969b: 396; see Garforth 1980:102). Pupils always needed some guidance and, without some form of directed learning, there would be the 'twofold

danger, that of too low a standard of political intelligence and that of class legislation' (J.S.Mill 1977:395–6). The newly enfranchised classes of advanced countries could be trusted gradually to educate themselves through democratic action (with some tutorial assistance) until they were sufficiently prepared for full and equal rights by their schooling—in this sense for Mill universal education had to precede universal emancipation.

The child-centred tendency in education towards which John Stuart Mill was moving was, of course, extended most famously by John Dewey. His importance arises not only from his celebrity, or notoriety, as a prime source for 'progressive education'. He also made the explicit connection between democracy and education— it is the title of one of his most influential books. Yet is is sometimes suggested that Dewey had very little to say about the nature of democracy. This is, however, not entirely fair. It is true that Dewey wrote little about the institutions of parliament, parties or elections. Moreover he did find 'political' democracy 'not the most inspiring of the different meanings of democracy'. But by that he meant the protective democracy of a James Mill in which accountable government is conceived as an external means towards the defence of individual interests and liberty. Dewey was propounding a conception of a participatory democracy which would reconcile pluralism and community. Unlike either of the Mills he was writing within a largely achieved democracy. Thus his task was to make persons who had attained political rights much more active in employing them. Furthermore he wanted them to employ these democratic rights in a less individualistic, defensive manner.

Dewey's educational theory is intended to be fully congruent with this conception of an active democracy. It is in turn built up on an epistemology which rejects the passive conception of mind in much mainstream philosophy since Descartes, including the associationism of the Mills. Dewey's pragmatism or 'instrumentalism' does not see the subject as the passive recipient of past or present experience but as interacting with the environment. Experience is 'transactional'. 'When we experience something we act upon it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences' (Dewey 1966:139). We learn when the consequences reflect back into a change made in ourselves.

Thought is a means towards the transformation of the environment. It attempts to overcome problems raised for the

organism by that environment. It proposes hypotheses about the nature of that environment which are to be tested by action which will give rise to further attempts to act upon the environment. Nature is not something out there, of which we are spectators (see Tiles 1988). It is what we have found out through inquiry and experiment. Such methods of 'inquiry' have no particular end and all the hypotheses we produce from it are fallible.

The implication for education is that it is not a matter of instilling information. The emphasis is not on cognition. Education is defined as 'that reconstruction of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience' (Dewey 1966:76). This means that the person being educated is to be encouraged to reconstruct his or her experience by testing it in the face of problems. This will create new problems and new experiences resulting in the 'growth' of the person. The child is actively engaged in a transaction with its environment.

Dewey opposes this problem-oriented education to the notion of scholarly disciplines. Such disciplines imply, he believes, established and distinct bodies of material and methodology which pupils had to master in the way of gymnastic display. They negated the spirit of inquiry and questioning (Dewey 1966:124–38). Such a spirit is fostered by an education which begins with problem-solving and which requires active engagement by the child—project work is the typical method. Ideally it would evolve from current experience in the home or in the society.[2]

This kind of curriculum was a preparation for citizenship. Generally, Dewey opposed the notion of education as a 'preparation' for anything because it implied that there was some fixed condition for which education will qualify one. But Dewey's citizenship involves an attitude of continuing criticism and reconstruction of values. There is no fixed set of political practices for which the citizen is being prepared.

Some of this may seem analogous to Mill's conception of individuality. Some have interpreted Dewey as defending a notion of autonomy which is to be developed in and through education. However, this leaves out of account Dewey's social account of the individual and of the enterprise of inquiry—and this social character has ambivalent consequences for democracy and education.

Dewey regarded the conception of the autonomous individual as an unfortunate consequence of theorizing about a number of problems concerning a variety of political and religious issues in the early modern era. He rejected notions of an abstract individual or of natural rights. These rights are social and individuals are not born self-interested (Dewey 1966:23–4). Human nature is neither self-directed nor altruistic but can be directed to a range of objectives. Still further, individuals are 'chiefly interested upon the whole, in entering into the activities of others and taking part in conjoint and co-operative doings' (Dewey 1966:24). Dewey's account of the transactions by which experience develops and is reconstructed similarly stresses the social character of this process. Human beings face problems in common and the testing of hypotheses as to their solution is, in many respects, a shared endeavour.

This conception of the social permeates Dewey's political thought and, consequently, his educational prescriptions. His position is an amalgam of liberal interest group theory and communitarianism. Individuals are conceived as possessing interests which they pursue in a variety of groups. Dewey stresses, however, something neglected in orthodox pluralism—the desirability of individuals participating within their groups. Since nothing in Dewey is fixed the interests of members and of groups are subject to continual reconstruction, as are the relations between groups. Here, too, the emphasis is on discovering harmony through experimentation as to interests and their boundaries.

All this is 'private' activity. 'Public' activity is concerned with the common interests of persons indirectly affected by the consequences of group actions (externalities). There will be, in principle, a vast range of such 'publics'—affected by groups involved in education, health, transport or any other major concern. How these publics are institutionalized to regulate their relations with the groups is, again, subject to experiment and innovation (Dewey 1966:97–8). The state is one of the modes of organizing an overall public—a 'community' in which the members of groups will find, experimentally, a harmony between their objectives. Because Dewey rejects the notion of 'natural' self-centredness this would not be entirely utopian. It does, however, need an appropriate form of democratic education.

First, Dewey recommends cooperative forms of learning— through play and projects—rather than private, individualist

learning where children sit in silence receiving instruction. Secondly, and more seriously, however, a strong element of communitarianism, or collectivism, enters into the schooling in a way which has troubled libertarians (see Flew 1977). Even more than J.S.Mill, Dewey stresses the role of education in social control. Education is a means of the social continuity of life, it helps to 'reproduce the life of the group' (Dewey 1966:1–40). Society exists '…*in* transmission, *in* communication'. To become 'really members of a social group' one must learn to 'attach the same meanings to things and to acts which others attach. Otherwise, there is no common understanding and no community life' (Dewey 1966:30, 33). This means learning to use words as others use them. It is the development of a 'socialized mind'. Formal schooling consciously selects the elements in the overall environment, the sets of meanings which it wishes to communicate and transmit. There may be some significance in the fact that the chapters on social control in *Democracy and Education* precede the famous sections on growth and self-development. But they are not intended to contradict them. In the chapter on 'growth' Dewey stresses the disadvantages of cultivating personal independence: 'From a social standpoint, dependence denotes a power rather than a weakness, it involves interdependence. There is always a danger that increased personal independence will decrease the social capacity of an individual.' (Dewey 1966:44). He later goes on to deprecate the idea of 'perfecting an inner personality' as cutting persons off from society and as creative of social divisions. The teacher can then be regarded as the representative of the community transmitting its meanings or usages and helping to cultivate the interdependent citizen.

It is this aspect of Dewey's thought that has led to Dewey being interpreted not as the herald of extreme individual-centred progressive education (which he was not), but as the purveyor of mass, collective culture (Bantock 1984:316–22). On this account there is insufficient comfort in Dewey's fallibilism, his insistence on continual reconstruction of values. The implication of this is taken to be a form of anti-foundationalism in which values, as well as 'truth', are what is asserted by the community. Society's culture is what is democratically upheld by the mass and is sustained in its schools.

The two possible interpretations of Dewey's theory of education—as the basis of active participatory democracy or as a

means for the reinforcement of a mass democratic cultural hegemony—may serve to illustrate one of the dilemmas of the democratic approach to schooling. Democracies, like all other regimes, wish to sustain themselves by teaching their future masters to rule in the manner that the existing masters deem appropriate.

EDUCATING FOR NEUTRALITY

What unites all these approaches to democratic education is that the content and the mode of education must be 'congruent' with the institutions and practices of democracy. What divides them is a difference of view as to what is entailed by democratic citizenship. Consequently, the nature of a democratized personality—the values such a person will hold—is seen differently by each theorist. But what conception of democratic education might be held in a contemporary pluralistic society in which there is little agreement as to what constitutes fundamental values? Indeed one understanding of a modern liberal society is that no one conception of the good can be definitively asserted as superior to any other. A liberal society and its laws should therefore be neutral between different visions of an ideal society.

This does, however, despite an element of paradox, require the operation of certain rules which have to be accepted as a condition of neutrality. No conception of the good may be denied its place in the continuing debate about values. This in turn is said to invalidate those types of political or moral argument which either deny the equal status of other arguments or which claim that those propounding them are not entitled to an equal voice in the debate.[3]

A neutral liberal democratic state will survive best where its citizens have received a congruent liberal education. As Bruce Ackerman, one of the most notable theorists of liberal neutrality, puts it: '…education cannot be treated as if it stood apart from the more general problems of liberal political philosophy' (Ackerman 1980:163). Education might, indeed, be said to illustrate the problems of such a philosophy. Ackerman argues that the liberal stance must reject any 'horticultural' image of education, whereby educators regard themselves as master-gardeners removing weeds or primary shoots so as to produce perfect plants. On this view of the world no one can presume to affirm an undeniable superiority of a rose over couch-grass.

   The dilemma facing liberal education, however, is that there is no reason to suppose that children will grow up so as to attain, unaided, the understanding of neutrality which the liberal state requires. Yet, at the same time the educators (parents as well as teachers) are not to instil into the child any particular vision of the good life as superior to any other. They are not permitted to claim any moral superiority over the child, whilst guiding it to participate in society's affairs according to the ground rules of neutrality. Making this balancing act still more difficult is the fact that, according to Ackerman, whilst there are many styles of education which can achieve the requisite goals, the child must not, in its early years, be confronted with too much variety. It requires 'cultural coherence' (continuity of language for example) within which it can develop its ability ultimately to participate in liberal dialogue.

   Given this initial cultural coherence Ackerman's liberal education displays a pattern of evolution reminiscent of that in Locke's educational writings. The infant is under the control of its parents but parental discipline relaxes as it grows older and its educational curriculum opens up increasingly to a variety of ideas of the good. Increasingly the child selects its own curriculum. The object is to equip the child or young adult so that it may define itself in any of a multiplicity of ways—whilst recognizing that no such definition can in itself be superior to the self-definitions others may have discovered.

   Where this position departs from that of an earlier liberal such as Locke is that the authority of the parent is contestable at a relatively early age in the child's development. The parents may not restrict the child's access to a variety of conceptions of the good on the grounds that the parents believe that their cultural or religious heritage and identity have a superior claim to be transmitted. Hence Ackerman rejects one educational policy favoured by some liberals whereby, instead of a system of state schooling, parents receive vouchers from the state which they may spend on the school of their choice. Ackerman sees this as a means whereby the parents can reinforce their conception of the good by sending their children to the kind of school which will sustain the parental value system. This argument, unless qualified, would also apply to private schools, particularly denominational schools. A liberal society could not, it might follow, be so neutral as to permit its future citizens to be inculcated into one consistent

understanding of virtue. The liberal school will offer a variety of experiences and equip the child to follow any definition of itself. The child may return to its cultural roots but, under this liberal education, only self-consciously after exposure to other cultures. One view of life which is held to be incompatible with liberal dialogue is that according to which Amish parents (to cite Ackerman's example) or Muslim parents can insulate their children from what they perceive as corrupting, modernist, rationalist, 'liberal' sentiments. Cultural communities cannot be natural but must in modern democracies be based on will and artifice. A liberal education will underpin this rationalist outlook and the traditionalist will no doubt fear that it will also undermine such cultural community under a guise of neutrality. Membership of a cultural minority is not treated here as an unqualified right but only membership which is consciously chosen.[4]

EDUCATING FOR DEMOCRATIC VIRTUE

A more pragmatic defence of neutrality may be simply that, in our present world, a view of justice which holds that the task of society is to ensure that rights are upheld since no one can agree on the superiority of any view of the good is the *only* one around which people are prepared to rally. If so, the congruent educational system would, indeed, also be one which taught its pupils to put the right before any view of the good since there could never be any confidence as to the superiority of such a view. For conservatives this represents a veritable *trahison des clercs*. In a celebrated polemic against liberal education Allan Bloom castigates liberalism for its alleged relativism and scepticism (Bloom 1987). Openness becomes its only value.[5] Yet what Bloom argues for in principle, if not in content, might receive the sympathy of non-conservative democrats. Bloom insists that:

> Every educational system has a moral goal that it tries to attain and that informs its curriculum. It wants to produce a certain kind of human being…. Democratic education, whether it admits it or not, wants and needs to produce men and women who have the tastes, knowledge, and character supportive of a democratic regime.
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> (Bloom 1987:26)

What this means for Bloom is an education which self-consciously explores the conception of virtue embodied in the constitution and which was the basis of the unity of the American republic. It was a public philosophy of natural rights to which all classes and cultures, immigrants and founding peoples could subscribe. It has now been replaced by a philosophy of neutrality, relativism and openness of which the work of John Rawls is said to represent 'almost a parody' (Bloom 1987:30). It is not entirely clear what must replace this supposedly 'value-free' education. A mixture of 'civics' and teaching by persons who believe in 'virtue', drawing on the classics and humanities appears to be envisaged. For this purpose what is more significant is the assertion of the duty of a democracy to stand up for a view of itself which it can rightfully expect to be taught within its schools.

This is a position adopted also by the participatory democrat Amy Gutmann (1987). Democracies engage in 'conscious social reproduction' and democratic education is one agent in that process (Gutmann 1987:45). It is a principle of a participatory-minded democracy that all have the right to engage in the processes by which the democracy is reproduced and that as many as wish to do so should be enabled to take part. This means that they should be educated to take part *democratically* which in turn implies that certain ways of behaving and reasoning are to be consciously inculcated and others are openly to be discouraged (Gutmann 1987:42). A democratic education is not, therefore, neutral amongst rival conceptions of the good.

According to Gutmann the neutralist approach to the teaching of normative thinking is that of 'values clarification'. No stand is taken on the content of the values since neutral educators cannot adopt any position of moral superiority. But they may 'clarify' them and in the course of doing so they indirectly propagate a particular view of rational deliberation. By contrast the democrat expects the educators avowedly to criticize bigotry such as racism. The educators are not merely to teach future citizens a 'false subjectivism' (Gutmann 1987:45). Nevertheless, when it comes to specifying what is entailed by a democratic education, Gutmann's version of democratic education interestingly comes face to face with the same problems as does Ackerman's liberal neutralism.

Once again, the voucher system is condemned as giving excessive powers to the parents rather than, this time, to the

democracy. To enable parents to select schools on the market may or may not achieve the objective of raising 'academic' standards. For the democrat the drawback is that it enables parents to send children to schools which, in effect, practise some forms of anti-democratic exclusivism. The democratic 'externalities' of the school system cannot be ignored in favour of some purely internal standard of excellence (Gutmann 1987:46–70).[6] In the United Kingdom the voucher system has been displaced by the Conservative government's policy under the 1988 Education Act of permitting a vote of parents to remove the school from local authority control and place it under a self-governing board of governors. From certain standpoints this delegation of decision-making authority can be described as democratization of the educational system. Yet it, too, potentially raises the issue of the extent to which a national democracy may be prepared to grant autonomy to a sector of its citizens.

Similar considerations apply to private religious schooling. Their very denominational exclusivism might appear from the outset to run counter to democratic values of openness and toleration. How far religious schooling in Northern Ireland may have reinforced intolerance and prevented the emergence of a fully democratic culture may be disputed but at least points to the problem (see Murray 1985; Whyte 1990:42–50). The democrat will also have qualms about a religious schooling which taught girls to adopt a restricted and subordinate role in political life. Still less will a democrat wish to sanction a school whose religious teaching proclaimed a theory of racial supremacy. The democrat will think that such teaching does not merely militate against the balance implied by neutrality but against the transmission of democracy itself. At the same time pluralist democracy is committed to the autonomy of groups as well as of individuals and restrictions on the educational rights of communities will run counter to pluralist principles.

One avenue of compromise may be found in a version of the constrained autonomy which John Stuart Mill advocated and which has found sympathy amongst some relatively sympathetic critics of educational vouchers. Elements of such constrained autonomy are also to be detected in the British 1988 Education Act. Mill drew a distinction between the state's legally requiring education for all and its provision of education. Schooling should be both compulsory and private. However, parental choice and

privacy of provision would be balanced by the state's requirement to sit public examinations for which the schools would, in their many different ways, prepare their pupils.

In the same way a restriction might be placed on a voucher system which required that vouchers be spent only in those schools which satisfied certain criteria as to curriculum and educational practices. This kind of balancing act is discernible in current British educational policy which, at the same time, aims to increase parental influence in the choice of school and over the school's management and also requires the schools to follow a national curriculum.

Of course such policies of constrained autonomy beg a whole range of questions. The biggest such question concerns the content of the national curriculum for the public examinations. This could permit either extreme parental autonomy or a democratic tyranny of the majority by the back door. John Stuart Mill's fear of the latter meant that the examinations would be initially in the basic capacities of literacy and numeracy. Even as the examinations expanded in range with an increasingly educated population they should be confined to questions of fact and science. A neutral curriculum was the aim (J.S.Mill 1991:117–19).

An overtly democratic curriculum might be very different. At its furthest, of course, it could so constrain the autonomy of schools and parents as, in effect, to deny autonomy. It could reach into the structure of the school itself. Gutmann could be interpreted as implying that a democratic school must be comprehensive, co-educational and have an appropriate racial balance if it is to avoid anti-democratic discrimination (Gutmann 1987:107–21).

Moreover, there is no firm line between the content of education and the manner of teaching. Some democrats, including Dewey, have written not only of democracy and education but of democracy *in* education. One version is presented by some forms of child-centred education where the child decides its own curriculum and disciplines itself.[7] Here, however, the analogy between democracy and school might be considered to break down. Political democracy is a relationship between persons who are no longer in a state of pupillage. Within school we are dealing with aspiring citizens who have not yet (or not fully) attained the condition of self-determination. Perhaps no democracy can trust its future masters that far. The

adults remain those who engage in 'collective conscious social reproduction'.

It is considerations such as these which have led students of political education to interest themselves in the processes of 'moral development'. How can the requisite moral and political character be developed within the child? If it is the case, as Piaget and Kohlberg have argued, that there is a sequential development of moral capacity in the child, a democracy might wish to structure the pattern and length of schooling so as to achieve the maximal elaboration of this capacity.[8] Thus Rawls proposes a three-stage model of the moral development of the person from a morality of authority, to a morality of association and, finally, a morality of principles. At the first stage, the child accepts the just injunctions of adults on trust; at the second, persons recognize and support the principles of justice as appropriate to the cooperative activities in which they engage; finally, they comprehend, and are committed to, the principles of justice themselves (Rawls 1971:458–96).

The democrat does not necessarily have to subscribe to this particular account of how one must learn to walk morally before one can run. It may, for example, be only necessary to democratic stability that the associative stage of morality is developed and not that all must be philosopher-citizens (see Paris 1991). What such approaches would suggest is the justifiable concern of democratic politics with teaching method as well as content—with what the emergent citizen can intellectually and emotionally handle at any given stage of development. The battles between 'progressive' or 'traditional' schooling are, therefore, legitimate political disputes—issues over which democrats may properly disagree and about which they might contemplate legislation. They are not to be 'taken out of politics' and left to some supposedly neutrally expert teaching profession.

Thus the extent of constraint on educational autonomy would be the focus of democratic debate. Libertarians will wish the autonomy to be virtually unconstrained (Chubb and Moe 1990:226). Social democrats and traditional conservatives will, for different reasons, seek some constraint on educators and children. The Mill-style separation of state compulsion from provision would, however, maintain that arm's-length relationship which has proved fruitful for experimentation in

other branches of culture in many mature democracies. It would not, however, eschew democratic concern for 'conscious social reproduction'.

The function of education, it has been said, is to get rid of children. The trouble is that, in democracies just as in other regimes, we are always rather nervous of the adults we are producing. To go back to Plato, both the first political and the first educational philosopher:

> 'then shall we simply allow our children to listen to any stories that anyone happens to make up, and so receive into their minds ideas the very opposite of those we shall think they ought to have when they are grown up?' 'No, certainly not'.[9]

NOTES

1   The idea of 'congruence' in political sociology was advanced by Harry Eckstein (1966). It retains some plausibility and relevance to education and socialization despite effective criticisms of its original formulation. For these see B.Barry (1970:58–63).

2   See Kaufman-Osborne (1984) for a discussion of a tension between particularity and community in Dewey's democratic education.

3   See the version of neutrality offered by Bruce A.Ackerman (1980). Other conceptions of liberal neutrality have been advanced most famously by John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) and Ronald Dworkin, *Taking Rights Seriously* (1977) and *A Matter of Principle* (1985). Ackerman's version is particularly interesting in this context for the specific attention paid to the consequences of the theory for education (pp. 139–67).

4   For an interesting discussion of how far liberal theories can accommodate themselves to cultural communities, see W.Kymlicka (1989).

5   Bloom is discussing higher education but he is also concerned with what university students bring with them from the school system.

6   See the contribution of Jack Tweedie to 'Should market forces control educational decision making?', *American Political Science Review* (1990) 84, 2, pp. 549–54 and the reply by John E.Chubb and Terry M. Moe, pp. 558–66. Probably the most thorough defence of the market in education is J.E.Chubb and T.M.Moe (1990). See also the essays in D.G.Green (1991).

7   The most celebrated British example is probably Summerhill. See A. S.Neill (1968).

8   See Piaget (1932). Kohlberg has usefully summarized his approach in Kohlberg (1980). This volume contains a number of essays on themes raised by Kohlberg's work.
9   *The Republic* (1941:377), translated by F.M.Cornford, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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Chapter 3

Democracy and the ends of Marxism

Norman Geras

The relationship between socialism and democracy has been a complex and a contested one. To large numbers of socialists it was axiomatic that their project, both the goal of socialism and the movement for it, must be democratic. They saw socialism as the heir to older, liberal and popular-democratic, traditions of struggle for political rights and liberties, and many of them indeed were themselves involved in, sometimes at the forefront of, movements for the defence and extension of such rights and liberties. At the same time, it has been common for socialists to be critical of the limitations of existing—'liberal' or 'bourgeois'—democracies. A central theme here has been that democracies of this type are too narrow and too formal: excluding any really substantial or sustained popular influence in political decision-making, and vitiating such democratic liberties as they do provide by the great social inequalities and deprivations which they also everywhere superintend. Set in this light, socialist aims have then been presented as an effort at deepening democracy, through the commitment to more participatory political and more egalitarian social forms.

Even so, this process of deepening has been thought of in different ways. It was thought of by some as being in basic continuity with the major institutions of existing democracy, as a consolidation and enlargement of these. Others have viewed it rather as discontinuous with them, as a sharp, punctual break in an institutional progression. Again, amongst socialists of different kinds, different views have been taken as to how far, if at all, limits upon a nascent socialist democracy might be temporarily permitted, to deal with the fierce onslaught which its adversaries were expected to mount against it. And different

socialists have shown themselves respectively more and less sensible of the dangers of this line of thought—unwarranted compromise of principle or unavoidable political necessity as they conceived it to be.

Axiomatic as was socialism's democratic inspiration to the generality of its supporters, so equally has it seemed obvious to many of its critics that socialism was the antithesis of democracy. They perceived in this quarter, in the sectarian certainties of some, in the 'vanguards of the working class', an arrogant claim to superior wisdom and the political ambition of would-be elites. In the socialist critique of prevailing democratic forms they found a too widespread and hasty dismissal of the values of liberalism. They deplored what they saw as delusions of final social harmony and transparency, behind which they feared a threat of technocratic and statist domination, whether of a bungling social-democratic or of a more malign totalitarian kind. Above all—far and away above all—these critics were able for over half a century to point to the Stalinist experience and its legacy; 'actually existing socialism' as it had come to be called by the time of its ignominious débâcle. If anything cast a shadow upon the democratic credentials of the socialist idea, it was this: the millions of lives destroyed, the disregard for basic rights, the official 'truth' and the official lies, the travesty of every democratic notion.

In a short essay it is not possible to cover more than a fraction of the issues alluded to in this complex argumentative opposition. I here concentrate on a limited task. I reconsider some of the democratic resources and some of the democratic deficiencies of one important current within the wider stream of socialism: namely, classical Marxism. Anyone already convinced either that this tradition was without democratic resources or that it was without democratic deficiencies need read no further. What follows is an attempt precisely to discriminate on that score.

I start, therefore, from a rejection of some familiar current polarities. One of these generalizes from the fact that actually existing socialism has nowhere been democratic, to a dismissal of the whole project of a socialism that could be. But if actually existing socialism has nowhere been democratic, this is bad not only for socialism, it is bad also for democracy. For the thing can be turned round: democracy is everywhere capitalist. It cohabits,

that is, with forms of economic power and privilege and their opposites which are deplorable in their own right, and are corrosive of the rough equality of voice that the idea of democracy presupposes. Against every cynicism, the socialist hypothesis continues to be that a better, a more just social order, and therewith a more democratic political one, is possible. At any rate, it may be. Attention to the intellectual resources we dispose of is to the point for those attached to this hope. (People who regard the hypothesis as comprehensively refuted on the evidence of the last few decades are, strangely, more patient about the prospects of capitalism; which has been around a bit longer than a few decades, still generates here persistent want and there the most appalling suffering, and may now be, systemically, a threat to the bases of human survival.)

At the other pole, there is a view that because actually existing socialism was not really socialism—an ideal still to be realized—and because it had nothing to do with genuine Marxism, its record poses no particular problem for socialists of Marxist persuasion. That record indeed did not represent the authentic goals or values of original Marxism. It is right to insist, too, that the Marxist tradition has encompassed, more, it has sustained and invigorated, socialist opponents of authoritarian, Soviet-style socialism. Some of them died for that opposition. Not all Marxists, consequently, and *a fortiori* not all socialists, are answerable for this terrible deformation of the socialist idea. Nevertheless, it has been common amongst Marxists also to say, following Marx, that socialism for them was *not* a mere ideal. It was a real tendency emerging within capitalism, a real social movement; it could only be a product of the struggles of the working class. The bald fact is that this movement and these struggles produced organizations and parties all over the world, and individuals by their tens of thousands, identifying with that aforesaid deformation of the socialist idea. They looked to it as supporters, as forgiving or gullible friends and as apologists—how many of them in Marxism's name? To ask what foothold may have been provided for this development by Marxist doctrine itself, its democratic commitments notwithstanding, is also to the point for those who care about the prospects of socialism.

In pursuit of such questions I shall focus particularly on the ideas of Rosa Luxemburg. I begin by evoking a connected set of themes in her work, the democratic core of her socialist vision. I

suggest that they yield a certain paradox, and then proceed to indicate three separate limitations in them.

I choose here to return once more to Rosa Luxemburg because she is an exemplary figure in the present context. The democratic cast of her ideas is well known. Her work not only pre-dates the Stalinist descent, it is also free of the anti-democratic distortions or 'substitutionist' ambiguities or compromises, as they are variously regarded, of Lenin and his followers. Together with the democratic resources of her thought, any shortcomings in it may therefore help to illuminate the contours of a Marxism not yet dominated by the Bolshevik experience and its sequel. This may perhaps contribute something to a wider process of democratizing socialist thought: in the sense here, be it noted, not of rendering democratic what was not; but of seeking to make more democratic what has always aspired to be so.

I

Let us begin with the familiar Marxian principle that the liberation of the working class must be won by the working class itself. Written by Marx into the preamble of the rules of the International Working Men's Association, it is a principle Rosa Luxemburg for her part also affirmed many times (Marx 1969: ii:19; Howard 1971:180; Looker 1972:278). That in itself is not so remarkable. The formula will be found in virtually all the political writers of classical Marxism. But I believe it was more central, more integral, to her thought. It informed some of her most characteristic political emphases. '[T]his guiding principle', she once wrote, 'has also the specific meaning that, even within the class party of the proletariat, any great, decisive movement must originate not in the initiative of a handful of leaders, but in the conviction and solidarity of the mass of party supporters.' Or again: 'the "working class" [in the formula] is not a few hundred elected representatives who control society's destiny with speeches and rebuttals. Even less is it the two or three dozen leaders who occupy government offices. The working class—that is the broad mass itself' (Looker 1972:159, 272).

For Luxemburg the creation of socialism had to come from this source. It could not just be legislated from on high. It must be made from the depths, out of the self-conscious efforts of an active, politically vigorous populace. As she put the point in the last

weeks of her life, during the German revolution of 1918–19: 'This rebuilding and this transformation cannot be decreed by some authority, commission or parliament; they can only be undertaken and carried out by the mass itself.' And: 'Socialism will not be and cannot be inaugurated by decrees; it cannot be established by any government, however admirably socialistic. Socialism must be created by the masses, must be made by every proletarian' (Looker 1972:277; Waters 1970:419). The inference should not be drawn here of some anti-political tendency on Luxemburg's part, hostile to parties or parliaments or leadership as such. The need for these forms of democratic political mediation she took for granted. Her point was a different one: that, whatever may be the organizational or legislative instruments of socialist transformation, instruments was what they were. The *subject* of it on the other hand, in the sense of its author or generative agent, had to be a veritable multitude—the working class. Already in 1904, she had chided Lenin for thinking to replace this collective subject by the authority of a party central committee (Waters 1970:129–30).

How, then, did Luxemburg visualize the process of socialist agency? In more sombre terms than one might expect. She did not write in the accents of Karl Kautsky, for example: who would invoke 'the fresh joyful life of battle and victorious progress on the road to political power'; or declaim 'Happy he who is called to share in this sublime battle and this glorious victory' (Kautsky 1909:63, 127). She liked to refer, rather, to a passage in Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*. According to this, proletarian revolutions, prodigious in their aims, are obliged continually to interrupt themselves, to return upon their own inadequacies and flawed earlier attempts, in a process of relentless self-criticism (Marx 1969: i:401; Waters 1970:89; Looker 1972:205). Luxemburg made the theme her own. Here, inflected by the 'unexampled misfortune for humanity' she saw in the onset of the First World War, is one expression of it:

> No pre-established schema, no ritual that holds good at all times, shows [the proletariat] the path that it must travel. Historical experience is its only teacher; its Via Dolorosa to self-liberation is covered not only with immeasurable suffering, but with countless mistakes. The goal of its journey, its final liberation, depends…on whether it understands that it must

learn from its own mistakes. Self-criticism, cruel unsparing criticism that goes to the very root of things is life and light for the proletarian movement.

(Howard 1971:324–5).

For Luxemburg the ordeal of mistakes and defeats was a necessary one. These were not just gratuitous blemishes upon a joyful progress. To a degree they were unavoidable, making up part of the sole experience from which an indispensable education was to be derived. It is an idea she pursued throughout her work. In 1899, in response to Bernstein's fears that the working class might acquire power prematurely: no, it *will* do so prematurely, for there is no other school of political maturity available to it than the experience of struggling for power, now failing, eventually succeeding—no point 'fixed *outside* and *independent* of the class struggle' determining the moment of victory. Against Lenin in 1904: the errors of the movement are 'more fruitful than the infallibility of the cleverest central committee'. In wartime: 'understanding and maturity only…step by step, via the Golgotha road of its own bitter experiences, through defeats and victories'. At the end of her life: in revolution 'the final victory can be prepared only by a series of "defeats"' (Waters 1970:81–3, 130; Looker 1972:285, 304).

I want to draw out two related features of the theme: the interiority, so to say, and the openness of this conception of agency. In different terms and moods Luxemburg repeats: no 'pre-established schema' showing the path; no external point determining the consummation; no infallible committee knowing the true way; only the subject itself and its own—bitter—experience. This is a doubly democratic emphasis. It means, first, that the putative agents of socialism must make themselves what they need to be if they are to create a better society, in an essentially self-formative process. The active source of change, they cannot be mere objects of it. Second and by the same token, because they are, as self-forming agents of it, in a sense also part of the substance of this change, what they create is not closely pre-defined. Making themselves, and making themselves free, they are free in great latitude as to just what it is they make. In another biblical reference, Luxemburg once wrote: 'We are truly like the Jews whom Moses led through the desert. But we are not lost, and we will be victorious if we have not forgotten how to learn' (Howard

1971:335). In the desert the horizon is open. Socialism was that for her and it is, more than ever now, that for us—an open horizon.

What I am calling interiority here is an old radical notion. It is learning by doing, self-education as opposed to instruction handed down. This was Luxemburg's view of working-class political action. As she put it in connection with the Russian events of 1905: 'the proletariat requires a high degree of political education, of class consciousness and organization. All these conditions cannot be fulfilled by pamphlets and leaflets, but only by the living political school, in the continuous course of the revolution.' Similarly, during the German upheaval of 1918: 'it is not by such means [lectures, leaflets, pamphlets] that the proletarians will be schooled. The workers, today, will learn in the school of action' (Waters 1970:172, 426). A socialist society must rest on other 'moral foundations'—the 'highest idealism in the interests of the whole', 'a true public spirit'—than the 'dullness, egoism and corruption' that underpin capitalism. 'All these socialist civic virtues, together with the knowledge and ability to manage socialist operations, can be acquired by the working class only through their own activity, their own experience' (Looker 1972:278).

Now, one could dwell once again on the Marxian pedigree of these sentiments: the coincidence in revolutionary practice of changing the world and self-changing, and so on (Marx and Engels 1965:86, 646). But I content myself merely with marking it. Some have been tempted to seize on the conceptions here being rehearsed in order, under a rubric of pure freedom or 'contingency', to oppose them to Luxemburg's materialist commitments. I think the effort is idle (see Geras 1976:133–93; 1990:78–9, 89–92). No logical reason forbade her, nor Marx before her, from seeing socialist revolution as a process of creative agency, the formation of new, autonomous and liberated, identities, and at the same time as originating in some objectively defined social locations and on account of certain sorts of interest rather than just indeterminately. I shall return to this issue.

For now I want to conclude my brief thematic summary by registering another sort of intellectual connection. The following are the words of John Stuart Mill:

> It has often been said, and requires to be repeated still oftener, that books and discourses alone are not education; that life is

a problem, not a theorem; that action can only be learnt in action…. [T]he spirit of a commercial people will be, we are persuaded, essentially mean and slavish, wherever public spirit is not cultivated by an extensive participation of the people in the business of government in detail.

(Mill 1859: ii.24–6).

The similarity between these formulations and those of Rosa Luxemburg just quoted is striking. Notwithstanding the obvious differences of political outlook between the two thinkers, it is part of a more substantial affinity. The interiority, the self-formative character, of socialist agency in Luxemburg's conception implies, as I have already said, a certain open-endedness of the revolutionary process. As in the manner so in the product of it, much remains to be determined through the experience of the process itself. And this requires that what would today generally be called liberal norms of political life must govern that process. It is to be noted, however, that Luxemburg herself does not so label them. She appeals to them as being the norms not of some *other* political tradition but of her own. Taking it for granted that they are indigenous to revolutionary socialism, she invokes them just like that. Such was the world she inhabited.

In any case, Luxemburg insists that for the movement she belongs to 'personal opinions…[are] sacred'; it 'demands complete freedom of conscience for every individual and the widest possible toleration for every faith and every opinion'. '[F]reedom of the press…the right of assembly and of public life', these are, again, 'sacred rights' of which no people should allow itself to be deprived. They are the 'most important democratic guarantees of a healthy public life and of the political activity of the labouring masses'. Through 'the exclusion of democracy'—this in criticism of the Bolsheviks—'the living sources of all spiritual riches and progress' are cut off. 'Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life' (Waters 1970:132, 152, 298, 389, 390–1). In perhaps her best-known statement in the same vein, Luxemburg emphasizes the pluralist dimension of these norms. I quote here at length because the supporting argument brings out clearly how they are connected with the 'openness' of the struggle for socialism as she envisages that:

Freedom only for the supporters of the government, only for the members of one party—however numerous they may be—is no freedom at all. Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently. Not because of any fanatical concept of 'justice' but because all that is instructive, wholesome and purifying in political freedom depends on this essential characteristic, and its effectiveness vanishes when 'freedom' becomes a special privilege…. Far from being a sum of ready-made prescriptions which have only to be applied, the practical realization of socialism as an economic, social and juridical system is something which lies completely hidden in the mists of the future. What we possess in our programme is nothing but a few main signposts which indicate the general direction…. [W]hen it comes to the nature of the thousand concrete, practical measures, large and small, necessary to introduce socialist principles into economy, law and all social relationships, there is no key in any socialist party programme or textbook…. The socialist system of society should only be, and can only be, a historical product, born out of the school of its own experiences, born in the course of its realization…. New territory. A thousand problems. Only experience is capable of correcting and opening new ways. Only unobstructed, effervescing life falls into a thousand new forms and improvizations, brings to light creative force, itself corrects all mistaken attempts.

(Waters 1970:389–90).

I think this pretty well encapsulates the notion of socialism as an open horizon. It is socialism as (only) that which emerges from the open democracy of the movement, the striving, for it.

II

We could re-express the same idea in a more provocative way. We could say that the movement is therefore everything, and the final aim of socialism itself, nothing. As what comes out of that movement, as its democratic and experimental creation, the final goal is not pre-given or distinct from it.

This would give us a paradox. It would give us one, because the formula of the movement being everything and the final goal nothing is famous as one of Eduard Bernstein's summing-up the

politics of 'revisionism', and it was condemned as such by Rosa Luxemburg amongst other defenders of Marxist orthodoxy (Tudor and Tudor 1988:168–9; Bernstein 1961:xxii; Waters 1970:36, 84; Howard 1971:43, 140). But Luxemburg's meaning, it could be said, was actually very different from Bernstein's. What she and others read in that formula of his was a renunciation of fundamental socialist principles in favour of the merely meliorative effort to soften the evils of capitalism. It was a dissolution of the goal of socialism into the movement so conceived; and not at all like her idea, in which the final goal is a real, emergent product of the process of fighting for, working out, indeed *realizing* those socialist principles. For her consequently the movement, being directed to the achievement of the principles as its end, was not everything. Correspondingly, the end was not nothing. It was the projected (and some eventual) embodiment of the principles. It could now in turn be said on Bernstein's behalf, however, that he would have been quite happy with this last way of putting things. For he rejected as a misunderstanding Luxemburg's construal of his formula. In doing so, he assented to there being an ultimate aim in the sense of some general guiding principles; he repudiated only the notion of a detailed vision or plan (Tudor and Tudor 1988:212–3; Bernstein 1961:202–5). The distinction is plainly similar to that drawn by Luxemburg in the passage excerpted above.

My purpose, though, is not to insist on this limited common ground. It is to explore the ways in which Luxemburg thought of the goal of socialism, since they reveal something of relevance to our present topic about the shape of classical Marxism more generally. In the understandings which she had, with countless others, of Marxism's long-range socialist end, there are, so I shall now argue, three types of democratic deficiency.

Let us give a name to what we already have. For Luxemburg this long-range socialist end is not, then, nothing. It is what I shall call for short a *regulative idea:* by which I mean a set of very general principles, to be realized in institutional forms that have yet to be worked out. As a regulative idea, the end functions to provide broad guidance, a sense of direction, to the movement; to ensure in particular that it continues to aim beyond capitalism rather than accommodating itself to it. The principles that constitute the end are such as one would expect in a revolutionary socialist. They appear here and there across the writings of this one: working-

class liberation; social equality, fraternity and an end to exploitation; communal property; a planned economic order; socialist democracy itself (Howard 1971:140; Waters 1970:148, 393–4; Luxemburg 1968:65, 68).

Now, as important as all these may be as general principles, still they do not on their own add up to much by way of specific policies, alternative social models, worked-out sketches of 'utopia'. Not only the concrete meaning of each principle singly—the envisaged, or the *favoured*, mode of its implementation—but also their mutual interrelationship in some well-ordered whole, these are obviously matters of debate and difference, and potentially grave difficulty; the more so given that one of them to be so negotiated is the very democracy through which negotiation generally is to take place. It is, therefore, as we have seen Luxemburg herself express it, 'nothing but a few main signposts which indicate the general direction'. This is, of course, a familiar Marxian absence: the destination a new society, but uncharted by any detailed map. So, exactly, does she treat it. She does not dissemble, pretend there is more here than there is, or that the journey might be less arduous than it is bound in those circumstances to be. The absence is for her a space: the space of democracy. It is an arena for that diversity, experiment and negotiation through which alone socialism can be created. It is, in other words, in the present context not a shortcoming but a kind of resource.

Luxemburg hereby develops one central impulse of classical Marxism: just because what is envisaged is an emancipation, those carrying it through have to be free in their constructive enterprise. She makes of that a fundamentally democratic notion of agency. There can be for her no authoritative instance above or outside the putative agents of socialism, pre-empting their choices: no authoritative leader or committee; no authoritative blueprint; no 'pre-established schema' vouchsafed by doctrine. Authoritative is only the democracy of the agents themselves, struggling, differing, failing, learning; endeavouring to make another world, in light only of some egalitarian, communist and—yes—liberal critical principles. So much, as far as the end-as-regulative-idea is concerned.

There is, however, another conception of the socialist end shadowing this first one. Sharp-eyed readers will already have glimpsed its figure once or twice in Luxemburg's talk of a 'final'

victory and 'final' liberation for which mistakes and defeats prepare the way. This is the finality not only of an aim. It is the finality of an inevitable conclusion. It is the end (as I shall call it in turn) as *unique destination*. Such an idea recurs in the interstices of her other arguments. Cataloguing a history of severe defeats, for example, she writes, 'And yet this same history leads irresistibly, step by step, to ultimate victory!' Self-criticism, she holds, can be borne, hard though it may be: 'The working class can always look truth and the bitterest self-accusation in the face, for its weakness was but an error, and the inexorable laws of history give it strength and guarantee its final victory.' Again, it is guaranteed, she says, 'that, despite all difficulties and complications…we shall…advance step by step towards our goal' (Looker 1972:304; Howard 1971:327; Waters 1970:415).

My object is not to offer yet one more commentary on Marxist determinism as such. In earlier work indeed I have argued that, with the 'socialism or barbarism' idea, Luxemburg went a long way towards a break with that doctrinal inheritance, but without freeing herself of it altogether (Geras 1976:13–42). In any case, the point of relevance here is that under this second conception of the end, the process of democratic agency has only one outcome. As open as it may be in the ways we have seen, its detailed results still to be troubled and differed over, to be sought, found, modified, rejected or replaced, it nevertheless has this clear limit: the result must be socialism. Broad and not yet very determinate, it is anyway one. Even the 'socialism or barbarism' formula leaves this point basically intact. For barbarism, as Luxemburg understands it—the breakdown of modern civilization—while it represents a historical alternative of sorts, is the consequence of repeated and irredeemable defeat. It is not a genuinely alternative outcome of the process of free, deliberative agency, not really conceivable as a democratic choice. Although, therefore, the slogan formally opens history out from a strict linear determinism, it leaves the great project of autonomous action subject to the limit of there being only one truly thinkable option within it.

This limit is a limitation in a democratic outlook. It is not that Luxemburg should not have had a view of her own as to what was the most compelling, even urgent, contemporary option. But if the procedural premise is democracy, then the agents, the

citizens, of the democracy must be free not only to choose but also *not* to choose that option; an eventuality harder to entertain and assimilate fully if there is only one outcome truly thinkable, or one outcome, period. And if there is only one, whether thinkable or…period, might it not then be tempting to seek a short cut towards it where too many are yet unpersuaded democratically? Or to treat what is actually the different choice of these many as an inferior status, or the symptom perhaps of a political or other pathology? It is to Luxemburg's credit that her own moral impulses and her overall democratic conception protected her from temptations of this kind. But other Marxists have been overwhelmed by them who shared with her the same doctrinal limitation.

One further question may be raised, briefly, about it. How can any outcome be that certain, so much of whose exact shape and content, empirical working out, practical trial, variation and negotiation, is still so open? Socialists have every reason to hope and strive for the kind of world they do. But to count on the certainty of its democratic achievement when there is so much to be settled in both the 'what' and the 'how' of it, this has been a major mistake, not only of Marxist thought. Socialism may be a possibility, and that is all.

III

The idea of the end-as-unique-destination has another effect. As well as limiting a (more generally) democratic conception of socialist agency, it may also be seen as needlessly restricting the definition of socialism's natural constituency. It does so by its tendency to obscure a third pertinent way of viewing the long-range socialist end: that is, as a *moral ideal*.

Along with most others in the Marxist tradition, Luxemburg did view socialism as this. Her support for revolutionary change was plainly motivated by ethical considerations. They surface regularly in her work: as when she speaks, for instance, of the power of the proletariat as 'qualified to uproot thousand-year-old oaks of social injustice'; or says that 'all conditions based on social inequality are fundamentally abnormal'; or writes of bourgeois society that 'its innermost law of life is the profoundest of immoralities, namely, the exploitation of man by man' (Looker 1972:210; Waters 1970:348, 392). But Luxemburg also followed

the practice, endemic in the tradition, of trying to repress this sort of ethical motivation. We have seen her do it earlier: freedom for the one who thinks differently, but not out of any 'fanatical concept of justice'. It was her disposition in fact to oppose to one another the idea of socialism as a 'historical necessity' (the end-as-unique-destination) and the idea of socialism as a moral ideal, a desideratum of justice in particular (Waters 1970:63; Luxemburg 1968:67–8; 1972:76). The principle of justice she once characterized as 'that lamentable Rosinante on which the Don Quixotes of history have galloped towards the great reform of the earth, always to come home with their eyes blackened' (Waters 1970:72–3).

Within this well-known Marxist contraposition—historical necessity against moral ideal—what is always put in place of the ethical sources of socialism is, of course, class interest. So it was with Rosa Luxemburg, as has been obvious here from the beginning. The agents of socialism are workers. They are proletarians. '[O]nly the working class as such can carry out the overthrow…the revolution for the realization of the socialist transformation'. And: 'the socialist struggle must be a mass struggle of the proletariat' (Howard 1971:180–1). It is this classical insistence of hers I shall now focus on as inappropriately restricting the constituency of socialism.

My critical intention, however, differs from one that is fashionable today with the enthusiasts of 'discourse'. This would have us forsake, on account of the discursive formation of identity and the indeterminacy supposed to be its result, any notion of interests grounded in structural social position. Forms of life become labile, free-floating. Contingency is the word. Current as it may be, and loudly concerted in its parodying assault on Marxist thought, the line of criticism is inane. It renders itself actually incapable of making sense of the fact (as this appears to be) that the beneficiaries of an oppressive social relation are as a rule less given to mobilizing against it than are its victims. That Marxism saw fit to look for general, probabilistic connections between social location and political identity was not due to some reductionist original sin. The quest is merely a precondition to any half-way realist sociology or history or political project.

The problem is not the reference to class interests as such. It is the opposition set up in traditional Marxist advocacy between these interests and any ethical motive or concern. The opposition

is misplaced; though I must refer readers to other work for more detailed argument to this effect (Geras 1992; 1991:59–80). Here, I will merely say that if the interest workers are held to have in the achievement of socialism is based, as it is in Marxist theory, on their being exploited under capitalism, this is not by virtue only of the technical or descriptive meaning of exploitation. It is not just because they produce capitalist wealth, because there is a surplus-value above the value of the wage and over which they do not dispose, that workers can be reckoned to have such an interest. It is due rather to the disparities of effort and reward, of suffering and enjoyment, involved in this situation. It is due to the distributive injustice.

But surely no notion of justice need be entailed (it may be said) in ascribing to workers a simple interest in getting more than they do for what they do. No, none need be. But more is just more. One can get it not only by getting more of, or for, the product of one's own labour, but also by getting some or lots of the product of other people's; by becoming an exploiter as well as by ceasing to be exploited. Marxists have not been so enthusiastic about this particular route away from proletarian status. They concentrated, in other words, on what they took to be the just or legitimate interests of workers. But (it may again be said) it was not necessarily considerations of justice or legitimacy, it was only considerations of practicality, that were operative. Becoming an exploiter is not a route available simultaneously to all workers, nor one available easily to any worker. Indeed. However, neither is socialism a route available easily to any worker, as Luxemburg for her part well knew. And as for its hoped-for, eventual availability to all workers, to those at least who live to see it should it happen—this great socialist end of not being exploited by others and not exploiting them either—why should any worker or group of workers take it as an interest of *his, her or their own* if not from some universalizing ethical consideration? The point is not simply that these workers would be better off under socialism. It is that they would be better off consistently with the same well-being for others. The projected interest in *this* path away from exploitation cannot be detached from the sort of belief Luxemburg herself expressed in calling exploitation 'the profoundest of immoralities'.

Other people than those who produce surplus-value are on the wrong end of the unjust social and economic relations of

capitalism: the dispossessed and impoverished, everyone struggling under the burden of grave want, people marginalized from the sites of activity and respect, all those working away from the 'point of production' for inadequate reward, and so on. Such people are also part of any putative socialist constituency: not only by virtue of being, as many of them will, 'dependents' of or otherwise close socially to the direct producers of surplus-value; but in their own right, for the same reason and with the same force. The anti-capitalist interest of workers is grounded on exploitation not merely as a technical fact but as a morally objectionable one, a type of material injustice; and there is more than one type of material injustice.

Luxemburg's orothodox emphasis on the proletariat as an agency of socialism is a second limitation in her democratic perspective. It may not be one in as direct a way as the first. For, focusing on the working class as its core constituency, classical Marxism also envisaged and sought allies. The focus was not overtly exclusionary. It was nevertheless a deficiency to frame its emancipatory project in more particularist terms than were genuinely its own. The ends of Marxism were tendentially universal: the freedom of each and the freedom of all. Hoping to enlist anyone who might be moved by these ends as general moral reasons, it yet shaped its appeal to those who were socially more likely to be moved by them, people with no large stake in the unfreedoms and sufferings of others. Its best representatives, Luxemburg as prominent here as any, rarely lost sight of these general moral reasons. But she, like the rest, was given to wrapping them up in one special category, that of proletarian. The least that can be said is that this was a particularism which did not always strengthen, in theory or in practice, the democratic and the humanist sensibilities of Marxists.

IV

In harmony with the different ways of conceiving Marxism's socialist end are to be found different views of Marxism itself. Thus, in the section she contributed to Franz Mehring's biography of Marx, Luxemburg wrote of the second and third volumes of *Capital:* 'they offer more than any final truth could: an urge to thought, to criticism and self-criticism, and this is the essence of the lessons which Marx gave the working class' (Mehring

1936:380). The notion of the end as a broad regulative idea—the open horizon of socialism as I have called it—is matched by this sentiment: Marx's lesson a questioning and critical one, better than any 'final truth', the proper lesson indeed of a man whose favourite motto was avowed to be 'De omnibus dubitandum'. Connected, on the other hand, to the notion of the end as a unique, historically necessary destination, is a view of the theory that discloses it as being this as the only worthwhile socialist theory—since Marx's time at least, and wherever social conditions are sufficiently developed. This is the burden, for example, of Luxemburg's concluding argument against Bernstein. 'When he directs his keenest arrows against our dialectic system, he is really attacking the specific mode of thought employed by the conscious proletariat in its struggle for liberation.' Before Marx there were other doctrines, effective in their day. But here and now: 'no socialism…outside of Marxist socialism' (Waters 1970:86, 88).

It is a monopolizing claim: Marxism not merely pre-eminent, intellectually more fertile or powerful in Luxemburg's estimation than other socialist conceptions, but *the* 'mode of thought' all on its own. That does not sit very comfortably with the open vision of agency we began by reviewing. While it may not strictly gainsay the freedom of the one who thinks differently, it does suggest there is not much point in thinking too differently. The best response to it is Luxemburg's own. If so much in fact is still open, unknown, how could any single theory, doctrine or even tradition contain all that might be necessary? As she knew in her other voice, so to say, truth is many-sided, shifting, hard to grasp. No one ever has it whole.

This tension in her thought is, anyway, representative once again of the broader Marxist tradition. Aspiring to speak for a movement of democratic emancipation, and aspiring equally to bring to it resources of knowledge, for both kinds of reason—of democracy and theory—Marxism had to be governed by the necessity of being adaptable: open to new data and experience, competing insights and bodies of learning, and to correction and change. So, at its best, it always was. But in the very moment of becoming a tradition with a unitary name, something like the monopolistic claim began to take shape within it: of being 'the' theory of socialism. This had a more warping effect on the thought of some Marxists than on that of others, but it is not a claim

conducive to the democratic or pluralist values Luxemburg actually valued.

It is the third and last of the limitations in her work to be identified here. Concerned as this essay has been, however, with the ways in which the tradition conceived its ultimate 'end', it may not be out of place to conclude with one other meaning of this notion, by considering the currently popular question of whether Marxism may now precisely be coming to an end. This is the end as *final demise*. I venture an answer in terms of the tension just discussed. Judged as an intellectual tradition of the kind of breadth and wealth that this one has encompassed, the very question of its end is comical. No less. Of no other intellectual tradition of remotely comparable achievement would such a question even be posed. With historical materialism, Marxism contributed fertile analytical resources to our understanding of history. It mounted a powerful critique of the evils of capitalism. And it set itself to seeking forces for, and ways of, challenging and overcoming them. This is to say nothing of what it offered more generally to the whole culture of a century and more through a legion of thinkers, writers and artists. The celebration of its end is at best wishful thinking and at worst a form of intellectual intolerance.

On the other hand, systematized as Marxism widely was as the unity of theory—theory *tout court*—and the workers' movement; and as the one science of socialism, the unsurpassable intellectual horizon of our times, *the* theory of theoretical practice, *the* self-consciousness of the working class; as this particular kind of monopolistic unity, Marxism is finished beyond the ambit of shouting sects. It will continue as a programme of research, a tradition of enquiry, and take a more modest place in the democratic cultures it finds, with all those still fighting under darkening skies for a world fit for everyone. It will contribute what it can to strengthening those cultures and that fight, as one voice amongst many in a coalition wider than the working class, if not as wide or shapeless as mere 'discourse' would imply. And it will know that the horizon really is open. There have already been, goodness knows, more than enough defeats, and the infamies continue to pile, irredeemable, on one another. But there is no guarantee of a final victory.

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Chapter 4

Democratization and qualified explanation

Alistair Edwards

How are we to explain democratization? We can appreciate the problem by considering a simpler but analogous task. Imagine that we are faced with a few dozen vehicles, loosely described as buses. Whatever their differences and states of disrepair, they are all used for public transport. Each has been originally constructed from whatever materials lay to hand. Where some element of conscious design was present, those involved in the construction of each vehicle seem to have been working from a number of quite different blueprints, and evidence of these conflicting purposes is still apparent. Many of the buses were adapted from the remains of other vehicles: traces of military or royal insigna can still be discerned on some. A few of those still operating have been around for more than a century. Others are new models. All have been extensively modified with a view to their more efficient operation.

We have to answer a number of questions about these vehicles: notably, why some are still going while others are not. We also want to explain why certain other vehicles are in no condition to be used for public transport, and how some of them might be so adapted. How are we to proceed?

Two different approaches spring to mind. We might try to identify the characteristics shared by buses, but absent in other vehicles: age; location; homogeneity of source materials; etc. Or we might construct the particular history of each vehicle, identifying the real forces conjoined in various ways at different times and in different cases, showing how they arrived at their current state. Neither approach looks promising. The former 'empiricist' approach seems wildly optimistic in its search for factors of association, and promises little explanatory depth. The

latter 'conjunctural-realist' approach is ill-fitted to answer the general questions posed, and supposes that knowledge of the vehicles' internal workings is available which their motley appearance belies.

Political science seems to be setting itself these sorts of questions when addressing democratization. And distinctions between approaches, drawn in this way, are now commonplace in the literature on explanation in political science. Yet applying these distinctions to actual explanations of democratization is more difficult than that literature pretends. In fact, few accounts of democratization will neatly and uncontestably fall into one or other of these categories. Many so-called 'empiricist' accounts are not so bereft of theory as this division suggests. Many accounts claimed to be 'realist' include elements which might reasonably be described as 'empiricist'. Such caricatured categories may usefully highlight various difficulties of explanation. But they cannot provide, in themselves, criteria for choosing between different explanations: not just because actual accounts do not always fit the categories but because even the caricatures have far more in common than first appears. I shall try to show that *both* 'approaches' set impossibly demanding explanatory standards, and that the appropriate response to this problem is closer attention to the questions posed and to our reasons for posing them. The appropriate response is not simply to plump for one or another 'approach' on the basis of some epistemological or ontological precommitment.

THE USE OF 'NECESSARY' AND 'SUFFICIENT' CONDITIONS IN EXPLANATIONS OF DEMOCRACY

'Empiricist' studies of democratization do not aim simply to establish factors associated with democracy. They aim to explain. To this end they commonly try to establish necessary and/or sufficient conditions for a democratic regime: conditions without which democracy cannot occur and/or conditions which are in themselves adequate to bring about democracy. Most critical comment, from within and without the approach, assumes that their success or failure in this regard is crucial.

From within the approach Lane and Ersson, in a recent survey of the literature, discuss the 'causes' of and 'conditions' for democracy:

> If affluence is a necessary condition for democracy, why is there democracy in India? If affluence is a sufficient condition for democracy, why is there not democracy in Saudi Arabia?
>
> (Lane and Ersson 1990:69)

Other factors receive the same critical treatment (Lane and Ersson 1990:71–5).

Some accounts may appear to state more modest aims and criteria (e.g. Dahl 1971:1), but then use necessity and sufficiency to eliminate conditions which appear inadequate (Dahl 1971:60–1). This move is common: outline an account with reference to explanatory conditions of this sort; identify its inability to provide such conditions, often indicating its inability to specify the conditions *as* either necessary or sufficient; then argue for some alternative, but in terms of the conditions 'likely to impede or enhance' democratization (e.g. Neubauer 1967; Collier 1978).

The initial attraction of necessary and sufficient conditions is easy to understand. Knowledge in this form satisfies a definite set of cognitive interests: in prediction, and in control by prevention and facilitation. These cognitive interests are strongly associated with the methods empiricists pursue, and these interests are often manifest in the works themselves. The point of these studies is to produce knowledge that may be used to promote the development of democracy (e.g. Almond and Verba 1963:501–5; Dahl 1971:208–27).

Conditions of this sort also give some explanatory force to an account by providing clarification of the relationship between variables. This is supposed to provide a means of establishing that the hypothesized causal relations actually exist, by allowing well-defined falsification tests to be performed.

However, 'necessity and sufficiency' appear less attractive once it is realized that they are neither clear nor plausibly attainable. To sustain this claim one might appeal to anti-determinist intuitions:

> It seems that universal franchise was established in Western Europe when the proportion of the labor force employed outside agriculture passed 50%. Are we willing to conclude that once this magic threshold was reached the old system could no longer be maintained and changes alternative to democratization were not possible?
>
> (Przeworski 1986:48)

The example is clearly a caricature. Przeworski's 'magic' number bears little resemblance to the explanations against which it is directed. The factors offered by 'empiricist' accounts are seldom so devoid of explanatory status. They are not usually offered in isolation, but against an explicit or implied background of some more elaborate causal theory, usually linked to the intentions and perceptions of actors.

But Przeworski's example does illustrate the intuitive implausibility of empiricist explanation in its extreme form. The idea that a precise level of one variable could be necessary or sufficient for a particular outcome is hardly worth entertaining. Empiricist accounts of *natural* science acknowledge that such ideals are 'rarely achieved' (Nagel 1961:582). Even in simple cases, and even where the evidence of the few cases of the explanandum appears supporting, scepticism is the automatic response.

The implausibility of such claims might be avoided by reformulating 'necessary' and 'sufficient' in some weaker sense. This might provide intelligible terms for the discussion of particular cases, but it cannot be used to test or support the general conclusions and explanations of democratization which we set out to provide. (See, for instance, Mackie 1974: ch. 2; MacIntyre 1971:195–6; Miller 1987:86–98; Nagel 1961:582–8; Ryan 1970:112–16.)

The ideas of necessary and sufficient conditions are by no means the clear and simple tools they first appear. There are a number of different meanings that may be given to them, and the application of any one of these is far from easy. (For an illustration of the confusion, compare the two statements by MacIntyre quoted on p. 99–100, below.) The empiricist has to choose between a strong requirement for necessity and sufficiency which will prove impossible to satisfy, and a weaker sense that will not provide the sort of knowledge desired. Although the sense chosen is seldom made explicit, in so far as a general explanation for democratization continues to be pursued by this approach the unrealizable strong requirement is retained. The result is a set of 'moderate' correlations between (say) social factors and indices of democracy, such that '…whichever factor we emphasize, there will be deviant cases requiring *ad hoc* explanations' (Lane and Ersson 1990:72).

But this does not express the central difficulty. It is not just that 'deviant' cases need *ad hoc* explanation. The cases which exhibit

the suggested condition are also treated in an *ad hoc* fashion. It is no longer apparent what the explanatory force of that factor is, nor what constitutes an adequate test of its validity. To treat cases which fail to display the suggested condition merely as 'deviant' leaves us without any obvious criteria to judge the explanatory power and validity of these conditions. The criteria provided by the necessity and sufficiency of conditions seem to require an indiscriminate rejection of all suggestions.

The alternative response, the treatment of the correlation as itself a measure of explanatory power and accuracy (e.g. Mayer 1989:33), equates explanation with the relative frequency of occurrence of possibly facilitating conditions in a given population: the notion of a general explanation is being supplanted by a notion of what has frequently happened. A causal model is being tested, and the probability stated that, in some sense, the part of the world observed is *'something like'* the model. Such models will not indicate the probable status of conditions as necessary or sufficient.

There are also practical and contingent reasons for rejecting this response. Feedback and reciprocal causation create the biggest problems for statistical test and appraisal. We have good reason to suppose that political systems generally, and democratic systems in particular, are largely constituted by just such phenomena. Democratization looks the last field in which one might claim that the assumptions made in applying statistical judgements are justified by the added rigour.

THE REALIST ALTERNATIVE

Faced with these problems, the realist response is quite simple. Empiricists have mistaken the nature of the world they are trying to explain. The response is not anti-scientific. The use of scientific method remains both possible and desirable: but not, of course, the methods of the empiricists. The empiricists' mistake about the world is closely tied to a mistake about scientific method.

The empiricist approach mistakenly assumes that the world manifests regularities at the level of events, and that science is concerned to discover such regularities as the basis for predictions. Although both the science of naturally closed systems and the theoretical-experimental science of artificially closed systems superficially resemble a search for regularities, this is not what

they are about. Instead, science attempts to discover the persistent and enduring causal mechanisms and forces which generate both the infrequent regularities and frequent irregularities of the world. In dealing with the actual world of open systems, this knowledge can be used to explain why a contingently occurrent conjunction of factors necessarily produced a particular outcome. Science is not, and cannot be, primarily concerned with prediction as an end, or as a means to eliminate inadequate theory. Explanation is the goal of science, and explanatory power the criterion for assessing the validity of theory (Bhaskar 1978, 1979; Lawson 1989; Lloyd 1986; Sayer 1984).

One obvious feature of this realist position is its tendency to render the main goal of empiricist studies of democracy impossible to attain. In so far as democratization is a prime example of complex conjunctural causation within an open system, it cannot plausibly be explained as a general phenomenon. There can be no prior commitment to the search for the same patterns of causation in all cases of democracy. Differences will be manifest between nation-state cases. An early switch to commercial agriculture and a shift in the perceived interests of the landed aristocracy may be central to one process of democratization, but democratization may occur without these changes where the political power of the landed aristocracy is weak due to *other* factors (Moore 1967:39, 106, 419–32). Likewise, the causal efficacy of any of the factors may depend on conditions which are more or less local in their occurrence, such as the absence of the need for a large standing army, or the existence of a strong rule-of-law tradition (Moore 1967:32, 415–16). Different causal configurations may also be manifest within cases: the accommodating processes by which stable liberal democracy is maintained in the face of conflicting pressures from personal rights and property rights may change over time (Bowles and Gintis 1986: ch. 2). In other words, if regularities do not exist at the level of the events concerned then we may be faced with as many conjunctions of conditions which purport to explain a process of democratization as there are cases of democracy. And the presumption must be that we will be faced with this: no general explanation of democracy will be provided.

This fragmentation will occur even though realist accounts may possess (or require) *some* level of generality. Some similar

causal mechanisms, drawn from the same theoretical tradition, may play a role in all or most of the cases. It may be that something like the interplay between the logics of personal and property rights is used to explain the development of liberal democracy across a range of cases (Bowles and Gintis 1986). But the form of this interplay will vary according to the particular contextual features.

This displacement of the general aim may be no great price to pay. The assumption that similar outcomes originate from some common cause is widely accepted as naive. Empiricist accounts are forced to accept some fragmentation of the phenomenon they are attempting to explain because of their own inability to produce satisfactory explanations at the general level. Thus, the need for combined factor models is recognized (Lane and Ersson 1990); different explanations are offered for the development of democracy in different cases (Katzenstein 1985); different types of democracy developing in different environments are identified (Lijphart 1975; Katzenstein 1985); and the models offered for some of these different types are arguably much more restricted in their explanatory scope than the general description of the 'type' might claim (Barry 1975, on Lijphart 1975).

However, abandoning the quest for a general explanation of democracy is not the only difficulty faced by a realist account. The second difficulty lies in the nature of the causal mechanisms that may be said to operate in and on the political world.

At least one proponent of realism is disarmingly frank about its aims and requirements. Citing the same sort of analogy used in the introduction to this chapter, he asks how we might try to explain why a car engine seized-up. Empiricists try to subsume the particular case under a general law of engine seizures. Others, including many historians, reject any recourse to a general law and instead try to construct 'a continuous series of sub-events' which could be collectively described as a process of seizure.

> The realist argument is that the continuous series *can only* be constructed using prior knowledge of the physical mechanisms involved in the sub-processes and micro-relationships of an engine—i.e. laws about friction, the flow of liquids, the behaviour of gases, and so on.
>
> (Lloyd 1986:70, emphasis added)

This is an ambitious explanatory project, even for something as simple as an engine. And it depends on the availability of knowledge in the form of scientific laws which, in the case of engines, *can* be tested and refined under controlled conditions.

But in cases of democratization we are not talking of mechanisms that generate regularities in isolation from one another, or of mechanisms subjected to tests in a controlled system. We are talking of tendencies which are only ever manifested in interaction with other supporting and countervailing tendencies. Some indication must be offered, generally applicable, of the form this interaction takes. We cannot test the validity of these postulated general tendencies unless their application is rule-governed. If no such rules are available, their application will be indeterminate, immune from falsification, and devoid of explanatory power. Where are the laws appropriate for the explanation of democratization to be found?

Realists often cite analogies with physical forces, like gravity. The 'law of gravity' is not a reliable empirical generalization which can be applied to the movement of objects. Gravity must be understood as a tendency, used with other theorized tendencies to reproduce and explain the specific configuration of forces present and causing some particular movement (Bhaskar 1978: ch. 2; Lawson 1989; Sayer 1984: ch. 4). The problem lies in identifying the sorts of social forces which might adequately fill this role.

Gravity is a regular feature of the world we experience. Not only is its force exerted in a regular and constant fashion, it is possible to perceive that force even in cases where other causal mechanisms intervene and no regularity occurs as a simple expression of the force. For instance, the intervention of my hand in the movement of an object towards the earth prevents others from observing an acceleration g by the object. However, all observers have an indirect means of inferring the force in configuration with my interference, and I am directly experiencing the force since it is part of my perceptual apparatus that is intervening. The point here is not just the lack of opportunity for social experiment: that is part of the foundation of the realist argument. The point is the nature of the force, the regularity of its manifestation, and the consequences for a scientific account of its operation.

The difficulties in dealing with other types of forces can be illustrated by a brief examination of Barrington Moore's account of democratization in England, France and the USA. Moore is one writer identified as 'realist' in his approach (Lloyd 1986:194, 290–1): he recognizes that democratization consists of quite different configurations of forces in the various cases analysed. Yet despite this, he attempts to test the particular explanations provided by offering a set of general preconditions for democracy (Moore 1967: ch. 7). Realist explanations surely cannot operate at this level. The preconditions for democracy can only be empirical generalizations across the range of cases. They do not describe causal mechanisms or forces. They attempt to identify only the common background conditions against which a variety of different configurations of forces have generated similarly democratic outcomes. Given the problems facing empiricism in open systems, it would be surprising if this attempt were to be successful. It is not. Some of the preconditions appear tautologous: conceptually rather than empirically connected with the democratic outcome. Some carry little explanatory weight in that their role as significant background conditions is obscure. All are doubtful in their empirical fit, even with the small number of carefully selected cases from which they are ostensibly abstracted. (For these well-documented criticisms see, for instance, Femia 1972; Stone 1967). This level of Moore's account is neither realist nor successful. We must seek elsewhere for an example of successful realist practice.

Although the preconditions are not in themselves statements of causal mechanisms, they must be in some way connected with such mechanisms. Most of Moore's preconditions point towards the central role played by the institutions of royal absolutism. But royal absolutism is not a determinate force with theoretically specified causal powers. Its force, and the mechanisms of which it is a part, are encountered only within the specific configurations which make up the sequential narrative of each case of democratization. Producing any general account of its causal powers, relevant to democratization, will be impossible. In some configurations it appears to perform 'an indispensable function' for democratization, in others it produces 'unfavourable consequences' (Moore 1967:417). The strength, even the direction, of causal force is specific to the conjuncture. Causal forces cannot be theorized at the level of (say) royal absolutism. The institutions

of absolutism do not exert a constant uni-directional force towards democratization or any other outcome. It is not, therefore, a matter of integrating such a force with other facilitating and countervailing forces, similarly theorized, in order to explain a stage in the process of democratization.

Even if we had a pretty full set of theories specifying causal powers, and could construct a causal sequence from these theories, we would *still* lack the basis for the causal claims commonly made. Knowledge of physical laws (as tendencies) may enable us to produce an adequate explanation of the movement of an object, through a complex field of forces, from one point to another. This knowledge will not, in itself, substantiate the claim that any particular force has facilitated rather than impeded the object in its progress to its destination. Claims of this sort are not more modest recognitions of limited knowledge. They are not more easily substantiated and weaker claims. They require *additional* knowledge and criteria, notably the clear identification and defence of relevant counterfactuals, *beyond* knowledge of a specific causal sequence.

One reason for the apparent difficulty of identifying mechanisms which satisfy the realist programme may lie in the nature of democratization.

> [T]heories of social change *necessarily* refer to historically observable regularities. Thus, there results the methodological difficulty that for central lawlike assumptions only a few cases can be found in the known course of history to serve as tests for verification.
>
> (Habermas 1988:38)

Depending on the specificity of the structures and forces used in conjunctural explanation, 'few' might be reduced to one. This is something we would wish to avoid. The aim must be to produce explanations of a range of historical conjunctions from a more or less unified body of theory specifying the causal powers of structures. Hence the requirement of a realist social history is '…*causal explanation* of the history of the recurrent *relational structures* of social life…' (Lloyd 1986:7).

I shall leave aside the question of whether there are *any* such structures or, more pointedly, how much variation is possible within 'enduring' structures. If social scientific explanation is to

account for events in terms of enduring underlying structures, then success depends on the degree to which the events are so structured. This is a contingent matter and we should not rush to judgement. But some events, such as revolutions, may be very weakly structured indeed (see Dunn 1985:76–7, 85). Even if, *pace* Moore, democratization does not *require* violent revolutionary upheaval, we might reasonably expect it to be associated with fundamental transformations of social structures and attitudes. These transformations may be sufficient to shake our faith in any 'enduring' basis on which unitary theoretical explanation must depend. Something similar may also be true of the process of democracy itself. A democratic system might be seen as the institutionalization of popular choice as a response to contingency. The attempt to impose a theoretical unity of structural explanation on events within such a system may be self-defeating.

These difficulties lead back to the most central problem of the realist approach. We are not interested simply in postulating the existence of causal mechanisms which might plausibly play some role in a specific democratic outcome. We need to test the accuracy of such an account and eliminate the suspicion that accounts of this sort are simply *ad hoc* assortments of suggested mechanisms constructed for the sole purpose of providing a purported explanation for single cases. This requires theoretical knowledge of the working of the mechanisms, including some means of establishing the form of their interaction in particular situations. We need to be able to derive conditional general laws from theories of causal mechanisms in a non-arbitrary fashion. On the realist account what we do not need is 'a way of looking at things', a conceptual framework, or a loose vocabulary. Such perspectives or constructions are generally distinctive enough to give some veneer of consistency to the *ad hoc* explanations offered for particular cases, but loose enough to allow explanations to be adjusted to, rather than eliminated by, the evidence.

This requirement is easier to outline than to satisfy. The sorts of mechanisms envisaged, be these concerned with individual, cultural or structural relations, are not directly observable and are not amenable to controlled experiment. The testing and refinement of knowledge of these mechanisms must take place within the process of particular explanation itself.

Knowledge in this form may be beyond us, yet its lure proves difficult to resist. Many of those who have, from various positions,

urged us to shun the pretensions and over-ambition of science and theory have found it hard to avoid a central role for inferences of causation. MacIntyre writes about the case against comparative political science:

> [T]he case…rests not merely on the impossibility of testing these law-like generalizations to which a true science of politics would have to aspire; it derives also from the nature of the subject matter of political science. For the most that any study of comparative politics based upon comparative history can hope to supply us with in the foreseeable future is *de facto* generalizations about what has been an obstacle or has facilitated certain types of course of action.
>
> (MacIntyre 1971:276)

Edward Thompson, arguing against the treatment of 'historical concepts' as general laws, says:

> These concepts…are brought to bear upon the evidence, not so much as 'models' but rather as expectations. They do not impose a rule, but they hasten and facilitate the interrogation of the evidence, even though it is often found that each case departs, in this or that particular, from the rule. The evidence (and the real event) is not rule-governed, and yet could not be understood without the rule, to which it offers its own irregularities.
>
> (Thompson 1978:237–8)

Despite this, both writers remain committed to demonstrating causal connections between events, MacIntyre in the form of obstacles and facilitations, Thompson in the form of 'an adequate (although approximate) representation of the causative sequence' (Thompson 1978:236). Once general laws and theories have been discarded, it is clear that neither '*de facto* generalizations' (as results of inquiry) nor 'expectations' (as guides to inquiry) can perform this task. MacIntyre, for instance, suggests that weakly necessary conditions *can* be established:

> [I]t is characteristic of the causal knowledge which history does provide us with that the antecedent conditions in terms of which we explain historical outcomes are sometimes necessary

conditions for the occurrence of some specific outcome, but are never sufficient.

(MacIntyre 1971:273)

But elsewhere, in referring to the generalizations on which causal explanations of events depend, he illustrates the confusion reigning in this area by claiming that '…the task of detecting necessary conditions as it leads up to this type of generalization is inseparable from the task of detecting sufficient conditions (MacIntyre 1971:196).

Once causal knowledge is introduced as a requirement for explanation, it is difficult to escape the drift from implied 'generalization' to the statement of necessary and sufficient conditions and the implicit or explicit use of general laws. Indeed, in this volume, Paul Cammack argues that '…there can be no universal laws, or explanation of democracy as a general phenomenon' (Cammack: 178). Yet only a few lines earlier he succinctly states the thesis underlying his analysis of the problems facing democratization in Latin America: 'In general, capitalism and democracy will be compatible only if majority rule produces governments committed to continued capitalist reproduction. Otherwise, something has to give' (Cammack: 178). The impossibly large field of 'democracy' is replaced by the merely enormous range of relations between capitalism and democracy. As with Moore, falsification is resisted only in so far as the claim approaches tautology. And his own and other contributions are punctuated by references to 'requirements', 'inabilities' and 'incapacities': the vocabulary of causal powers. Despite its retention of this language, the kind of conjunctural analysis favoured and claimed for its own by social-scientific realism cannot sustain realist aims.

Realism faces problems similar to those which it thinks must defeat empiricism. It avoids properly confronting its own version of this problem by offering an account of political explanation which is intrinsically based on a totality of explanation, and on the possibility of total success. It does not offer guidance on the central problem: how to deal with, or even recognize, failure and partial success. It offers only a schematic account of the 'shape' of final knowledge (e.g. Lloyd 1986:157, 307; Sayer 1984:215; Alford and Friedland 1985:411; Collier 1989:31–2).

CONCLUSION: HOW TO PROCEED?

The aims of 'empiricism' and 'realism' invoke unattainable standards, leaving us with little over which to exercise critical judgement. Faced with apparently competing accounts we can reflect on the character of their respective failure; we can look for bald errors of fact or logic; but apparently not much else. Yet our inclinations are probably more charitable.

It would be surprising if most of the variables strongly associated with democracy were not good indicators of at least a range of plausible theories of democratization. It would be astonishing if there were no connection or association between some of the factors impeding or facilitating the development of democracy and factors which, for instance, reflect the position of a polity within the international development of capitalist production. We are faced with identified conditions that almost certainly have something to do with most processes of democratization, and sequential narratives composed of factors which are very plausibly significant in a particular process of democratization.

Neither the strict aims nor the charitable intentions provide grounds for discrimination between different accounts: the only choice offered is between blanket rejection or acceptance. They fail to address the relevant differences. This failure arises from their inability to confront the ways in which certain types of commitment clearly and directly frame the accounts. These commitments produce differences which disputes about the appropriate level of 'scientific' explanation can only obliquely suggest.

General questions about democratization are unanswerable. The infinite variety of conditions, actually present or counterfactually posed, which might facilitate or impede such a process can produce only bewilderment. Some of this bewilderment must always remain, but it is sometimes just disregarded by a more or less arbitrary selection of conditions which seem implicated in the main cases considered. Bewilderment is more effectively reduced by imposing qualifications on the initial general question. Faced with such broad questions about 'how and why things happen' a common and sensible response might be to ask 'Compared to what?', and to go on to address the narrower qualified question. In practice,

both moves are closely linked. But the element of arbitrary selection is a tactic which allows no purchase for proper understanding or criticism. It is therefore the introduction of implicit qualifiers that must be pursued.

The weakness of empiricist approaches, in their most pure and general form (e.g. Lane and Ersson 1990), can now be reframed. Empiricism lacks qualifiers of any specific kind, being concerned with the bare question: 'Why does this process happen rather than not happen?'. When posed about complex processes in open systems, this sort of question is truly bewildering. The only qualifiers which are implicitly present are provided by the available empirical cases of non-democratization. Empiricist comparative analysis then asks: 'Why did this process occur rather than the range of other processes which have occurred in other cases?'; a question only slightly less bewildering since the qualifier is not explicitly stated and refers only to a narrow range of contingently occurrent alternatives.

Conjunctural analysis qualifies the general question more narrowly and explicitly. Because it cannot aim to account for democratization as a general process, its analysis takes the form of a sequential narrative. Like all historical accounts of actual events, this will depend on the application of principles of causal selection. Some of these will be introduced through the process of explicit comparison: 'Why does the process of democratization in France not follow the pattern of England or fall foul of the processes discernible in Germany?'. But qualifiers prior to and more active than these are *also* at work.

The principles which may produce the qualifiers are various (see, for instance, Nagel 1961:582–92; Hilton 1988:14–24). Typically they invoke some idea of what is normal, usual, expected, or even preferred, against which some specific deviation is to be explained. Different accounts of democratization may appear to yield different answers chiefly because they add different qualifiers. These qualifiers are imposed by pre-theoretical commitments. As such, they are seldom explicitly stated and notoriously difficult to excavate. Yet they must play such a central role that some sustained attempt should be made to bring them to the surface. Here they are only offered as brief and tentative suggestions.

Moore, for instance, appears to rely on some general model of the forces driving modernization and their effects on perceptions of justice, rational forms of organization and exploitation. It is

this model which directs his attention to particular institutions and practices, allowing him to regard them as obstacles to democratization and to select the events surrounding their modification or removal as crucial. Similarly, Marxism does not offer 'a consistent comparative perspective' just in the sense of its possible application to a range of actual cases. It implicitly depends on comparison between these cases and some 'feasible alternative' where 'submission and subjection to the bourgeoisie' is not perpetuated through the reformist struggles of liberal democracy (see Cammack: 178–9). Again it is *this* qualifier which directs causal selection. At least a large slice of Marxist analysis is, not very surprisingly, concerned with the question 'What explains the ability of liberal democracy to resist moves towards radical alternatives?' rather than the general question 'What explains liberal democracy?'.

The various approaches to questions of democratization are often presented as if they were isolated from one another, easily classified, and facing quite different problems: each using quite different criteria of success and failure; each embodying its own ontological and epistemological commitments, and its own supposed source in 'basic values'. But although the significant differences touch on such matters, this is not the problem. It is not that one view makes a naive mistake about the subject matter or eschews theory. It is not that the alternative shrugs its shoulders at empirical evidence. Both of these views face essentially the same problems. Attention to actual empirical work bears this out, whereas attention to the meta-theoretical overviews sustains the caricatures. Beyond the common general problems, the differences between approaches arise principally through their attempts to address different questions.

Explanations of democratization are answers to questions which are much more restricted than they may first appear. No work can be properly appraised until the questions it addresses are made clear. Even when the more qualified questions are clearly identified, we may still be faced with such indeterminate answers that their relative worth defies any settled judgement for which consistently applied criteria can be offered. But we may also discover that the chief source of apparent disagreement lies in the different questions thought worth addressing. We must then turn directly to the reasons which might be offered for asking one question rather than another.

One attitude to this might be that many or all such questions are worth asking and that, contrary to appearance, different views are complementary rather than competing. But here, surely, appearance is a more reliable guide to the spirit of inquiry. All questions are *not* equally worth asking. And given finite resources, different questions *are* in competition, at least for our attention.

This leads directly to what are usually, and much too loosely, described as 'conflicting values'. In their relation to actual examples of empirical analysis these are seldom explored in any detail, being treated only as a sign which marks the end of the line of fruitful engagement, beyond which lie basic and incommensurable commitments too deep to be fathomed. But, before presuming that this will again bring us to a position where no meaningful debate is possible and no resolution of differences can be attained, we should recognize that any consistent elaboration of these, in support of a particular qualified question, will involve logical, epistemological and empirical considerations. Is the implicit Marxist qualifier offered as an ideal or practical baseline? If ideal, what set of values and interests can be provided in its support? If practical, under what conditions might it be realized, and what evidence can be produced to support this contention? Can the empiricist qualifiers, provided by the range of actual cases used in comparative analysis, be defended as non-arbitrary? Generally, is the displacement of the broad cognitive interest in 'explaining democratization' justified by criteria of relevance and by the production of questions which can more clearly be answered? These are matters which can only be settled in the course of detailed arguments between those concerned to pursue differently qualified questions. They cannot be settled simply by imputing some rough and general set of 'values' to an 'approach' (see Edwards 1992).

Addressed in this way, the recognition of 'value-dependence' becomes the beginning, rather than the end, of argument. Values must be clearly identified as commitments which protagonists are prepared to defend, and as commitments which give consistent support to the pursuit of particular qualified questions. Values should not be treated as the unelaborated source of ontological and epistemological precommitments. The connections which must be established between values and qualified questions provide critical leverage on an approach in requiring that reasons

be offered for asking particular questions. Thus we may impose a sharper focus on existing disagreements, get a better picture of what the arguments are about, and open up the possibility of their resolution. The relative, though still insufficient, transparency of underlying values in some realist accounts is their chief virtue. Questions are more clearly and narrowly qualified, and the basis for these qualifications is more clearly apparent.

Critical examination of accounts of democratization in the context of their qualifiers offers no easy solution to the problems of causal analysis. It remains necessary to test for the efficacy of hypothesized causal mechanisms in open systems. Analysis is brought down to more specific questions of more manageable proportions, yet still involves big causes, conjunctions and comparisons. But, most importantly, it enables us to get to grips with the questions actually being posed, with the reasons for posing them, and with their possible relevance for other questions. In doing so, it may at least succeed in distinguishing cases of disagreement about actual processes of democratization from cases where disagreement is really about the sorts of questions best addressed. Beyond this, it may encourage more direct and fruitful criticism of the questions themselves.

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Part II

States of democracy

Chapter 5

The painful return to normality

Ghita Ionescu

Could, or even should, present-day political leaders, let alone political scientists, try to predict the consequences of present developments? Yes, of course they should in so far as 'governing is foretelling' *(gouverner c'est prévoir)*. And, of course, they could do so if, after they have tried to put the consequences of the past in the right order of priorities, they could then try to discern the ways which the red thread of consequentiality will follow in the future.

This was already difficult and, indeed, it was seldom achieved even in past political periods. Since not everything could be known of the happenings on this planet, forecasts were based on a maze of ignorance—and even what was known was assessed 'from inside-out, i.e. in terms of national or local interest. Now the knowledge of the world is 'globalized'—and everything that happens in the world visibly forms a circular chain of reactions, an active circumambience of consequences of consequences. Forecasting has become easier both for meteorologists and for political analysts.

The recent political past has so abounded in significant historical events, developments and phases that it has rapidly come to seem remote. However, it appears that the end of the 'cold war' is generally considered as the crucial date which separates the recent past from the new present.

'The post-cold war' is now as current an expression of historical demarcation as 'between the wars' was for the period 1918–39. This periodization, to use a professional expression of the historians, is justified especially in terms of political psychology. The moral relaxation of countless human beings, especially of those from the USA, Western Europe and the whole of the former

Soviet empire, which was produced by that empire's collapse (and the sudden change in political temperature it caused) has led the human beings of this present generation to consider and proclaim 'the end of the new cold war' as the Great Divide. More generally this Great Divide has had the deeper significance of a return to normality for those human beings who, unlike those of the free world, had lived, in any normal sense of the word, in the great jail of the monolithic state. For them the return to normality was, and still is, as blinding as for the prisoner emerging from the cave. They are now going through a long test of mental and moral rehabilitation—as we shall see later.

The idea that the end of the cold war was the beginning of all other developments is, however, inexact and shortsighted. For that event was itself the consequence of many other causes.

WHO KILLED THE USSR?

There are three principal 'who done it' theories to explain the mysteriously precipitated death of the otherwise frighteningly powerful USSR. Two of these theories point to different suspects. The third mixes them together—but still unsatisfactorily.

In the first, the prime suspects are Ronald Reagan and his junior accomplice and successor George Bush. Although officially they both expressed regret and sent condolences at the consecutive stages of the agony of the USSR, the two suspects liked to describe how they had prepared and perpetrated that long assassination. Moreover, they liked to be lauded for it, with a tinge of jealousy between Reagan, who claims to have wounded it mortally, and Bush who reminds us that the final *coup de grâce* is what matters. Reagan said in essence: 'We knew that the USSR was in reality frailer than it looked. So I reproduced, in my artistic imagination, the star-wars of the cinema and hurried the preparation of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). This meant challenging the already overstretched technological and financial capabilities of the USSR, to limits when even the marshals, generals, strategists and financiers of the formidable military-industrial complex had to cry, most appropriately, in both senses: PAX!' Bush and his foreign minister Baker, a much more important accomplice in the perpetration of that act than is generally realized, accept the Reagan claims but argue that what mattered was to push Gorbachev first gently down the precipice. Once Gorbachev had

fallen Yeltsin too was pushed down, until the point of historical irremediability was actually reached, and the formal death-certificate of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) was duly signed. This required, Bush and Baker would say, much greater subtlety than in the previous game of exhaustion by escalation.

In the second theory, shared especially by the true leftists of the world, the suspect is Gorbachev. The leftists cannot, in their heart, accept that the USSR, the first embodiment of the superb Marxist-Leninist scheme for human equality, could actually be *defeated*, even if by a criminal act, i.e. from outside and by adversaries—and, moreover, by capitalists! No, they say the USSR was poisoned from within with a poison which slowed down its movements and progressively paralysed its limbs—while it was still fighting so successfully the capitalist rival. Only after Gorbachev had instilled in the robust USSR his mixture of glasnost, perestroika, democracy and free market, and other such lethal poisons had infected its bloodstream did the good giant, thus weakened, tumble and die due to internal causes. But while Gorbachev hesitated at the end, Yeltsin finally killed both the USSR and the party. The body is dead but the soul of Marxism-Leninism will transmigrate, concludes this second theory.

The third theory combines the other two. 'Was Gorbachev a CIA agent?' is a question frequently asked now in communist and leftist circles in the CIS and abroad. But this version also recognizes that the giant had feet of clay and was bound to fall. Whether by the final American punch, or by the slow putrefaction of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine precipitated by Gorbachev's new re-interpretation, does not, in this theory, matter so much. The inevitability of the collapse of Marxism-Leninism and of its states (only the forlorn hope of a USSR military victory could have changed the fatal course and that was recognized to be inconceivable) was the cold conclusion of the third theory which is, obviously, nearest to the truth. The USSR would have died in any case, with or without being pushed, because it was the embodiment of the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist accumulation of theoretical and practical incongruities and of moral horrors.

But that does not mean that the theory is right in the way that it lists the priorities of the macro-causes which led also to the actual destruction of the USSR. The opening for the first time ever by Gorbachev of the glasnost window which brought light and

fresh air into the suffocating cave and which under Yeltsin let in the final hurricane, was undoubtedly the last moment in the passing of the USSR. But in reality Gorbachev's gesture was a consequence of the full admission by the high echelons of all the USSR apparats—military, scientific, financial and political—that not only was further rivalry with the West impossible, especially with the new American weaponry and permanent economic superiority, but that the survival of the already decomposing monster was also impossible.

For recognition by the apparat of this defeat and indeed of the entire victory of the Western democracies over the Marxist-Leninist dictatorship, was itself the political consequence of the technological-electronic revolution which had already taken place in the West. This revolution was, moreover, favourable to the West, because only in the 'capitalist' world was there sufficient freedom and truth and indeed capital to enable science to take such adventurous courses. Overall freedom, from that of the market to that of opinion and its clashes, was the irresistible advantage of the West. By contrast the electronic revolution hit the USSR not only in the financial, military and technical fields; it also destroyed through the speed of the new means of transmission of information and through the satellites circling the globe like watchmen, its deadly secrecy and all the kinds of sinister 'walls' behind which it felt secure. For three-quarters of a century the absolutist state of the USSR had resisted from behind these concentric 'walls' the pressures from without and from within. Many other absolutist states had achieved similar performances in previous history, as was demonstrated with admiration by Marxist historians. But this was no longer possible when faced with the speed of motion of the information revolution, which relativized all power even in the USSR, the most absolutist state ever imagined in history.

It is at this point (having by necessity considerably oversimplified a complex explanation) that the cold war ended, and the post-cold war started. It must also be added that the very fall of the 'walls' of the USSR subsequently played a last part in helping to bring about overall interdependence. For, once those obstructions had fallen, geographic 'globalization' was achieved. The whole world was now open, the circumambience of interdependence was complete. A new kind of era of peace was dawning.

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES: FROM 'NO MORE WORLD WARS' TO 'NON-ZERO SUM GAMES'

As the title of this section indicates, the view of the future must be separated into two, possibly quite contrasting, prospects: the immediate future, which is difficult to see because of the flames kindled by the great winds of history on old nationalistic embers and the unsettled dust of the crumbled ideological and political constructions; and the long term. In the long-term future, with which we start, it seems probable that the world will have to bow to interdependence and will find in it the approximations of *peace,* as during the cold war it played with the approximations of war. Elsewhere[1] I first of all characterized these approximations of peace as the 'no-more-world-wars' era; but they could be redefined more precisely as 'non-zero sum games'. What I mean is as follows.

The era of the cold war (fifty years of it!) came to an end with the long-expected collapse of the communist—to be more precise Marxist-Leninist—world and of its former controlling brain, the USSR. Since the end of the cold war, it has generally been hoped and believed that the event marked the return of the rest of humankind to Western freedom, i.e. to the macro-economic normality of the world market, the political normality of democracy, and the usual normality of daily individual lives—and deaths.

Also, as has already been indicated, with the fall of the last bastion of systematic autarchy and dictatorship, the geopolitical and, even more, the economic and commercial and financial globalization of the whole world was achieved. The whole planet is now surrounded by a circular *perpetuum mobile* of interdependence, which transnationalizes most human activities. A new era of positive reconstruction in a global world perspective, somewhat reminiscent of the birth of the United Nations in 1945, has begun.

What, at the outset, was less fully recognized was the specific way in which the new era (for possibly hundreds of years to come) was going to be different from the previous ones. It was not the end of history, as Professor Fukuyama tried to put it, but on the contrary it was rather the beginning of something new. What followed the end of the cold war was not peace or even Kant's 'perpetual peace'. It is instead and more significantly a NO-

MORE-WORLD-WARS ERA. Why this negative name? Why not peace? For three reasons.

The first is that peace can be of many kinds: local or international, bilateral or multilateral, temporary or permanent. But here we are speaking of something else. Here we are speaking of the practical improbability from now on of hot or cold world wars, i.e. of wars in which the globe is divided into two hostile camps. But, although for almost fifty years the world has lived without great hot wars, the cold war was punctuated by jaw-jaw crises and by a sense of imminent conflict. The cold war was in this sense, and for all intents and purposes, a war. It kept modern weaponry in a state of constant escalation, and maintained the mental preoccupations of the peoples and the leaders of the free world in a constant state of tension and vigilance. This was more war than peace. The specific peace benefit after the end of the cold war lies in more than the important reduction of oppressive nuclear budgets. It lies far more in the lifting of the fear and tension in which mankind was held for half a century, and in the return of human beings to the normality of human life and condition, and to a spirit of necessary cooperation. The only exception was in the former Soviet bloc, where after long decades of totalitarian constraints people had, as we shall see later, greater difficulty in adapting themselves to the new situations.

Second, together with the end of the cold war, there also occurred the end of what was called in international language a strategic bi-polarity but which was above all an *ideological bi-polarity*. The democracies have no ideology. Freedom, the principle upon whch they are based, is not ideologically but morally and legally definable. But when faced with the strongly dogmatic and monolithically disciplined Marxist-Leninist ideology, or in the Second World War with fascist ideology, the defence of freedom also took on, in opposition, the fervour of a 'cause'. Now, when Marxist-Leninist ideology has disappeared, parties have absolutely reneged on their ideology, and when the end of ideology, long heralded by Raymond Aron, Daniel Bell and Edward Shils, is a most evident fact, bi-polarity, which was caused by and based on ideology, has also disappeared.

As a result, in international terms, bi-polarity is now being replaced by a *de facto* multi-polarity, to be followed, it is to be hoped, by the creation of the *de jure* international organization which will act as a guardian of the peace. It is true that after the

end of the cold war enthusiastic American commentators proclaimed the coming of uni-polarity, while pessimistic American commentators asked the US government to withdraw from world business and concentrate on the happiness of its continental peoples. But both, I am sorry to say, were wrong for the same reason: the USA may be a 'primus-inter-pares' because of its uniquely simultaneous advance on the military, economic and scientific-technological fronts. But nevertheless it is a *pare*, a peer among other peers, even if now the most prominent one, and the USA is a principal link, but nevertheless a link, in the chain of causality of interdependence. In that chain, the USA cannot be a uni-polar power; but neither can it be a forgotten province of isolationism. On the contrary because it is the central link in the chain of interdependence, the US while trying to improve even more the functioning of its internal federal affairs will still, by necessity, have to maintain its high authority in the world.

The same should also be true of the European Community, which is not allowed (because of its economic relations with the rest of the world) to forget its new role in world affairs, political and economic. Like the USA, but without the federal consistency of the USA, the EC of the twelve plays a major part in the whole process of world-interdependence. Therefore, the fact that it concentrates on improving and enlarging internally its own constituency does not mean that it can shelter itself behind isolationist and protectionist attitudes.

A third reason for reluctance to use the word 'peace' in describing our era is that, *peaces* are usually confirmed or initiated by a treaty: from the treaty of Westphalia to the Treaty of Versailles, to the Treaties of Paris. The cold war did not require a treaty (and neither reparations or judgements, of which later). This is why, I repeat, we find ourselves now in a situation best defined as the beginning of an era of absence of 'Superpowers' conflicts and thus of world wars. That era will last until and unless modern science and technology can produce in the future some other unforeseeable changes in space or in the surrounding universe. But excluding the possibility of some such unforeseeable confrontations between spatial or stellar powers—which are better left to science fiction—it is difficult to see how there can be for a long time another *world war on earth*. There are even now, and there will be plenty more in the future, local or regional wars; as

we have seen in the exceptionally savage and, from a European point of view, tragic self-dismemberment of post-communist Yugoslavia, or in Armenia, Georgia and Somalia. But none of them, not even the very central European war in the former Yugoslavia, will inflame the whole world again and divide it into two pro- and contra-belligerent camps.

To imagine that some Islamic powers would like to launch a world *jihad* against the democracies is not impossible—but the post-cold war unity demonstrated against Iraq shows what would be the fate of any such folly. Or, similarly, to visualize an alliance between Japan and China with anti-Western aggressive aims is almost inconceivable, first because of the historical hostility between the two powers, and second because it goes against the grain of the efforts of both countries to be active in the world market.

Peace and its corollary, the free circulation of goods, persons and ideas are now *imposed* by interdependence and its devices. In the case of the local and localizable wars, or 'turbulences', an international task force from NATO, or the WEU or from any other subsidiary organization (like the USA-UK-France task forces in Iraq) if properly equipped and internationally authorized, should try to put an end to, or in any case circumscribe, the conflicts. The rest of the world will have to cope with the, by now, universal plague of refugees. Such new 'local wars' are somehow comparable to the fires in oil wells or indeed in oil fields. It takes a long time to extinguish them, or indeed to let them burn out by themselves. But the surrounding world, although noticing with horror the flames, explosions and human accidents was not existentially affected by them. The rest of the interdependent world will continue to learn how to practice non-zero sum games.[2]

Indeed, by taking only three examples it can be seen that the modern world already plays our non-zero sum games of interdependence—whether it likes it or not.

One of the non-zero sum rules imposed by interdependence is that of '*dissociating*' economic activities (by which is meant the separation of the interests of firms, of all kinds: economic, commercial, private or public) from the by now symbolic dependence on the affairs of the state in which they happen to be located. This is now even more the case given that the states, great or small, are increasingly less able to support, financially and

technically, their 'national' firms, including their 'champion' enterprises. One of the most startling instances of this separation by necessity, and of the consequent transnational association, was the recent case of the world electronics industry. On 13 July 1992 Toshiba, IBM and Siemens (the champion Japanese, American and German electronics firms) announced that they will henceforward give up 'natural competition' and in 'a turning point for the world's electronics industry' join together all their forces (and those which they derive from the insufficient resources of their respective 'state' powers) in order to be able to produce the new generation of advanced memory chips, the 'brains' of today's computers.[3] The word 'brains' has here a double connotation: direct, as the essential piece in the machines which revolutionized human science and ways of thinking; and symbolical, as the pivot of artificial intelligence which gives to those who possess it a leading position in the process of policy-making in the age of interdependence.

A second move in the game is illustrated by the way in which the United States, Canada and Mexico have formed one continental region called NAFTA. The obvious purpose of this union is to give to all three states a new common strength against the dangers of interdependence and notably of the possible competition with the European single market. But, because further regionalization goes against the grain of interdependence, both the USA and the EC tried hard to conclude in 1992 the next round of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). The motive is that this 'agreement' would give legal force to the world-wide liberalization of trade and economy which has actually occurred. If not concluded, the old trade war would again show its ugly head with all its perilous consequences.

A final example is of course the European Community which, in spite of its problematic advance, can certainly not go backward—as sentimental patriots would still wish. The twelve formerly 'sovereign states' (whatever that expression means after the information revolution) will continue their possibly painful double integration: first into the region of Europe, and then as one of the six, seven or possibly eight geo-economic regions of the world of interdependence—their exact number depending very much on the success of Russia in maintaining and organizing the possible CIS region. But with this we come to the final part of our enquiry.

SHORT-TERM CONSEQUENCES: LIBERALIZATION RATHER THAN DEMOCRATIZATION?

Democratization is a portmanteau expression which can mean many things, including some aspects of what is happening now in the internal political life of the successor states of the Soviet empire. Its general, indeed journalistic, meaning as the political developments and reorganization following the liberation of a population from under a brutal dictatorship, has been applied to the political effects on the populations of the events in the former Soviet bloc since 1989.

For several negative and positive reasons, I have been inclined to think that the term 'liberalization' is more appropriate when speaking of these early political changes. The negative reasons, i.e. why 'democratization' should still be heavily qualified when used in this connection, derive from the role played by the 'demos' in the past and present events in Eastern Europe. Neither the so-called 'revolution' nor the present forms of government in the fifteen CIS states and in the eight former 'satellites' would satisfy Lincoln as having been *of* the people and made *by* and *for* 'the people'. They were and are all made 'from above', when the walls of the Kremlin were blown out by the information revolution and its leaders tried to save their skins. The peoples were certainly happy to see the fall of tyranny—but in the circumstances they were an enthusiastic choir accompanying with their clamours the collapse of the Kremlin and all the local Kremlins.

In other and more precise words, although all these countries have by now more or less freely-elected parliaments, it would be a bold political scientist who would affirm that the present governments are 'representative of' and 'responsible to' the people. And neither can Aristotle's stricter definition of democracy as the government of the poor be applied, in so far as for mega-economic reasons the peoples of most of those countries (with the exception of the East Germans), suffer more from high prices and post-privatization unemployment now than they did under the old tyranny. They are told, from abroad and from above, that they must suffer for their freedom, but that if they endure now, future generations will be grateful to them.

By contrast, the concept of *liberalization* (and with this we come to the positive reasons) is highly applicable to these situations and

to the effects they have had on the peoples involved. For what has really and definitely occurred has been the lifting of the various censorships. Above all the freedom of information and of personal security, appositely called 'glasnost', was the first and most percepibly important benefit they obtained from the 'revolution': to be free to hear and say everything you want without immediately being 'legally' molested was indeed a miracle—as were also: being 'free' to pray to the God of your religion; or to travel when and where you want; or to read books and publications unheard of before; or indeed to bask in eroticism and pornography. These were the initial and most important 'liberalizations'.

But instead of continuing on their ways to internal changes the peoples of the USSR, of Yugoslavia and of Czechoslovakia opted for another *liberalization*—that of the 'national liberation' of their lands and peoples. Fifteen 'sovereign states' currently form the CIS, two comprise the former Czechoslovakia and it will take some time before it will be known, after the blood bath, how many more 'sovereign states' will emerge after Croatia and Slovenia from the former Yugoslavia. The respective national problems attracted the attention of the 'peoples' much more than did their own condition. For, Janus-faced, not only did those peoples look joyfully inward to the proclamation of the autonomy of the fatherland—but they also found ample reasons to fight against their rival neighbours. The extreme example was provided by the Serbs, determined to fight on all sides. Federalists might think that the territorial situation thus created with a great number of small (and probably unviable) units requires a large transnational organization of cooperation, to secure peace between, and the viability of, those units. But such ideal solutions will remain for an unforeseeable time still in the dreams of the idealists. For the time being, the appetite for further national liberations, or indeed expansion, is the major 'popular' concern.

To be fair, the whole nationalistic movement had started with German unification. And also, to be fair, it is difficult to see how the Berlin Wall could still separate the two halves of the same people. But future historians and especially German historians will probably look with greater attention to the rebirth of nationalism in the very centre of Europe and how it started with the German unification. There is no question that the pressure on both German peoples for this reunion into one people was

irresistible. But could it not have been more gradual, nuanced and slower in becoming again as it '*eigentlich*' was?

In terms of global interdependence, as the term is employed in this essay, Germany is now not only at the centre of Europe, geopolitically and economically, but also at the centre of the Eurasian landmass of which Western Europe is, to quote Paul Valéry, its 'cap'. Her responsibilities concern as much the European Community as the dissolved Soviet empire in East Europe. If the rapid and costly unification was bound to stir inflation, was the new Germany, unlike the old FDR, sufficiently concerned for the economies of the other member states of the European Community?

To make matters worse, the nationalistic influence was soon felt afterwards (but in the other direction: *for* separation and *against* unification) also in Slovenia, Bosnia, Slovakia and Croatia whose autonomy and statehood were soon recognized, as with German unification, by the European Community. Yet, possibly, the historians will argue, subtle provisional solutions might have emerged if discussions within the former Yugoslav framework could have been given more time. When the red nationalistic thread arrived in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a notorious medley of nationalities, races and religions, all hell broke loose.

This term *liberalization* is also highly appropriate to the economic problems of those countries which are expected, indeed required, to join the global trade-market and therefore to replace their former monolithic economies with new liberal structures. Liberalism, the economic and political Siamese twins going under that name, was the hard concept the peoples had to learn. 'Free market' was not only an economic command of the West; it had to be associated with 'political freedom'. It is here that the difference between democratization and liberalization appears more clearly and realistically. Ever since Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality* it has been said that there can be two forms of democracy: economic democracy, as explained by Marx, and political democracy, as explained by Tocqueville. The mixed expression of 'socialist market' remains a contradiction in terms, and the political egalitarianism of democracy is only a surrogate for the real egalitarianism sought by the poor of capitalist society. The authentic slogan of liberalism was Guizot's exhortation: '*enrichissez-vous!*', echoed recently also in Conservative parties. On the other hand, as far as the post-communist world is concerned,

the 'peoples' who had lived under the Marxist-Leninist regimes had undergone at their, and their children's, cost, the experiences of 'communist egalitarianism' and of 'economic democracy'. Like the word *party* (as we shall see) the word 'democracy', and especially in its association with 'democratic centralism', frightened and disgusted the citizens.

Finally, 'liberalization' had other more pleasant and more important effects. It was natural, for instance, that the human beings kept under the most Tartuffian system of ideological hypocrisy—political, ideological and moral—would want to achieve spiritual, intellectual and moral liberalization. Spiritually, the return to the Churches (Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant), secret and timid under the tyrants, became now demonstratively public. Intellectually, having thrown away long since the compulsory earphones of the Marxist-Leninist Agitprop, the intellectuals and the young manifested a truly insatiable desire to catch up with their reading and to renew, or open direct contacts with, Western culture.

Last, but not least, morally too liberation was hastily achieved. The Western contagion, of intense libertinism soon spread publicly. Hidden up to then, sexual freedoms of all kinds now manifested themselves openly, on the background of pop and rock, pot and drink and alas, but inevitably, Ecstasy and Aids. By contrast, the institutionalized 'bureaucratic' prostitution, so characteristic of the communist 'elites', began to decline statistically. So, while the revolution of liberalization—from the personal to the national, to its moral varieties—was much more advanced in the post-communist world, political democratization was slower.

With this we come to the attitude of the peoples of the CIS and the other post-communist countries toward politics in general. For several reasons, from which we shall select only the most characteristic, the populations of the post-communist countries showed a strange anti-political attitude, both in those countries which had competitive politics—indeed, in some cases parliamentary party politics—before the communist dictatorship as well as in the countries of the Soviet (formerly Tsarist) empire.

One reason, more evident in those countries with ethnic problems, is the clear preference for solidary national fights against foreigners and for the recovery of their sovereignty and national rights. Political parties, where there were any, were

indistinguishably united in this supreme effort. In most of the embattled CIS, the list of which does not need to be repeated here, in the Baltic States, in Czechoslovakia and, of course, in Yugoslavia, party-political distinctions were effaced by the nationalistic passion. They still are.

A second reason was the scepticism about the genuine economic effectiveness of the parliaments and of their representative governments. Even in countries where there were organized political parties (as in Poland, Hungary, the Baltic States and to a lesser degree in Romania and Bulgaria) it is the economic problems which are felt to be the real ones, and for the solutions to which parliaments and their parties were evidently perceived to be useless.

The economic situation of those capital-starved countries (part of the financial capital being still in the hands of the now banned communist parties) is aggravated by the need to adjust to the free market and leads the former East European countries to expect the West both to teach them the arts of the market and to pay their expenses until they are in a position to earn anything by themselves. The West has achieved much—but it has found the exercise increasingly difficult, especially as the pupils do not show sufficient talent. With the exception of the Czechs who can be expected to benefit economically from the separation from the backward Slovakia (once again an independent state as it was under Hitler), the rest of the East European countries have been making depressingly little progress in the world market. Instead they have been increasing their indebtedness and have been coming to feel that they have been discriminated against—hence also the volatility of their party politics. The patience and the generosity of the EC—and her association agreements—will continue to be required.

And then there is the CIS and its fifteen supplicants—headed by the big Russia, the most pressing. 'There is not to be any Marshall Plan for the former Soviets. In its absence credit and trade will probably be the US's most important contribution', confirmed *The Washington Post* (30 August 1992). But Russia has already a foreign debt of £74 billion and the International Monetary Fund (its principal interlocutor in such matters) has *promised*, if rather vaguely, to lend it another £24 billion. Is that enough? Out of that possibly illusory sum the IMF has recently for the first time coughed up £1 billion. Russia has also received

£600 million from the World Bank and £600 million from Japan (for exports guaranteed to Japan). Obviously, although the Russian people seem to suffer with the admirable endurance we learned to know from Tolstoy, all the sacrifices asked from them are, according to the former prime minister Mr Gaidar, essential to credit: 'Any form of credit is only a prop for our domestic policy. If our internal policy is irresponsible these props won't help us.'

A third source of popular scepticism about politics lies in the issues which separated, or should separate, the parliamentary parties. These are far from clear cut. This could be explained in part by the lack of connection between parties and economic interests or social classes and groups. With the exception of Poland, where Solidarity was a party born out of the trade unions, in the other countries the effacement of the civil society by the monolithic one-party state had prevented not only the formation of working- and middle-class organizations, but even of class solidarity. The left-right instinctive distinction was blurred in a manner likely to remain for a long time to come—the communists having become the reactionary right. Hence a certain lack of interest in politics: in Hungary where democratization is most advanced, while the first elections recorded an electoral turnout of 65 per cent, the second was only of 45 per cent of the electorate. Instead, there followed, as has already been mentioned, a massive return to the Churches (Catholic or Orthodox) in the wake of which the latter renewed their old spiritual leadership and popular confidence. Finally, new 'movements', mostly of academic-intellectual origins, like the Czechoslovak forum, the Hungarian Dialogus, or the Romanian Civic Alliance, because they were led by new and young faces, and because they asked for 'administrative purification', gained spontaneous support.

Fourth, and this may be the most important reason, the party political apathy has its roots in popular psychology even, it could be said, in the political subconscious of those peoples. The two great symptons of this collective psychological phenomenon are, on the one hand, the subconscious disgust at political terminology and, on the other, and even deeper and vaster, the feeling amongst most present-day 'citizens' that they are still 'glued' in the past—exception being made, of course, for the intransigent 'oppositionists' and 'refuzniks' so brave under the tyranny.

But, beyond that, the people of the former Soviet empire have a peculiar twist of political psychology which has led them to revolt against certain political expressions used by the predominantly political regime of the communists. Even when they are carefully explained as being pluralist, competitive notions, the expressions: 'political parties', 'parliament' (seen for years in big halls filled with wax figures installed in rows of plushy seats applauding mechanically) or even 'democracy' (widely used in Marxist-Leninist Agitprop prose for 'democratic centralism') or, as we have seen, 'economic democracy', gave those peoples, to use a Sartrean metaphor, a psychological 'nausea'.

In Russia attempts by Shevardnadze, Yeltsin and Gorbachev to form new Russian political parties were received with lukewarm interest. As for the parliaments themselves, specially the Russian and the Czechoslovak, although they occasioned some sanguine debates, their evident lack of policy-orientation, let alone policy-making power, was only too evident. Parliaments voted for the dissolution of great (USSR) and small (Czechoslovakia) republics, for inevitably severe economic policies of 'free' high prices, and for economic restrictions of all kinds, yet always fearing at the same time that they could be going too far, thus causing popular explosions. Some countries like Hungary, the former Czechoslovakia and the Baltic States are obviously more advanced. But the size of the economic clouds, coupled with parliamentary impotence, must cast serious doubts about the rapid progress of democratization in the Eastern European countries.

Of course, nor are all Western democratic countries now models of order and stability. Italy, for instance, has been deeply immersed in an economic and political vacuum, filled only by the obvious domination of the 'judges'. Yet the great difference in the former communist systems is the lack of power of the civil society: the absence of socio-economic and cultural organizations in the communist countries and the lack of financial capital, which could sustain a regime in case of political failure. Instead, paradoxically, what helped to hold together the communist regimes, apart from terror, was corruption. This is also, as we shall see, one of the main causes of the psychological reluctance of the present generation of citizens to engage in open political struggles.

During the totalitarian dictatorships a sub-system emerged through which the abnormally dichotomic societies—a handful of oppressors versus the mass of oppressed—developed another form of coherence. This was the sub-system of corruption. To be sure, corruption has played an important political role which has been recognized throughout political history: from Greece and Rome to some of today's Latin American, Asian, African dictatorships; and, even if in a different fashion, effectively too in many democracies. But never did corruption achieve systemic totality as in the totalitarian systems: fascist and communist—precisely because they were 'systems'. And indeed the highest level of corruption was recorded in countries where the Marxist-Leninist 'system' was at its strongest: the USSR, East Germany, Romania or Albania.

There are three metaphorical ways to describe how the sub-system of corruption worked as a cohesive factor in the Marxist-Leninist system. One is to describe it as a lubricant. The formidable wheels and 'transmission belts' of the dictatorial systems worked a little smoother when oiled by dirty money. A second metaphorical description is that of a mute network of communication: the money-insatiable tyrants still needed more and were eager to sell the services and goods of the restrictive state to those starved by the lack of rights and of food. These furtive encounters, between the new *Misérables* and the officials of all sorts and levels—the canteen manager or the Politburo member—created an ambience of familiarity and provided the payers with a second way of life, with the accent on 'life'.

But the third metaphor is probably the most adequate: corruption was a glue which dirtied everybody but, on the other hand, stuck people together, thus giving a cohesion of complicity, but nevertheless a cohesion which attenuated the sharp mechanisms of terror on which the dictatorship was essentially based.

The glue of corruption stuck fast together people who needed to earn their living, and who, therefore, had from school been forced to become spies, and to give absolute 'loyalty' to the 'fatherland' and to the 'party'. Those with official careers in the *nomenklatura* and the party were, beyond any doubt, total servants of the totalitarian state. They knowingly sacrificed, as Lenin had asked, family and friends for the sake of *partinost*—and they went regularly to the respective units of the 'security' to confess

everything they knew about themselves and about everybody they knew. Everybody was a spy and knew that everybody else was a spy.

Melvin Laski, in a 'Letter from Berlin',[4] gives a scabrous description of the impossibility of finding East German (now German) private, let alone official, persons who did not spy for the STASI. He also quotes official sources according to which members of the Hungarian secret police were writing great bulks of the Hungarian Samizdat.

For those who fell in the glue of the regime before the liberation, living now in a post-communist society is like the discovery in Sartre's *Huis Clos* that 'hell is other people'. Everybody knows that others know. A sense of remorse unites and at the same time separates the former sticky flies of the Marxist-Leninist glue. They are happy that their countries were liberated—but can they liberate themselves from the past?

Gorbachev's greatest trick was to make both the Western free world, and the peoples whom he ruled, believe that everything could and would be solved by transition, without revolutions, judicial enquiries and punishments. And in reality he avoided any kind of Nuremberg Trials for the USSR and the other communist countries. Yet a few major exemplary punishments could have purified the political atmosphere. Instead only Ceausescu was killed (by other communists so as to save their skins); Zhivkov of Bulgaria got five years in prison, and in East Germany the half-dead Honecker was arrested and later released; whilst in Russia herself a movement of public opinion developed in favour of liberating 'the Putschists'. It was left to the mayor of Moscow, Mr Luzhkov, to insist that they should be judged, declaring that, 'We have a responsibility to history. If we want to live in a democratic system they must be severely punished.'[5]

The consequences of the political 'glue' are even more shockingly revealed now in the economic glue. The 'free market' being now the rule, it encompassed, morally and economically, the black market. But the free market means high prices and requires more money, whereas, on the contrary, what the new economic policy requires is severe restraint. Given the contrast the old glue flows now in the new market more than ever before.

There are, apart from the official foreign loans and commercial transactions, two sources of money and both sources are morally doubtful. Nationals who have money are either former trafficants

and crooks in the old regime, usually active in, or former officials of, the party and police who enriched themselves personally. Moreover, as is increasingly being argued, there are also former trusted officials who have received a share of the capital of those two institutions—party and security—to keep, and fructify it, until such days when it will be used for the needs of those, now transformed, organizations. Nobody is more hated in the new 'free market' society than the mysterious millionaires who are buying, with large quantities of unexplained cash, 'privatized' enterprises, shops, banks, or radio and TV chains and press concerns. Russian sociologists say ironically that the country has entered now the 'era of mafiosi-bourgeoisie'.

The second source of money is the foreigners—foreign institutions and foreign individuals. The money of the industrial firms and banks is of course direct capitalist money emanating from their own countries. But in the capital-starved phase of economic transition of the countries, there appear also many strange foreign individuals (Robert Maxwell was very active) who find it sometimes much too easy to make profits and especially to gain power. A murmur of national protest can be heard now in the East European countries and in Russia too, against being 'bought over' by such unknown capitalists. But that genuine murmur should not be confused with the appalling demagoguery of the so-called 'patriotic' but, in reality, xenophobic and anti-semitic movements, more often than not orchestrated by the clandestine former communist parties.

CONCLUSION

The period of liberalization, with its advantages and disadvantages, is coming now to an end, having reached its economic, societal and intellectual goals. In the meantime a new generation of young judges, a new generation of dedicated administrators and economists, and a new generation of political leaders are gradually taking the reins of those countries. In the climate of peace in the 'no-more-world-wars era' of interdependence they could and, it is hoped, will undertake the necessary task of bringing their countries back to political democracy and to the world mainstream. To the extent to which the particularly rapid world-wide movements of interdependence, which also now agitate the globalized free world, render the

catching-up process even more difficult, both Russia and the new and old countries dominated by the USSR seem to be on the painful but not impossible return to normality.

NOTES

1   At a seminar of the IPSA Research Committee on European Unification held at the European Parliament, 1–3 June 1992.
2   It was, I think, Thomas Schelling who put in circulation the expression of 'non-zero sum games' (the zero sum games being those in which one player wins what the other loses, imperfect symmetry). Schelling described the expression as: 'These are the games in which though the element of conflict provides the dramatic interest, mutual dependence is part of the logical structure and demands some kind of collaboration or mutual accommodation—tacit, if not explicit— even if only in the avoidance of mutual disaster'. (See T.Schelling *The Strategy of Conflict,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963, pp. 83–4.) Indeed, later on, trying to perfect his own terminology he thought that *coordination game* was a better, albeit almost synonymous, term than 'non-zero sum game' because it indicated more clearly 'the perfect sharing of interests'.

      To translate Schelling's strategic language into the language of international political economy one should first replace the word 'conflict' with 'competition,' or, alternatively, refer to the 'conflict of interests' or even, in a more old-fashioned way, to 'national interests' and, secondly, link its meaning with that of the compulsory interdependence which constrains all players in the game to coordinate their 'activities' whatever they do or whether or not they know that they do.
3   'Chip diplomacy', in *The Economist,* 18 July 1992, pp. 71–2.
4   *Commentaire,* Summer 1992, Juillard, Paris.
5   In the *Financial Times,* 17 August 1992, p. 2.

Chapter 6

Voice, choice and loyalty: democratization in Eastern Europe

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It is hard to think of any one of the major questions concerning democracy and democratization that is not raised, in one way or another, by what is happening in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union at the time of writing.[1] History's turning-points are also its learning points. A new order is unfolding in Europe which is already straining our existing concepts and taxonomies. As we strain to discern the future, our analysis of a constantly shifting present necessarily raises questions about past assumptions, reminding us that the past, no less than the future, is a kaleidoscope that can be shaken to reveal surprising patterns. This chapter makes no forecasts for the future, but presents the process of change in Eastern Europe in a way that casts light back upon a communist past which yesterday seemed so familiar, but on which so much remains to be said.

The final collapse of the Russian empire at the close of the 1980s, and of the communist system which had assured an incongruous extension to its life after the fall of the Romanovs, will force a rethinking of almost every aspect of European political life. Coming as it did when a neo-conservative tide in Western Europe was challenging current thinking about the role of the state, the crisis encountered by one of the major strands of socialism raised more sharply than ever before the fundamental questions about socialism and democracy. Moreover, the implosion of communism in Eastern Europe has offered a quite exceptional laboratory for the political scientist in which to study a process of democratization in progress. What is on offer to him or her, be it said, is democratization as a process, rather than any new or confirmed model of democracy itself. Nothing guarantees that the process will remain on track to a final democratic destination. But

the process in the four cases to be treated here—Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria—is certainly under way. The fact that for West Europeans it is happening on their doorstep is of more than economic relevance, as the pages that follow should make clear.

To the extent that democracy is a matter of the relationship between the state and the individual, communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe provided, until its great unravelling from 1985 onwards, an extreme case of a devaluing of the individual and a corresponding exaggeration of state power. True, there was, in the Soviet Union's 'social-democratic' origins, in communism's continuing claims to represent a strand of socialist thought and practice, and indeed in the egalitarianism structure of social welfare that communist parties instituted, sufficient justification to treat communism as something distinct from other forms of authoritarian rule. But such justifications were easier to conduct in terms of socialism or welfare than of democracy. Stalinism represented socialism at the expense of democracy or, to paraphrase a prominent actor in the drama, socialism without a human face.

The unravelling once under way, the countries of communism went on to present a new paradigm, this time of democratization. The sensational nature of communism's collapse and the fact that it was occurring in countries that were geographically and to varying degrees culturally close to Western Europe has led to a tendency to see this democratization in self-fulfilling terms as democracy *tout court*. But such claims must be viewed with circumspection, for the very same reasons that distinguish communism from other cases of authoritarian rule which Europe has recently seen. 'Really existing socialism' was a distinct social form, involving a revolutionary reordering of social and economic relations (Konrad and Szelenyi 1978). Forty years was long enough for this system to be firmly set in place, and society acculturated to it. The eagerness with which a Russian yoke was cast off obscured the problems that undoing the communist system would necessarily involve. The jokes about its being easier to make fish soup out of an aquarium than an aquarium out of fish soup (and similar difficulties involving eggs and omelettes) contained more than a grain of truth.

To translate these metaphors in crude terms, ruling communist parties characteristically atomized society. With all autonomous

organization destroyed and replaced by numerous forms of organization sponsored by the party, society was deprived of an associative life through which the individual could articulate his or her needs, demands or merely opinions, and which could serve to aggregate these citizen demands on the system, mediate the demands of the state, and absorb the shocks of discontent. Undoing the communist system, in similarly crude terms, has been to a great extent a matter of re-creating such possibilities of association. In some cases, notably the Russian, it has been more a matter of creating than of re-creating them, and this distinction is obviously important for a comparative understanding of what is happening in the region as a whole.

To start a discussion of the process of regime change in Eastern Europe in these terms is to focus on the intermediate level between the poles of the individual citizen on the one hand and the state on the other. That indeed is the aim of this chapter. The process of democratization has involved, at root, a redefinition of what citizenship involves. To a certain extent we encounter below the individual citizen at grass-roots level as consumer, as producer and as political participant. But the main focus is on mediation between government and citizen, on the actual mechanisms that have embodied that mediation in the societies under discussion, and on the ways in which mediation in the public realm has been conceived.

The starting-point for this discussion will be the monopoly of power in the hands of the ruling party, the incompatibility between this monopoly—which may be considered the key characteristic of the communist system of government—with autonomous association, and the proactive way in which the party filled the void thus created with organization sponsored and controlled by itself. The treatment of this phenomenon offered here will cover not only Eastern Europe but the Soviet Union itself, since the latter was the source of the communist model of organization. The analysis will then address the changing configuration of political aggregation as this form of rule was first challenged by contestatory movements and then replaced by a constituted system of competitive politics in Eastern Europe.

An examination of these processes casts a new light on some familiar features of communist rule (for example the closed frontier), it throws up several points of interest in the relation between monopoly and regulation, and it highlights the function

of law in a move away from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* relationships which, it will be held, the process of change from democratic centralism to Western-style democracy has involved. It also reveals strong influences on the emerging scope of participation, and to an extent on its nature, exercised by the attraction of membership of a European community (and Community), and even more by quite striking intervention by international funding bodies.

In what follows some use is made of the terminology of systems theory. This is useful because it focuses on information flows, and one of the strongest hypotheses to explain the implosion of the communist system in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is that the very operation of the system closed off autonomous inputs of information, which brought about system failure. Rather more use is made of Hirschman's terminology of exit, voice and loyalty to draw parallels between economic and political behaviour (Hirschman 1970). It is Hirschman's terminology more than his argument that will be used, and it will be adapted to a purpose akin to his, but rendered different by being applied in the context of a shift from monopoly to a 'market' in the economy, political life and ideas. The terminology is thus used with apologies to Hirschman, rather than in strict application of his views.

THE COMMUNIST POWER MONOPOLY

An anatomy of the communist power monopoly has at its disposal a rich existing literature, refined by analysis of the events that have attended communism's fall. It reveals that the monopoly had four clear components.

First, extreme policies of autarky were reinforced by the closed frontier. There was to be no exit of manpower, no entry for ideas discrepant with those of the party, and the maximum possible elimination of uncertainties as a prerequisite for central planning. That is, economic isolation from the world economy was backed up by political isolation.

Second, the system of central command planning meant the elimination of choice from the economy. Third, this economic monopoly had a direct counterpart in a monopoly of political power which the ruling party exercised through its control of elite recruitment and communications. Through the 'leading role

of the party' voice was eliminated in politics, and privileged channels were put in place for the generation of loyalty to the system.

Finally, these economic and political mechanisms were supported by a very particular and all-encompassing view of the proper organization of society, which the party was well placed to put across whilst at the same time shutting out rival messages. The honorific term for this view of social organisation, which—monopoly *oblige*—was closely connected with the doctrine of the party's leading role, was democratic centralism. In the way in which democratic centralism has been presented in the Stalinist orthodoxy can be read an obsession with loyalty, and the atrophy of voice and choice. Loyalty to the organism—at first the party, later the state—was presented as a value transcending individual or group interests; its obverse—fractional activity—was seen as unhealthy and as dysfunctional (Waller 1981).[2]

In view of the concerns of this book, it must be pointed out that a distinction was normally preserved between democratic centralism and another term in the communist lexicon—socialist democracy. The distinction may appear arcane, but is best grasped by seeing democratic centralism as having its roots in debates (in both ruling and non-ruling communist parties) about relationships within the party, and about the correct role of the party in ensuring social development. There is therefore a very close relationship between the doctrine of the leading role of the party and the 'Leninist principle of democratic centralism'. In fact, in many presentations democratic centralism is simply defined in terms of the party's leading role (Lavrichev 1971).

Socialist democracy, on the other hand, is the term that has been used for the various and numerous channels of participation that ruling communist parties made available to the masses. Definitions of socialist democracy characteristically contained a strong economic component, and indeed the nationalization of the means of production, distribution and exchange was frequently presented as the principal element of socialist democracy and as its guarantor.

The economic component of socialist democracy involved also 'personal plans' through which the citizen as producer contributed to the common weal. In the political realm the individual participated through voting in elections (the high turnout for which is common knowledge), through work in the various soviet

and councils, and through the trade unions. When a particularly salient piece of legislation was projected, citizens were encouraged to attend meetings held to discuss it, and to contribute their comments as letters to the press. 'Socialist emulation' provided another form of socialist democracy, offering teams of workers the chance to outshine their fellows and to display a banner recording the fact. What all these forms of participation had in common was that they were organized and controlled by the ruling party, that they were used by the party to emphasize the collective nature of all legitimate political and economic endeavour, and that the party's monopoly of power excluded all possibility of autonomous organization.

Such was the nature of the communist power monopoly in the Soviet Union and in each individual country of the Soviet bloc. Participation in this system was a matter of economic and political activity to promote the social interest as defined by the party, and of expressing loyalty to the organism. Stakhanov and the voter for a single name placed on a ballot paper by the party were participating equally. All were required to show loyalty, and democracy and participation were defined accordingly. In elections (without choice) the voter was encouraged to 'vote so that the fatherland may prosper' and to demonstrate the 'unbreakable bond between the party and the people'. The latter participated without voice as citizens, without choice as consumers, and by demonstrating loyalty. Loyalty was part of the definition of participation. For this reason, and for others of an economic nature, there was strictly no exit. Only traitors left.

Why did this system fail? In Eastern Europe collapse was triggered by the Soviet Union's withdrawal of its support from the regimes; but in the Soviet Union itself the collapse can be claimed to have stemmed, at root, from two causes. The first was that the autarky of the system had to give way to an opening to the world market. This affected indirectly the question of democracy in numerous ways: the image of the Soviet and East European governments became important (the former more than the latter, since its behaviour in Eastern Europe was part of its problem of image); this affected policing and conformity with international agreements (on human rights for example); exit could no longer be denied for people, just as goods (and prices) had to be allowed to flow across the frontier. These consequences

of the opening of the frontier, however, are not the focus of this study.

The second root cause of the collapse of the communist power monopoly, however, must concern us closely, since it involves the relationship between democracy on the one hand and information—or, in the heuristic terminology employed above, voice and choice—on the other. The collapse of the communist system in both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe revealed the extent to which that system was beset with problems in information flows. Viewed in systemic terms the power monopoly was choking off inputs of information, whilst generating its own messages within the core of the system. The result was oversteering; the centre put out ill-informed decisions, and equipped itself with the means of enforcing these decisions regardless of their social efficacy or their acceptability to the population (Etzioni 1968:521; von Beyme 1975:259–77).

Seen in this light, glasnost was the gasp of a voiceless system; its institution accompanied signs of frustration in society but was not brought about by them. So much is clear from the simple fact that it was introduced from above, on the initiative of no lesser a person than the party's general secretary himself.

Glasnost in political and perestroika in economic life were, in fact, interconnected. Both, in the final count, were required by the faults in the system, which were at root faults in the flow of information. At the same time each of them spelled the end of the system. Whatever the costs voice had to come in political life; choice had to come in the economy; it had been shown that loyalty no longer guaranteed performance; the mechanisms that secured loyalty in the tradition of the thing had lost their justification, whilst new mechanisms had to be sought that would guarantee performance.

To that extent the final stages of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe serve as a fine example of the functional view of democracy. The absence of democracy quite simply brought collapse. But the converse, unfortunately, could not be taken for granted. Whilst a lack of democracy could bring the system down, collapse of the system was not sufficient to institute democracy. Turning now to the period following the fall of communism, we can trace and assess the early stages in the process of democratization.

RALLYING THE ANTI-COMMUNIST FORCES

In such a system, where association for political ends was ruled out in formal terms, what signs were there of less formal or illegitimate groups forming for the pursuit of political aims or the expression of political preferences?

One example of illicit group formation has been a common feature of communist politics and constitutes, in a sense, part of the pathology of the power monopoly. The concentration of power at the centre led to the formation of endless cliques and mafias for 'mutual protection'. The details of this behaviour are rich and extremely important in contexts other than the present. Even within the present discussion they illustrate a distinction between informal, affective ties on the one hand, and secular forms of association regulated by rules rather than personal attachment on the other. But these cliques and mafias contributed nothing to the development of democracy within the womb of communism; on the contrary, they were part of the pathology of the power monopoly itself, and we leave them aside.

A second category of group formation was to have a clear effect on the development of democracy, if within a restricted sphere. The system itself, in its own functioning, associated people through their work in an increasingly differentiated and sophisticated structure of research and administration. This involved the formation of departmental views, sectoral interests and schools of thought in bodies ranging from the Academy's research institutes to the party's own departments of the Central Committee (Brown 1983). The role of what Griffiths termed 'tendencies of articulation' was to grow with time, as technical and administrative competence became less rare and more vocal, constantly pressing against the limitations imposed by the communist power monopoly (Skilling and Griffiths 1971). The debate over change in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe was conducted, not on the floor of a parliament, but within the administrative, technical and academic elite (Rozman 1985; Evans 1986).

Third, the communist political system itself provided a further possibility for the autonomous expression of group preferences in the surprising area of the mass organizations. These, it will be recalled, were traditionally the prime channel for ensuring loyalty to the party. In the 1980s in Eastern Europe, however, they began

in certain cases to develop autonomous roles. This was especially true of the party's youth organizations, and of the party-sponsored peace councils (Waller 1989:323–4; Tismaneanu 1990). That is, the 'transmission belts' were running in reverse. This development illustrates the powerful role that youth played in undermining the communist monopoly in its later stages, a role which later was to become institutionalized in one of Hungary's more prominent new political parties—the FIDESZ—membership of which was restricted (until 1993) to those under 35 years of age.

Fourth, in Eastern Europe (but not the Soviet Union), semi-autonomous organization managed to survive within the communist carapace in two areas. In Poland and the GDR most notably, the churches were able to expand from a position of survival to one of tolerated autonomy especially as the 1980s progressed. The election of a Polish pope and the role of the GDR's evangelical churches in the peace movement from the close of the 1970s provided the crucial landmarks here. In a rather different area of public life, devolved regional government offered a solitary case of institutionalized autonomy within the state, Slovakia securing in 1969 the first concessions that were to lead, twenty-four years later, to formal separation from the Czech Lands.

In each of these four cases, moves in the direction of the autonomous expression of political preferences (for it could be no more than that in the circumstances) were either taking place within the structures of the system, or stemmed from residual islands of semi-autonomy which the ruling party, presumably on the basis of some calculation of costs and benefits, had permitted to exist. Two further cases arose expressly in order to oppose the system. They concern only Eastern Europe, and not the Soviet Union.

In a series of crises in the region (in Poland and Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and in Poland in 1970, 1976 and 1980–1) the ruling party had shown that, with the power of the Soviet Union behind it, it could triumph over movements of dissent, from whatever section of society they stemmed. If it could not summon up enthusiasm for its projects, the party could at least hold in check challenges to its rule. From about the time of the Helsinki Accords in 1975, dissent in the region began to adapt to these circumstances, in which confrontation apparently offered no opening whatsoever for a more democratic way of organizing

political life. At this moment of greatest despair—punctuated by Solidarity's failure, with the greater part of the Polish nation behind it, to make any impression on the power monopoly—dissent ironically began to develop strategies capable of perplexing the ruling parties at a moment when the guarantee of Soviet support was beginning to waver.

The first of these strategies was diffuse in its origins. It grew partly from the ideas and actions of individual writers and activists, and partly from spontaneous expressions of frustration on the part of young people. In the 'anti-politics' of Adam Michnik, Gyorgy Konrad and others, in the 'flying university' of the former, in the songs and activities of the Plastic People of the Universe in Czechoslovakia, dissent was in effect seceding from the society that the party had created, and establishing a counter-culture (Konrad 1984; Skilling 1985; Connor 1980). Moreover, it was able to do this in conjunction with movements in Western Europe which, in the wake of Helsinki, and then with the surge of the peace issue in the wake of NATO's 'dual track' decision in 1989, were increasingly establishing contact with what they saw as their eastern counterparts (Hauner 1990:100, Thompson and Smith 1982; Tismaneanu 1990:6–10).

Less diffuse was a second development, closely related to the first, and destined to lay the groundwork for the exchange of power when the communist regimes finally collapsed. In signing the Helsinki Accords the communist parties of Eastern Europe in fact gave a considerable hostage to fortune. From that moment on it was open to dissenters to reveal the hypocrisy of governments that persecuted citizens on political grounds whilst proclaiming a respect for human rights. At first this had little effect; the parties could back up their hypocrisy with the traditional police strength. But the creation of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia was none the less a turning point. Illicit from the start, harassed at every turn, its leaders and spokespeople periodically imprisoned, the Charter managed to make its voice heard. Moreover, although it could never take proper organizational form, the Charter acted as a rallying point for all opposition to the regime. From 1977 a process of aggregation of political preferences was in process in Czechoslovakia.

Within two years of that date, as a result partly of an internal dialogue between the ruling Socialist Unity Party and the evangelical churches, and partly through the upsurge of the peace

issue at the turn of the decade, the GDR was to become the site of the second case of a general mobilization of unofficial, if not overtly contestatory, activity. This time it was the evangelical churches that played the crucial role at the hub of the movement. Through 'peace novenas', 'blues masses' and 'peace forums' the churches were able to assemble large numbers of mostly young people for activities which did not expressly challenge the party's monopoly of power, but none the less constituted a further example in Eastern Europe of political aggregation (Ramet 1984; Sandford 1983; Woods 1986).

A third case was provided, rather obviously, by Solidarity in Poland. Although Solidarity was outlawed after the imposition of military rule on 13 December 1981, it was able to play, from the underground, much the same role as Charter 77 was playing in Czechoslovakia. When the Polish party, first of all the ruling parties of the region, conceded to the opposition a part of its monopoly over the electoral process in the elections of 1989, it was Solidarity that organized the electoral contest on behalf of the opposition, even though a great range of interests and opinions were concealed under that umbrella (Lewis 1992).

The emergence of these aggregating bodies had one immediate and highly significant impact, given the circumstances of the time. It ensured an internationalization of dissent which was to give the dissenting movements added authority, and thus contributed to their march towards their historic role as the successor governments to the ruling communist parties. It was a dual internationalization. First, meetings between the leaders of these movements gave their enterprise a regional dimension which it had hitherto lacked. And second, their role within the unfolding events of the early 1980s was greatly enhanced by the growing contacts that they developed with West European peace groups and the attention that they won from Western governments (Short 1986:24–6).

There was from the start, let it be said, a fundamental mismatch between the aspirations and ideas of those Western radicals and the leaderships of the East European dissenting movements. This first became manifest in the sharp exchange between Edward Thompson and the pseudonymous Vaclav Racek (who claimed that the Western peace movement was playing into the hands of communist governments, when the proper priority was to use the issue of human rights to embarrass and hopefully oust those

governments) and became clearer in hindsight when the leaders of the dissenting movements went on to form the post-communist governments in the region (Hauner 1990:100; Kavan and Tomin 1983). The admiration in which many of them held Mrs Thatcher and her ideas is but one example of this. None the less their role in the process of democratization that followed the fall of communism was great. On the one hand they served, in an important sense, as movements of national liberation. To that extent the democratic element of their activity was libertarian and revolutionary, and gave no gauge for the future. But on the other hand, even the most strenuous marketeers among them took integration into Europe, in one sense or another, as their guiding light, and that meant a commitment to democracy. The examples of Spain, Portugal and Greece were no doubt never very far from their minds.

Such were the growth points, in the arid soil of the communist political system, from which the process of democratization was to develop once the communist parties had been divested of their monopoly. We turn now to the process of regime change itself, which will be followed in the case of Eastern Europe alone.

THE CHANGE OF REGIME

The transition from communist rule to a process of democratization in Eastern Europe was from many points of view abrupt. The communist parties ceded power or were forced from power in all non-Soviet countries of the bloc in the space of a little over one year, the inflexibility of the communist power monopoly itself ruled out incremental change, whilst the absence of Soviet support (conceivably actual Soviet connivance) diminished the impact of rearguard actions. The impression given by events was that the transfer of power had taken place without there having been a revolutionary period as such at all.

The abruptness of the transfer, however, conceals many aspects of the transition that mediated that transfer, in the sense both of preparing the way for it, and of providing discrete staging-posts in the creation of a new political order. To that extent it is deceptive to see the change of regime in Eastern Europe in simple before-and-after terms. The difficulty lies partly in that some elements of the revolutionary process took place within the womb of the previous regime, and partly in the fact that the swift and 'tender'

nature of the transfer suggested that the period of revolutionary turbulence had come to a close earlier than in fact was the case. Thus whilst in terms of the evolution of the corporate actors involved a process of revolutionary change can clearly be discerned, its elements have to be, as it were, recovered from accounts of the final years of communist power and the early years of the process of democratization.

Two illustrations can be given. The first concerns the prominence of the environmental issue during the 'heroic' period.

Hungary had no direct equivalent of the broad aggregating movements such as Charter 77 or Solidarity, and the role that they played elsewhere was divided between a Hungarian Democratic Forum, the Association of Free Democrats and the Association of Young Democrats (FIDESZ). What brought the movement of contestation into a single focus in Hungary was protest against a scheme to construct a complex system of dams on the Danube, and particularly the dam at Nagymaros (Waller 1992:121–8). Elsewhere, too, environmental issues, given added salience by the explosion at Chernobyl, were prominent in movements of dissent, and in Poland the creation not only of an Ecology Club, but of a Green Party too, antedated the fall of the communist regime. Yet by the time the first elections were held in Hungary the environmental issue had disappeared from the agenda as far as the electorate was concerned, and the first two elections in Poland likewise produced not a single parliamentary deputy. In so far as there is a green movement today in Eastern Europe it is a totally different political phenomenon from the green component of the upsurge of the revolutionary period. The green wave in Eastern Europe was part and parcel of the revolutionary movement, and it subsided with the fall of communist power (Waller and Millard 1992).

A second example of forms of collective political action that must be analysed as part of the revolutionary process is that offered by the major dissenting movements of the communist period themselves. For example, the line of parentage can be established from the Civic Democratic Party, which stood in the election of June 1992 in Czechoslovakia, to Civic Forum and back to Charter 77. A total of fifteen years is involved. Yet at a certain point in that evolution a revolutionary movement had become a political party, playing an entirely different role. Solidarity in Poland had been subject to the same evolution.

What then distinguishes a revolutionary movement from a political party? At what point in the evolution of Charter 77 / Civic Forum or Solidarity did the crucial sea-change take place? In terms of the analysis offered here, that question must be answered in functional terms, and the important landmarks are the events that altered the function of such movements and forced a change of character. Solidarity offers the clearest example, its shifting functions being related to certain well-defined landmarks. The landmark indicating the close of its revolutionary function was the 'round-table' talks of early 1990.

A partly free national election had taken place in June of the previous year, but since this was seen as an inadequate gesture by the ruling party, it did not affect in any significant way Solidarity's view of its own role, nor relations within the movement. The round-table meetings in 1990 were a different matter. Here the movement was taking part in constitutional discussions on an equal footing with the party. The movement's sights were no longer set only or primarily on its duel with communist power but on the shape of a new political order. With that Solidarity exchanged what might be termed its natural homogeneity in terms of its battle with the party against a natural differentiation in terms of a system of competitive politics. The sequel was to display all the implications of this cardinal role-change. The formation of a Solidarity government under Mazowiecki later in 1990 opened up differences of policy—and equally importantly of personality—which the presidential election of 1991 could only augment. By the time of the October 1991 election no fewer than seven parties or groups stemming from the Solidarity movement gained representation in the Sejm (Lewis 1992).

One of these deserves special note. Once Solidarity ceased to function in the revolutionary mode and embraced functions of a party in a parliamentary framework, new questions arose concerning its trade union role. It is characteristic of the institutional flux in Eastern Europe in 1991 that the Solidarity trade union chose to stand in the elections, thus competing for votes with the various other ramifications of the Solidarity trunk (it won 5.05 per cent of the poll and 27 seats).

In Czechoslovakia, where the communist party held on to power until popular pressures drove it to step down, there were no round-table talks and it was the holding of the first free

elections in June 1990 that forced the Civic Forum, set up as the successor to Charter 77, to reconsider its role in the new circumstances. As with Solidarity and the round-table talks in Poland, the logic of differentiation was thereby set in motion, although it was not until the newly elected parliament assembled that the process moved from the personal to the institutional level. The debates within Civic Forum in anticipation of the elections were revealing. Here the shift from movement to party gave rise to considerable heart-searching, at one point almost leading to the movement's deciding not to fight the election at all.

In neither case did Civic Forum nor Solidarity plan for the differentiation that later took place. On the contrary, it was clearly lived as a painful experience in large sections of each movement. The question arises of the extent to which this regret derived from nostalgia for the spirit of the revolutionary movement, or from the lingering effects of having lived for over forty years in a society where the dominant ideology was one of loyalty to the social unit and where the notion of party conveyed not competition but cohesion in pursuance of a single social interest.

An emphasis on the differentiation within the 'forum' movements should not be allowed to obscure the luxuriant emergence of other political parties, many of them to wither on the stem as the filtering effect of the early elections took its toll. But nor should such an emphasis suggest that, once the right of association had been won and elections held, the process of party formation would be straightforward. It has been taking an extremely long time for clear constituencies to be formed by leaderships with clear programmes; competition and rivalry between individuals using party labels have been much more in evidence than has the creation of parties with anything like a mass base; a number of factors have hampered in particular the development of the left; and populist and demagogic appeals to sentiments of nationality or religious faith introduced a rogue element into the process of secular association on the basis of interest. Special mention should be made of the blurred lines between the various forms of association now opened up. Many political parties have severely restricted clienteles and are clearly ultimately destined to redefine themselves as pressure groups. Conversely, trade union leaders have at times come close to seeing themselves as players in the party political game, and have sought

to interfere directly in government, as with Podkrepa's attempt to reshape the governmental team in Bulgaria in early 1992.

The process of party formation has been at the centre of attention of commentators on the process of change in Eastern Europe. This interest is entirely justified. However, it does not acquire its full significance if other examples of association that have followed from the opening up of the political arena are ignored. An important corner, after all, has been turned. The closed frontier has gone, choice is being invited back into the economy with the introduction of the market, and voice in political life can be expected to have institutional implications.

Above all, a stream of legislation has set the ground rules for competition in both economic and political life. With a right of association now enacted in all the countries covered in this analysis, the way has been opened for the institutionalized expression of interests and the formation of pressure groups. Lewis records that by April 1989 over 1,200 associations of a general character had been registered in Warsaw, with some 2,000 operating at national level (Lewis 1992). Chambers of trade and business associations have been put in place. Furthermore, in certain countries the effervescence of the 'heroic' period had already seen the emergence of new trade unions, often white-collar and thus reflecting the role of the administrative sectors of society in promoting the process of change which was alluded to above. An example of such a white-collar trade union was the Democratic Union of Scientific and Academic Workers in Hungary. Podkrepa in Bulgaria illustrated an evolution of a rather different kind. This trade union, too, was a new formation. The impetus for its foundation came from above; in fact it was largely the creation of one man, the controversial and colourful doctor, Konstantin Trenchev. But once in operation it recruited the more radical blue-collar workers, and was to prove a formidable rival for the ex-communist unions.

Encouraged by new enabling legislation the organizational middle ranges of the political system began to fill quite quickly with these and other new forms of association. It should not be forgotten, however, that they then shared the political arena with existing organizations—the communist parties (usually renamed) and trade unions—which had once exercised monopolistic power, but were now having to learn a new role in a competitive system of politics. True, their public image was at its nadir. They enjoyed,

however, a confidence born of maturity and an organizational strength which the newer forms of association lacked, and sooner or later this was bound to bring them advantages.

The communist parties themselves were condemned, at least in the short term, to adopt a low profile. The ex-communist trade unions, however, although they shared in the opprobrium meted out to the parties with which they had been so closely bound, were able to play an immediate role in political life. Released now from the bonds of monopoly, they hastened everywhere to proclaim their independence of the communist parties. Although they were forced to part with the property that they had acquired in the communist period, they mostly preserved a substantial membership base. Czechoslovakia was to retain a relatively centralized federation of now autonomous trade unions; elsewhere, however, the ex-communist unions coexisted with newly created organizations (*Report on Eastern Europe,* vol. 2, no. 13, 27; Vinton 1992:29–37; Engelbrekt 1991:19–21).

The fall of the communist power monopoly was thus followed by a process of democratization in Eastern Europe. This remains true whatever unpleasant surprises an uncertain future may spring. In Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary an alternative elite was on hand to benefit from the transfer of power, and whilst neither Bulgaria nor Romania enjoyed this advantage, there were sufficient other factors—the prospect of aid to shore up ravaged economies, and hopes for a closer association with Western Europe—to ensure that certain steps were taken without which the future development of democracy would have been ruled out.

POINTS OF ANALYTICAL INTEREST

A number of analytical points arise from this presentation of the process of regime change in Eastern Europe in terms of the move from monopoly to autonomous association. Four of them are worth summing up in conclusion to this chapter.

Factors influencing the process of democratization

Three major factors have had a particular impact on the process of democratization in Eastern Europe: promoting it, impeding it or simply shaping it. The first is the influence of history and of

culture. Isobars based on a pre-communist history are, after all, plainly visible. Poland and Hungary have a good deal in common in terms of social and political development, and this fact has frequently shown through in the post-communist period. Bulgaria, despite deep social and economic change under communism, remains a Balkan country in more than geography. Czechoslovakia's democratic past did, if less quickly than expected, show through—although events were to show in turn that cultural and historical factors operated differently in the two components of that federation.

Second, Western Europe exercises a double pull. The political class in the Eastern European countries almost universally claims a cultural affinity with Europe, and therefore with its democratic development; and the prospect of membership of the European Community carries a virtual democratic obligation. In this respect the position of the Eastern European countries resembles that of Portugal, Spain and Greece as they emerged from authoritarian rule.

Finally, the international funding bodies (the IMF, the World Bank, the EC through PHARE) are having a quite marked effect on the process of democratization. On the one hand it is frequently asserted that both marketization and the promotion of democracy are the goals of the fund-givers; on the other hand, in demanding financial stringency the funds can and do strengthen the hands of governments in dealing with trade unions, the policies favoured by the funds press hard on welfare, and it remains to be seen which, of the two goals of marketization and democracy, the funds would favour should an incompatibility arise between them (Stadler 1991).

Regulation and the law

It is a paradox of the transition from communist rule in Eastern Europe that the state, which was seen as being at the heart of the communist system's problems, is having to be brought back in to provide the framework for the new economic and political relations. But in fact the paradox can be resolved by making a necessary distinction between monopoly and regulation.

A centre that organizes and runs an economy and a political system on a monopoly basis has no need for regulation. Monopoly is an alternative to regulation, not an extreme case of

it. But now that central planning and the rest of the communist power monopoly has been abandoned, governments are forced to resort to regulation. The problems that flow from this consideration are severe. The pressures to move to a market economy are acute; yet the consequences of taking that step without legislation governing the conduct of business, relations between juridical persons, and a taxation framework that can be enforced are awesome.

To that extent, privatization and regulation have had to proceed hand in hand in the transition from communist rule. Whereas in the neo-conservative wave in Western Europe privatization has spelled deregulation, in Eastern Europe it has meant regulation.

In the political sphere, the importance of law in creating the necessary framework for democracy has been equally evident. And in fact the path of change that led from monopoly to competitive politics has been studded with legal decisions that made association possible—not only the actual parliamentary passing of an act of association (though this is a crucial moment in the story in each country) but *ad hoc* judicial decisions such as the registration of Solidarity in November 1980 (later revoked, then reinstated).

The problem of loyalty

Allowing choice and voice to invade the economic and political systems, whilst allowing exit through an open frontier, raises fundamental questions concerning loyalty. A first simple one is posed by the consequent brain drain, which has been substantial in Eastern Europe. Should it reach critical proportions demands might arise for regulation; yet the memory of the past almost certainly rules out any such policy.

Second, until acculturation to the new society and its norms has been achieved, and until citizens situate their roles and aspirations in the framework of the articulation of sectional interests, a 'habit' of loyalty to affectively determined objects creates the risk of the political exploitation of this habit. The ease with which ethnic and religious causes have been used for political ends throughout the post-communist world is stunning. Unfortunately only very extensive sociological enquiry would be able to determine whether this phenomenon—which Zygmunt Bauman has termed 'the unsuspected radicalism of popular anti-

authoritarianism' (quoted in Lomax 1992)—is to be attributed to the displaced loyalty factor, to a sense of release from authoritarian rule, or to factors that have nothing to do with communism, but concern the current prominence of such issues throughout the world.

This question of the relocating of loyalty, and of its devaluation, has other implications. Even if the loyalty that citizens previously showed was sham, they were prevented, physically and psychologically, from developing or even contemplating loyalty to other political objects, or other ways of ordering things. In these circumstances an external model such as European liberal democracy was likely to exist only as a desideratum detached from possibilities of instituting it. It could only be instituted by internalizing it—that is, by developing an attachment to it. It is no doubt the effects of this vicious circle that account for occasional anomic reactions to social tensions that have occurred, bypassing the new political mechanisms whether political parties or even trade unions, as in the celebrated Hungarian transport strike of 1990. There are, however, countervailing considerations suggesting that emergence from communist rule is not the only factor at work in such cases, and that the pre-communist political and social circumstances might play a role. Thus the low turnout at elections in Hungary and Poland contrasts with exceptionally high turnout in both Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. The damage done by communism to capacities for structured political involvement could on its own account hardly have such uneven effects.

From community to association

A fourth point of analytical interest has wide-ranging implications and may serve as a conclusion to this study. It was suggested above that at the heart of the transition from communism in Eastern Europe lies the question of the definition of citizenship. This chapter has attempted to focus on a particular aspect of this question: the way in which, and the rhythm at which, the ability of the citizen to associate freely with other citizens in the pursuit of his or her interests developed in the early stages of the transition process. At either end of the exposition stand two different kinds of society, and two dominant ideological influences which emphasize radically different values.

If the arguments adduced above are to be summed up in these global terms, they suggest that the societies of Eastern Europe have moved from values turning on community to values turning on association. In its essence, and despite the emphasis on order and planning which was put out by the party's propaganda organs to encourage the masses, the communist system was informal. Embodying the law, the party-state was unaccountable; as suggested above, its monopoly of power rendered regulation otiose; networks of influence and corruption ensured that an impossible economic system kept turning. Not only did the party-state view the entire economy as its patrimony, but the political system that created and presided over it was patrimonial also. The patrimony was one and indivisible; there was one social interest, and the party spoke for it. The state looked after its children, on condition that the children renounced any attempt to set up bonds of secular and autonomous association. Loyalty was the paramount requirement in this collectivist world.

From this beginning, the societies of Eastern Europe have set out, and partly been required, to create new economic and political relations built on association. They have had to put in place the legislation that will regulate relations between citizens who are now seen as having individual and sectional interests which they can urge against a government's claim to be acting in the public interest. The logic of such a system calls for aggregation in promoting these sectional goals, and for a stable intermeshing of the institutions through which such aggregation may proceed. Whether the international context and internal pressures created by outright penury will permit such a programme of democratization to be consolidated into democracy is as much a matter of hope as of expectation.

NOTES

1   One of the effects of the collapse of communism in Europe has been to create problems of nomenclature and punctuation. It was during the cold war that an Eastern Europe came into being as a political entity grouping the European members of the Soviet bloc, while the West likewise acquired a capital letter to mark its political connotations. Since 1989 not only has the major justification for the capital letters of Eastern and Western Europe fallen away, but a distinction is frequently made between an East Central Europe and

the Balkans. In this chapter the capital letters have been retained, simply because of their familiarity. For the same reason the term 'Eastern Europe' is used to refer collectively to the Soviet Union's client-states in Europe.

2   I develop this anatomy of the communist power monopoly in rather more detail in 'From party-state to political market-place in Eastern Europe: the collapse of the power monopoly', in Michael Moran and Maurice Wright (eds) (1991), *The Market and the State,* London: Macmillan, pp. 100–18.

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Chapter 7

Democratization in China: structural constraints

Flemming Christiansen

Democracy in China is hard to achieve. In the minds of Chinese intellectuals and politicians democracy has long been a utopian goal on the one hand and a panacea against today's predicament on the other. It shares this position with the concept of scientific and technological progress, the Mene Tekel used to lay the omnipresent ghost of backwardness. The gentlemen De and Sai, representing *De*mocracy and *Sci*ence, commenced their frivolous slapstick performance in the Chinese intellectual variety show when the later founder of the Chinese Communist Party Chen Duxiu invoked them in 1918 to exorcise the dark ages of feudalism and backwardness in which China was stuck.

Although ideas of constitutionalism and demands for reform of the political system towards some form of democracy had existed in China since 1895, these remained faint voices of scattered intellectuals at home and in diaspora, and even the democratic intentions in the Early Chinese Republic after the 1911 Revolution proved insignificant in taming the lust for power of men like Yuan Shikai (president 1912–16) and later the regional war-lords. Against this background democracy and science gained the role of cure-all for China's misery in the imagination of generations of Chinese intellectuals, while regimes prided themselves on putative democratic institutions which stood in stark contrast to their cruel, repressive nature. Chen Duxiu (1918), representing the critical intellectuals, coined the idea of the two (foreign) gentlemen, De and Sai.

Ever since they have served the function of rhetorical last resorts for any movement and political system in China, often qualified by other terms in order to indicate their actual realization, e.g. 'people's democracy'. The claims of rulers and

ruled alike to represent 'democracy' and the multifarious qualifying explanations of what constitutes *genuine* democracy, make serious discussions of democracy in China difficult.

It is clear from the use of the term in Chinese debates, and from a glance at the Chinese political system, that it only forms part of the Chinese cornucopia of political mythology. Thus my main question in this chapter is not whether democracy exists in China, but whether a functioning representative democracy can be established.[1] Are there structural forces which thwart the emergence of representative democracy? Democracy is influenced by key features of the social structure in which it is realized, thus my discussion starts with a description of how Chinese society is fragmented and under the legacy of the work units. Democracy requires a form of civil society, and I therefore address the question whether there is civil society in China. Democracy requires modes of policy-making and representation, so I examine the existing frameworks for policy-making and popular representation in China.

FRAGMENTED SOCIETY

Chinese society is socially *fragmented* rather than socially *stratified*. China can indeed be divided along lines of ethnicity (there are fifty-six recognized national minorities, constituting about 69 million or 6 per cent of the total population); by linguistic differences (there exist five major Chinese dialects with subdivisions and five dozen or so minority languages); by social and occupational status (unequal distribution of wealth, the difference between urban and rural population, occupational prestige). Yet these many divisions do not seem to form major sources of spontaneous political alignment or cleavages, although they do constitute the basis of various forms of exclusion and discrimination.

The main focus of social and political orientation of the individual Chinese is his or her village or work unit *(danwei)*. The social and political organization of the country is characterized by the almost total amalgamation at the grass-roots level of work, social life, provision of social, medical and educational services, residence, consumption, political control and political integration in one organic whole. The symbolic representation and physical

manifestation of the urban work unit is the tall brick wall within which it is normally confined.

The villages (or the teams and production brigades that used to exist under the people's commune system) are similar foci of human activity in the Chinese countryside. The significance of the village and the work unit in Chinese life is due to the great restrictions on mobility. Movement from one work unit to another is rare.

THE WORK UNIT, THE XITONG AND THE INDIVIDUALS

The work units belong to *xitongs* (literally: systems). The typical work unit is a school or a factory under a ministry or a similar nation-wide mother organization, a 'xitong'. A work unit comprises a multitude of general functions distinct from its main purpose (a university: teaching and research; a steelworks: steel production) with the aim of catering for the social needs of its employees, including everything from shopping and child care to postal services and publishing. Similarly, xitongs include a vast number of ancillary activities (i.e. work units) which are not strictly within the main scope of their mission. Thus the ministry of transport, and the army, run colleges, universities, theatres, orchestras.

The main flow of resources takes place within these structures, and the main lines of communication are vertical. Personnel mobility between work units does occur, but rarely horizontally and almost never between work units in different xitongs. Mobility, therefore, is closely linked within the framework of the work unit, and even more importantly, must be obtained through the unit.

This total dependence of the urban Chinese on their work units must be contrasted with their security of employment. Despite official claims and some anecdotal evidence to the effect that permanent tenure (or the 'iron rice bowl') has been abandoned, actual sacking of people does not occur (even as a work-related disciplinary measure, although it is legally possible) (Hebel and Schucher 1992; Vosbein 1986–7; Walder 1986).

The relationship between the work force and the administrators/authorities, therefore, is not one of total powerlessness,

since the work force has the option of obstruction and certainly needs incentives for helping the administrators towards plan fulfilment and smooth functioning of the work unit. This implies a game of mutual dependence, and indeed room for individual initiative and action on the part of the members of the unit (Walder 1986; Womack 1991:321).

The private and public interest of the Chinese urban resident, therefore, is closely knit together with the interest of the work unit, creating *danwei* loyalty. There do not exist sufficiently strong organizational points of reference outside the work units on which people from different work units can converge as groups representing common political interest.

Furthermore, the internal organization of the work unit does not represent competing external interests or political positions; mass organizations and trade unions are integrated constituent elements of the work unit which do not represent interest beyond the confines of the unit. The power of allocation and control within a work unit is not always vested in one person or one group of people, but may be dispersed between several people with wide discretionary powers. Practical frictions and problems of cooperation between such groups and persons are mainly solved within formalized structures of negotiation, involving various strata of management.

The dividing line between 'work force' and 'administrators/ authorities' thus has little confrontational significance. It does not necessarily reflect any important cleavage within a work unit. The workers are divided by objective interests, deriving from marital status, age, party membership, gender, health, level of education and other such social and personal attributes which determine their specific relationship with various parts of the official organization of the work unit. To attain aims relevant to their personal situation they have to bargain with different parts of the organization. The collective interest of the 'work force' *vis-à-vis* the 'administrators/authorities' is likely to be of minor significance if present at all.

My main argument here is that the fundamental public and private interest of the individual is mediated by the fragmented social structure of the work unit. Personal identification is primarily based on the work unit, not on class or stratum.

IS THERE CIVIL SOCIETY IN CHINA?

The role of associations

Organizations which appeal to people from different work units and xitongs do exist. Among these are several academic associations, which include personnel from various universities, academies and research units under central and local authorities; religious associations, including the Buddhist Association and Christian organizations; professional organizations, e.g. of enterprise managers. A number of united front parties are also registered and allowed to function under the leadership of the Communist Party. The associations are restricted by charter and registration to specific types of activities and are not in a legal position to form politically independent frameworks. Even if they were, the particular, disparate interests of their membership (reflecting work-unit interest and competition between xitongs) are likely to prevent them from developing into organizations standing on coherent independent political platforms.

The relative independence of the associations can be doubted. They are officially registered and often seek their leadership among official notabilities, like retired ministers, persons from the top party leadership, non-party celebrities, or leaders of the democratic united front parties. It is advantageous to associations' function to have sufficiently senior protectors. It is not known to what extent the posting in the leadership of associations is on the nomenklatura lists; however, it is known that presidents, vice-presidents and secretaries-general and similar posts in the Buddhist Association of China, Christian Council of China, China Daoist Association and other religious organizations were vetted by the Central Committee's United Front Department in the mid-1980s (Burns 1989:38–9).

Discussions with Chinese observers give the impression that most associations are offices manned by a small staff which has the task of preparing conferences of members and perhaps publishing a journal. These functions may be important; nevertheless the figureheads of associations do not normally express themselves publicly as leaders of associations, but in the capacity of their main occupation. A common, slightly derogatory, remark often heard about associations is that they are 'empty work units' *(xu danwei)*. The independence and political significance of associations, therefore, should not be taken for granted.

Limits to concerted action

The basic pattern of social organization determines the structure of political participation. In describing social interaction during the demonstrations for 'democracy' in Beijing in spring 1989, Frank Niming argues that

> In urban China there does not yet exist an alternative organizational focus beyond the work unit where social activities, including demonstrations, can be set up. This gives the party and the state a sturdy grip over the life of its citizens.
>
> (Niming 1990:86)

These adverse circumstances made the prospects for rallying other social groups around the demonstrations very limited.

> Initially, however, the students could not hope for the active support of the people. During the initial stages the challenge was to create avenues for the people to express their sympathy without getting tainted politically. The death of the former party general secretary, Hu Yaobang, on April 15 provided the students with a politically sufficiently neutral occasion to start the ball rolling.
>
> (Niming 1990:86)[2]

Frank Niming regards the fragile and politically empty alliance of the students with disparate groups of urbanites who acted as rather passive bystanders as an important way in which political action could be carried out at a level where work-unit boundaries were insignificant:

> As the people could not demonstrate themselves, the students had to continue to play this active role for them. The student demonstrations represented the silent frustrations of the population. For this reason, the students continued using relatively empty concepts like 'democracy' and 'science', which were never given any specific content, together with concrete demands such as 'down with official speculation' *(dadao guandao)*, on which everybody could agree. Since these demands had little to do with the specific interests and frustrations of individual segments of the population,

everybody could identify with the movement. Each individual, as an anonymous member of 'the people', could give the students the mandate to represent his or her specific, but during the demonstrations unstated, frustrations about the system, the leadership, and its policies.

(Niming 1990:90)

Concerted political action across the borderlines of the work units is, accordingly, difficult to achieve. The relative costs of mobilizing popular support on the part of the active element (*in casu* the students) in terms of logistic effort and political risk are very high.

Frank Niming's conclusion that the 'role of the bystander is the germ of Chinese civil society, in which people will be able to act and organize as citizens, independent from government bureaucratic structure' (Niming 1990:104–5), therefore indicates the great limitations of urban 'civil society', which is not likely to germinate within the wider framework of the Chinese social organism.

The emergence of new social groups

At the end of the 1970s the Chinese political and economic system was in dire difficulties, mainly due to malfunctioning of the economic planning and to political suppression during the Cultural Revolution. Thus the country embarked upon a reform programme which was aimed at alleviating the social and political pressures on the leadership.

The programme included macro-economic adjustment of the extant command economy and gradual qualitative reforms leading to the introduction of market regulation. The most important steps were to encourage agricultural production in order to end shortages on the urban markets and to improve conditions for urban consumers generally.

To gain the allegiance of specific groups in the urban population, the new leadership under Deng Xiaoping removed some of the most heavy-handed measures of the Cultural Revolution. Large numbers of political prisoners were released, bad-class labels were abolished and the policy of sending young urban school leavers (the so-called 'young intellectuals') to the countryside was abandoned.

The rigid labour allocation system had (during the Cultural Revolution) been forced to place urban school leavers in the countryside in order to avoid drastic overstaffing of urban state-owned enterprises. After 1978, this system could not cope with the large numbers of new people entitled to urban job allocation. Some flexibility was created by expanding university enrolment, especially of mature students who had been deprived during the Cultural Revolution, and by absorbing larger numbers of recruits into the People's Liberation Army.

To alleviate the pressure further, the 1978 Constitution provided for the development of a strictly controlled urban private sector of 'individual enterprises' *(getihu)*, mainly in the service trades (Hershkovitz 1985; Zhongguo Baike Nianjian Bianjibu 1981:537). Registration of people in this new category was chiefly regarded as an emergency measure of little consequence. However, it soon proved to be a systemic change which, together with the introduction of 'market regulation' in the planned economy, heralded a major shift in the economic structure of the country.

The planned economy at the end of the 1970s was to be replaced by the 'laws of economy' which would do away with the irrationalities and bottlenecks created by political dominance of production and trade. Although China was not meant to become a market economy, the reformists deemed it necessary to introduce an indicator of scarcity into a system, which had hitherto been governed exclusively by central allocation of goods. All economic activities should be defined separately and be fixed in contracts; mandatory planning was to become indicative; the enterprises should become more independent, be allowed to retain a part of the profit for reinvestment, and be able to create 'horizontal' links between each other. Setting more 'realistic' prices, reflecting the relative scarcity of goods, would do away with waste and irrationality, and would create incentives for better productivity (Hu Qiaomu 1978; Harding 1987, chs 2, 4 and 5; Rosen 1987).

Enterprise managers, given more autonomy, would thus more vigorously pursue the interests of their enterprises. Previously, their only aim had been to negotiate quotas of materials and products within the xitongs and with the planning authorities, whereas they now could also reinvest and operate 'horizontally' in an, albeit limited, market-place.

The economic development of the 1980s saw the emergence of (a) small private enterprises, the so-called 'individual households' *(getihu)*; (b) strata of relatively independent managers of state-owned and collective enterprises; (c) large-scale private enterprises *(siying qiye)*; and (d) sino-foreign joint ventures and purely foreign enterprises, whose Chinese personnel had distinctly different working conditions from those existing in state-owned enterprises.

Starting in the late 1970s, the rural people's communes were dissolved and agricultural and other types of rural production were *de facto* privatized. Although land ownership remained collective, the access to land (land-use right) became a private asset. At the same time, there was asymmetry in the development of agriculture and the rural non-agricultural enterprises, due to suppression by state authorities of prices for agricultural products, and rapid expansion of the market for services, construction, transport and industrial products. As a result there occurred social stratification among rural households, and some of the former collective peasants emerged as very active and independent entrepreneurs.

Characteristics of changing and newly emerging social groups

The restoration in 1978 of the intellectuals (who had once been 'stinking number nine' on the infamous classification of the Cultural Revolution) as prime motors for the development of the country was a major step. After 1978, intellectual work was considered part of the productive forces rather than a phenomenon of the superstructure (in which latter capacity it had been a target for ideological struggle). In other words, the primacy of 'red' over 'expert' was turned into a claim for 'red *and* expert', and in reality 'only expert'. This went hand in hand with greater allocation of funds to institutions like universities and academies, better living standards for intellectuals, and more stress on developing a qualified debate about social and technical problems of development, a debate which had been banned for ideological and bureaucratic reasons since 1957.

As particpants in cooperation and debates across institutions, and with shared material conditions, the intellectuals are the urban social group most likely to cross over the xitong and work-

unit boundaries. However, this likelihood is reduced by inter-xitong and inter-work-unit competition for funds and status. The hierarchies of institutions, as well as the patronage structures for career pursuit, hamper the emergence of a unified intelligentsia.

As state employees, the intellectuals have mainly continued to be paid according to relatively flat salary scales which have been strongly eroded by price inflation. Their general living standards are traditionally considered high, but not compared with the private sectors of the economy. For some groups among the intellectuals the reforms have brought wealth, especially for those who could use their skills to develop new technology or who were able to find work as consultants, thus exploiting their skills as private entrepreneurs. As a social group, then, the intellectuals are ambiguous. Their main professional interest is to engage in open debate and to emphasize academic stringency (rather than political imperatives). In these respects they are potential supporters of 'democracy'.

As an ideologically privileged, but materially underprovided, group they share complaints about work conditions and pay, a fact which is likely to prompt trans-work-unit cooperation. As advisors to all levels of government, many intellectuals are informed about and keenly interested in specific political problems, with the result that they are closer to policy-making than most other groups outside the bureaucracies. Their access to international cooperation (combined with a greater knowledge of foreign languages than in any other single social group in China) has brought privileges to some intellectuals, including 'new ideas', opportunities for cooperation, visits abroad and money. Far from being united on crucial political issues, however, the intellectuals are not able to form trans-work-unit groups of a political description. As xitongs, the Academies of Science and the State Education Commission and their subordinated work units, do not represent more than a fraction of the intellectuals, since intellectuals are also working in academies and institutions under other xitongs.

The individual entrepreneurs *(getihu)* are defined as people who run small businesses employing no more than two apprentices and five assistants (Christiansen 1989; State Council 1981). These enterprises are registered by local government and mainly operate in the trade, service and catering sectors in urban areas. The fact that these enterprises are small and flexible and in

most cases based on low profit and high turnover, combined with small investment, have made them extremely successful in adapting to market opportunities and in filling in the large gaps left by the state and collective sectors. Due to lack of detailed regulation and to unclear legal definitions many individual entrepreneurs operate in semi-legality. Such enterprises tend to be based totally on direct cash transactions with no proper bookkeeping, a fact which leads tax officials to impose indiscriminate and inflated rates on them (Odgaard 1990). The sector is looked down upon by many employees in state-owned enterprises as criminal and despicable and is accordingly exposed to attacks and clamp-downs, the very term *'getihu'* in daily parlance being synonymous with sleazy practices. The vulnerability of this group of people is traceable to their lack of integration in work units and xitongs which would be able to protect their legitimate interests. As a social stratum they are of increasing numerical significance, but in social standing they remain marginalized.

The question of their political participation is crucial, and it should be noted that in as far as they are given a reasonable amount of official protection and recognition (in economic terms), the individual entrepreneurs are likely to be under general political control by the authorities. If the private entrepreneurs are pushed into illegality, or are marginalized, they are likely to uphold their economic interest by linking together in gangs, or seeking protection through some of the illegal secret societies operating in China. Even when they receive official support and recognition, individual entrepreneurs are the objects of illegal organizations squeezing them for protection fees. Although the suggestion has been made that secret societies constitute a sort of nascent civil society (Munro 1989:6), this idea is implausible: secret societies, being mafia-like brotherhoods, are by their very nature opposed to the sort of social and political order which is implied in the concept of civil society. Their existence, to the contrary, shows the incapacity of certain social groups to achieve recognition and inclusion in political processes. Individual entrepreneurs in China seem to form a stratum which oscillates between legality and illegality, depending on the degree to which their activities are supported and protected by the authorities. Shifts in policy towards individual entrepreneurs and towards specific fields of

operation have created a certain degree of confusion about their legality.

Private enterprise is, however, not limited to small-scale private entrepreneurs, but also includes larger private enterprises in the urban sector. These were only legalized in 1988, but operated for some time before. Being larger, and often very powerful, and led by people with high managerial skills, they must be viewed differently from small individual enterprises. The big enterprises are organized in many different ways. However, they share one key feature: they are not bound up in the same strict structures of the xitongs as are the work units, and their managers have greater direct influence over their activities, especially since Communist Party control is much weaker and more indirect than in work units. This greater freedom enables big private enterprises to establish broader contacts outside the straitjacket of the xitongs, and to practise direct sale and purchase on the market. However, the enterprises depend on official recognition, licences and delivery of production factors for their operation, and are subject to indirect control by myriad state agencies and offices. The state sector is also an important market for many of their products and services. They therefore live in a close symbiosis with the state-controlled economy, and their links with the authorities, it must be assumed, are mainly based on *guanxi* (clientelist ties). Private entrepreneurs may, indeed, joint together to promote common political interests, while at the same time upholding vast networks within the existing frameworks of the economy and the political system.

It has been suggested that during the crisis of 1989 the private entrepreneurs in Beijing financed the student demonstrations and sponsored links between various social groups that could formulate political platforms (Chong 1989:7–10). This does suggest the existence of a limited 'civil society'.

A new stratum that has emerged within the framework of the post-1978 reforms is made up of the managers in the state-owned enterprise sector. Their decision-making power has increased drastically, and although they are entangled in the red tape of the xitongs, they have more power than ever before in the history of the People's Republic of China to allocate funds for specific purposes within their work units, to sell part of their products outside the plan, and to purchase production factors in the free market. Their main function is still to protect the

interests of their work units *vis-à-vis* the higher levels in the xitongs. However, operating horizontally gives them more flexibility and more particular interests as a group, which they may seek to promote in informal networks outside the formal control of the xitongs. But their main points of orientation are still the established channels for bargaining rather than separate political groups.

In the urban sector, the partial demise of the command economy created more differentiation and potential for aggregation of political interests in groups (Østergaard 1989). However, the *underlying structures of patronage* and formal structures of public control severely limit the potential of an 'open market-place' for political action and political ideas.

The rural structures

Like the urban work units and xitongs, rural China is bound up in formal structures that form societies *en miniature* (Shue 1988). Until the 1980s there was effectively a ban on population mobility, which was based on collective ownership of the means of production and collective farming (Christiansen 1990). The reforms of the 1980s produced radical change, especially in farming and in the ownership of the means of production. Between 1978 and 1983 the people's commune system was abolished and economic and political administration were separated from each other, at least *pro forma*. The villages were put in charge of dividing the previously collective assets among the farmers on an equitable basis. Staple crop land was distributed as land-use-right contracts (at first for three to five years, after 1984 for fifteen years or more). Other assets were sold off to the highest bidders (e.g. animal husbandry farms, orchards, fish ponds, lorries, machines). Collective rural enterprises remained collective property.

Crop production was privatized in the sense that each household was made responsible for profits and losses. The rural non-agricultural enterprise sector expanded rapidly, and the collective farmers became independent economic decision-makers who were forced to respond to the market.

The structure within which these changes took place, however, did not create much room for a genuine market exchange. The household classification system prevented migration and regular

recruitment of peasants in state-owned enterprises on equal terms with urbanites, thereby skewing the labour market. The staple crop prices were centrally fixed and subject to (albeit changing) procurement procedures which denied the peasants full access to the market, and the delivery of production factors was governed by utterly corrupt systems (Aubert 1990; Oi 1986; Christiansen 1992a). The economic and institutional structures for rural production, in other words, were not liberal, and did not create independent entrepreneurs (Christiansen 1992b). The closed nature of the villages, due to the continued existence of the household registration system, brought about, not a fundamental shift towards political interest group formation, but further refinement and specialization of the patronage systems (Oi 1989:226).

THE EXISTING POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

The bargaining treadmill

The political structures in China reflect the structure of the social and economic organization described above.

Chinese political structures combine the 'fragments' of society into formal structures of bargaining and control. The party and state control is mainly based on direct and indirect control over the xitongs and work units. The official structures of the state are fully adjusted to absorbing and formulating policy issues within xitongs, work units and rural townships and villages. The inclusion of the population in the political life of the nation, therefore, is based on amalgamated social, economic, occupational and administrative 'cells' which frustrate any natural inclination of political groups to aggregate political interest in forums independent of the state.

Most analyses of Chinese policy-making in the 1980s seem to agree that the system is (using a phrase coined by Lampton) a 'bargaining treadmill' (Lampton 1987; see also Lieberthal and Oksenberg 1988). The system (especially after the regularization and devolution started in the early 1980s) is geared to provide forums for conflict resolution through bargaining processes. Conflicting interests are formulated within the frameworks of the

formal structures, focusing on issues like resource allocation, boundaries of authority, access to information. The formal structures (a) endow specific interests with legitimacy (but reject others as illegitimate); (b) seek to include all interested parties in constructive negotiation lest there emerge substantial opposition and obstruction against the political system (but do so on their own terms, excluding unwanted negotiation partners); and (c) create the background for extensive structures of parallel informal bargaining (Oi 1989; Manion 1991). All participants in the formal bargaining process must be convinced that they are included in the decision-making process in a fair way. If not, they are likely to oppose the outcomes vigorously. The 1980s saw a great formalization of procedures with this purpose.

The formulation of policy issues, and the creation of forums for their solution, is therefore replicated at various levels of authority. Bargaining takes place in villages, on work floors, in local governments, party branches, branch offices of executive organizations, local people's congresses, and in local governments. Problems not solved in direct 'horse trading' between bargaining partners are projected upwards in the hierarchy of bargaining, much weight being given to reciprocity and equity. Policy issues at lower levels will tend to be concrete, concerned with the distribution of goods, the access to public assets, quotas, licences, credits. At medium level the agendas will tend to concern strategic options, regional planning, investment schemes, construction of infrastructure. At national level, bargaining will concern wider policy issues, conflating material and ideological aspects.

Hence, the extant, albeit gradually reforming, political system in China is exceptionally well equipped to absorb, formulate and solve conflicts by providing 'fair' forums for bargaining. Since the legitimate policy issues do not stem from 'civil society' or broad social groups, but from the formal structures, the xitongs and work units, there is not provision for direct absorption of views from broad social groups, and no multi-party structure.

Structures for political representation

The people's congresses, which are local legislative assemblies, and the National People's Congress (NPC), the supreme legislative body are, therefore, not based on representative democracy, but

are assemblies of delegates from lower level people's congresses, designated according to quotas based on gender, occupational class (worker, peasant, soldier, intellectual), nationality, etc. Most of these classifications reflect a stereotyped Leninist division of the groups in society, the workers, peasants, soldiers and radical intellectuals constituting the revolutionary masses. The recognition of ethnic difference in a multinational state is also a part of the Leninist heritage. The quotas do not reflect the real proportions of the population with these attributes, but ensure a minimum representation. The quotas are achieved in various ways, due to the difference in rural and urban organization. Rural constituencies are formed to elect one candidate for local people's congresses, using four times the votes necessary to elect a candidate in the urban constituencies. The peasants, at the local level, therefore, have a vote which is only worth a fourth of an urban vote. The selection of delegates for the NPC, according to the electoral law of 1979 (*Renmin Shouce* 1979; 401ff, art. 10–14), theoretically gives peasants a one-to-eight (but in reality a one-to-ten) representation at national level, in the NPC. Other quotas exclusively relate to the delegation from lower to higher levels of people's congresses, and are set by the departing standing committee of the higher level people's congress before new elections. The exact procedures are not known. The polling districts to people's congresses are—what else?—work units or a combination of several work units. Election lists, accordingly, are decided upon through internal bargaining in the work units concerned.

It is evident from the above how work-unit politics are integrated in the bargaining structures in the xitongs, and how they play a crucial role in the formation of the legislature. The fact that work units are forced by the quotas to select women, workers, people from national minorities for the elections means that the persons elected are not all factory directors and headmasters.

The structures do not overlap—xitongs tend to be vertical lines of control, while the people's congresses are local, emphasizing the horizontal bonds. The Chinese term these conflicting structures of political alignment *tiaotiao* and *kuaikuai*, which have been translated by Jonathan Unger as 'branches' and 'areas' (Unger 1987). Through the system of delegation, the areas, however, are founded in a vertical structure. But there is a

difference. While the work units fend for their own interest in the bargaining within the xitongs *and* with local government, local government fends for local, regional interest with higher levels of government. The 'struggle between branches and areas', therefore, creates an institutionalized framework of checks and balances.

The Communist Party forms a xitong of its own. It has decisive influence on all levels of authority through party branches. Since the beginning of the reforms the double posting of communists has largely been avoided. The head of a factory party branch, therefore, should not normally be identical with the factory director, and a mayor should not be identical with the municipal party secretary (but he or she is likely to be deputy party secretary) (Li and Bachman 1989:77). This division of authority creates yet another field of authority clash and bargaining.

The governance of China is not based on representation of social or political groups, but is centred around formal structures of resource allocation and institutional entitlements. There are some formal safeguards against the concentration of power in very few persons, and the electoral and quota systems aim at giving a voice to broadly defined groups, which are not identical with interest groups. The representation of the peasantry in the National People's Congress (NPC), as an example, is only 315 or 10.6 per cent of the delegates. Only two, or 0.067 per cent, are active farmers, the rest are salaried rural cadres. Only two of the 100 members in the Standing Committee are peasant delegates, of whom only one is an active farmer (*Nongmin Ribao*, 26 March 1988; 19 and 28 March 1990; 2 April 1990).

The delegates at the NPC do not represent their 'class', but are mainly grouped in provincial delegations, within which the decisions and policies are discussed. As a result, peasants and other 'groups' have little opportunity to liaise and negotiate amongst themselves about their specific interests. However, all groups put forward problems and policy issues which deserve the attention of the leadership, and the NPC, therefore, functions as a forum for addressing pressing policy issues. The inclusion of all regions, and the major social 'constituencies' in the deliberation process of the people's congresses, including the NPC, has a dual function—it binds them morally to accept the policy outcomes, and it enables the leadership to control the deliberation process (but not totally the outcome).

Informal structures for policy-making

The most salient aspect of Chinese policy-making is the role of *guanxi*, clientelism. Whereas most political scientists (e.g. Burns 1988; Shue 1988) considered the wheeling and dealing among people as expressions of insubordination or independence from state interference, Jean Oi has demonstrated that clientelism is a logical and functionally very potent extension of state regulation (Oi 1989; see also Yang 1989).

Guanxi is a function of unequal access to services, goods, credits, which are not distributed in a market-place, or at least only in a deficient market. The personalized control of distribution means that the price mechanism is largely irrelevant, and that there is no scarcity price. Guanxi is not corruption, since it does not represent the illegal appropriation by bureaucrats and middlemen of the difference between the fixed price and the scarcity price. Guanxi is the reciprocal exchange of access to the distribution of scarce assets. This exchange need not be direct, but normally takes place with a long-term perspective, and normally does not involve an exact calculation of the value of the exchanged assets. The exchange can relate to access to goods or services, political favours and loyalty. Guanxi can occur between persons or institutions, and is the main glue that creates cohesion within work units. The long-term nature and asymmetrical, nodal structure of guanxi (a one-to-one relationship with a partner normally more powerful) creates a strong counter-weight to the formation of 'civil society'.

Structural limits to democracy

If China were to become a totally free market economy (it has only marginally become so); if the political structures, which at the moment keep a firm balance amongst institutional interests and fragmentize society, were to be destroyed (the structures are intact); if the bonds of guanxi were to be replaced by the market principle of corruption (this has happened to a certain extent): if all these things happened, China could perhaps experience a transition towards representative democracy. But there is not much to support such a development.

The free operation of a private economy could possibly herald a limited 'civil society'. The political system has not been able fully to absorb the interests of the private entrepreneurs, and because of actions directed against them some have been pushed into illegality, or to seek protection from racketeering gangs and secret societies. The lack of an alternative to (a) political inclusion on terms set by the state, and thereby by the competitors; or (b) exclusion, leaves the private sector in a political limbo. The gradual deregulation of the economy creates more room for segments of the state (work units and xitongs) to act corporately, while society remains fragmented.

The emergence of 'civil society' (if this term is still appropriate) would require an arena of competing political interests among corporate units which would have internal economic and social solidarity based on guanxi, and which would be largely independent of the central structures of the state (Yang 1989:37–8). The ownership type of enterprises and institutions (state, collective, private, individual, joint) would, with increasing devolution in the state sector, gradually become insignificant, and the private sector could be awarded political recognition.

Such a 'corporate "civil" society' could develop in harmony with the existing political modes of deliberation, which presently give room for corporate representation rather than for representative democracy. Such a development could possibly further preclude the evolution of representative democracy, since the state, while deregulating and withdrawing, will not provide the basis of a welfare state; social security and social cohesion, therefore, must be sought in the work units and in the private sphere. This strengthens the role of corporate units and the function of guanxi.

A formal deregulation and withdrawal by the state will bring an end to (at least some) publicly defined loci for bargaining and formal control over the agendas for bargaining. However, bargaining is not likely to disappear. The guanxi networks are poised to supplant formal bargaining. Xitongs may become looser, but the bonds between persons in xitongs will grow tighter and become all important for the functioning of the country.

CONCLUSION

The present structural constraints to the development of a representative democracy are huge. And in spite of the cries for 'democracy and science' every so often heard in China from the fragile anti-government opposition which occasionally appears, it is difficult to have faith in these emblematic concepts. I once asked one of the student activists from the demonstrations for democracy and human rights in 1986 whether he thought that each vote, including that of a peasant, should have equal weight. His answer gave me something to ponder. It was, 'Beware, no!'

The foreign gentlemen De and Sai who represent progress and modernity, democracy and science still have a huge impact on political thinking in China. They represent the illusion of a political system that has not come about in China, and they draw their energy from the dissatisfaction of those who dream that democracy and science can solve all their personal problems. Perhaps one day we may write the obituary of Mr De and Mr Sai. That day will mark the advent of a social and political consensus about China's governance. A consensus that we may call democracy, shared by peasants and workers, intellectuals and soldiers.

NOTES

1   By 'representative democracy' I here broadly refer to nation-wide institutionalized procedures for democratic governance in which a freely elected parliament with a *de facto* multi-party system forms the core.
2   On the multi-faceted symbolism and convoluted frames of reference present in popular political action, see also Esherick and Wasserstrom (1990).

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Chapter 8

Democratization and citizenship in Latin America

Paul Cammack

LATIN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND EMPIRICAL THEORY

It is both curious and instructive that the flowering of democracy in the 1980s in Latin America and elsewhere coincided with the collapse into incoherence of the behaviouralist effort to place the understanding of politics in general, and democracy in particular, on a new scientific footing. Verba laments that 'We have been studying political development for a long time but we are no longer confident of what it is or our ability to understand it' (1985:28–9), while for Dominguez twenty-five years of research on links between regime type and level of economic development 'have ended with a great deal less certainty on these matters than they began' (1987:85). Wiarda, seeing no coordinating or integrating theory, describes an atmosphere of 'unhappiness and disenchantment with the field' (1985:7); and for Mayer, a long-time devotee of the empiricist revolution, comparative politics is 'in a state of conceptual disarray, with little consensus on the nature or purpose of the field' (1989:273). As Easton concludes, 'students are no longer so certain about what politics is all about' (1991:284). The heady days of optimism in the future of 'political science as science' are far behind us: the best Lane and Ersson can do is to review a number of correlations (a technique Luskin (1991:1037) likens to 'a wet finger aloft in the wilderness'), admit that they 'do not suffice for the derivation of either necessary or sufficient conditions', and feebly suggest that in the future 'single-factor models may have to be replaced by combined ones' (1991:73).

If empiricist theory were our only guide, we would conclude that we have more democracy in the world than ever before, but less idea than ever why this should be so; and if practitioners of empiricist theory were true to their own probabilistic methodological principles, they would long ago have concluded that they were probably wasting their time, and turned their energies elsewhere. If they have made little progress it is not only because of the primitive manner in which increasingly sophisticated quantitative techniques are applied (King 1986), but more fundamentally, as Edwards notes in his contribution to this volume, because they have mistaken the nature of the world they are trying to explain. Even so, the grandees of the 1960s claim that the global spread of democracy has proved them right all along, advertising the fact that their normative commitment to capitalism and liberal democracy (in that order) takes precedence over the supposedly value-free scientific basis upon which they seek to understand the character and prospects of liberal democracy itself.

As far as Latin America is concerned, there certainly is something to be explained. Although virtually all the republics of Central and South America trace their political independence back to the first decades of the nineteenth century, none figures in Lijphart's list of the twenty-one countries which have known continuous democracy since the Second World War (1984:38), and Powell (1982:3–5) has only Costa Rica in his composite list of twenty-one core democracies. Studies focusing on the period after 1960 routinely include Venezuela, democratic since 1958. In the 1960s and 1970s, the idea that economic development might belatedly bring democracy in its wake seemed hopelessly disconfirmed, as Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay succumbed to long-term military rule. As noted at the time, the most advanced countries were the most severely affected. Yet in the late 1970s and 1980s a move back to democracy began, with the result that no pure military dictatorship now remains in power. There is as little support here as ever for devotees of robust correlations and universal laws. In South America, the transition affected the poorest countries in the region along with the wealthiest: Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador (with per capita GNP in 1980 of $1,080, 570 and 1,100 respectively, compared to an average of $9,424 for the developed-country democracies) actually led the way between 1979 and 1982. It took place during

the most severe economic crisis to affect the region since the 1930s, a circumstance which might explain the demise of authoritarian regimes previously in power, but not the universal move to democracy, or its virtually universal survival. As it affects every regime in the region regardless of socioeconomic variations it demands a *conjunctural* explanation, rather than one which treats them as separate cases abstracted from geographical and historical context.

The collapse into incoherence of the behavioural effort is registered in the four-volume study of democracy in developing countries edited by Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1988–9; vol. 1 forthcoming). In a compendium of the errors of contemporary empiricism, these scholars side-step the tedious business of theory construction, model building, and derivation and testing of hypotheses. Instead, they marshall ten theoretical dimensions, twenty-six countries, and forty-nine tentative propositions about the likelihood of stable democratic government, only to conclude that while there are plenty of arguments and lessons to be drawn from the study, 'these are not integrated into a single, all-encompassing theory, and . . it will be some time (if ever) before the field produces one' (1989:xiv).[1] The search for scientific truth has given way to a contradictory blend of normative commitment and policy advice. In a summary account of their conclusions the authors state their 'bias for democracy as a system of government' (Diamond *et al.* 1990:3), defined as meaningful and extensive competition, with highly inclusive levels of participation in the selection of leaders and policies through regular and fair elections, and a level of civil and political freedom sufficient to ensure the integrity of both competition and participation. They then enumerate the features likely to promote democratic stability: economic success and relative socio-economic equality; a responsive, accountable but relatively autonomous state; a strong and independent judiciary; a military oriented to external defence and subject to civilian control; flexible, accommodative and consensual leadership; a population sharing democratic political values and beliefs; reasonably stable and workable party systems; and a robust associatonal life. In conclusion they advise new rulers to cut back state economic ownership and control, reduce inequalities between rich and poor, and reorient economies to make them internationally competitive and attract foreign investment, and

call for skilful political crafting and courageous and wise policy choices by leaders, and patience and forbearance from publics and interest groups. In doing so, they simply yoke a description of an ideal type stable liberal democracy remote from the experience of the countries whose history they address to a set of policy prescriptions which is internally contradictory (in advocating a massive redistribution of income, for example, along with reduced state intervention and incentives to attract foreign capital), and linked to stable liberal democracy *only* by the pious thought that leaders should be courageous and wise, and publics forbearing and patient.

On specific policy dilemmas, they have nothing to offer. They urge the acute need for redistribution in Brazil, for example, but lamely remark that while reform is essential, it may also be impossible, as 'policies to reduce inequality, such as land reform, carry serious short-term policy risks, while reducing absolute poverty requires long-term policy commitments that may be politically difficult to sustain' (ibid.: 20). It is precisely because reform is both essential and impossible, of course, that Latin America's experience with democracy has been so limited. In short, Diamond *et al.* offer a normative model and a set of prescriptions which bear no relationship to the circumstances they describe, rendering the empiricist tradition within which they affect to work incoherent. For an understanding of the record and prospects of democracy in Latin America which enables us to address policy options and normative concerns more coherently, we must turn elsewhere.

CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA

Liberal democracy is a conjunctural historical phenomenon, explicable in terms of its structural conditions of emergence and reproduction, and their interaction with its own institutional dynamics. As such it can be understood theoretically only if the social context in which it emerges and is reproduced can be theorized. This task is beyond Diamond, Linz and Lipset, as they decline to examine the relationship between democracy and capitalism, on the absurd grounds that the concept of a capitalist economic system is so vague as to be 'almost meaningless' (1989: xx). On the contrary, it is the essential starting-point for a theoretical analysis of liberal democracy. Schumpeter noted fifty

years ago that 'historically, modern democracy arose along with capitalism, and in causal connection with it' (1970 [1942]:296), then went on to ask whether it might still be compatible with socialism. In a similar spirit, I take as a starting-point the historical and theoretical relationship between core capitalism and democracy, then examine as an open question its character and prospects in the peripheral capitalist economies of the Third World.

Briefly: capitalism is a mode of production in which a minority who own the means of production confront a majority who do not. National and international competition between capitalists and struggle between classes are the fundamental motors of change. Democracy is a form of rule in which non-capitalists potentially enjoy an unassailable majority. In general, capitalism and democracy will be compatible only if majority rule produces governments committed to continued capitalist reproduction. Otherwise, something has to give. Even in the advanced capitalist countries, democratic stability has not been easily achieved, and its survival cannot be guaranteed. But its attractions for capital and the mechanisms which tend to support its survival have both been extensively if belatedly theorized in the Marxist tradition (for examples see Gramsci 1971; Miliband 1977; Therborn 1978; Hunt 1980). In view of the prior need to theorize capitalism, and the contingent relationship between capitalism and democracy, there can be no universal laws, or explanation of democracy as a general phenomenon. It can be theorized in abstraction from the social circumstances in which it appears only in so far as the properties of the specific institutions in which it might be embodied can be explored through formal analysis.

For Therborn, in the first place 'the sphere of political representation is not independent of economically determined social relations', second, each situation has its own unique *conjunctural* logic; hence 'social reproduction must be secured in an endless chain of concrete situations. The state intervenes, not in generalized processes and crises, but in this or that moment and crisis.' The assent of the majority to capitalism, as expressed through voting for one or another pro-capitalist party, is conditioned by 'their submission and subjection to the bourgeoisie at work and in everyday life', not as a matter of either chance or structural determination, but as a consequence of the constant

efforts of the state and the ruling class to persuade the majority, through material and ideological initiatives, that no feasible alternative exists (Therborn 1978:170–1).

In successful democracies, two kinds of party have been central: the *bourgeois party,* which is 'above all a vehicle for the organization of other classes around the bourgeoisie', and the *party of labour,* which contributes to democratic stability so long as it shows 'no concrete ambition to move towards the establishment of a socialist society' (ibid.: 194, 209). However, there can be no iron law which rules out other institutional solutions to the problem of conciliating respect for the limits imposed by continued capitalist reproduction with universal suffrage.

Seen in these terms, Marxism offers a consistent comparative perspective from which democracy in central and peripheral capitalist societies can be analysed, allowing us to incorporate and correct the partial insights of theorists outside the classical Marxist tradition, such as Adam Przeworski and Stein Rokkan. Przeworski theorizes the specific case of social democracy, but in a one-sided way which overrates its ability to offer positive advances for workers, and ignores its ability to deny them alternatives. He explains the shift towards reformism in European social democracy as a consequence of the rational action of workers who find that they can improve their material conditions within capitalism, as the level of profits allows for both the reproduction of capital, and rising real wages (1985:136–7). But his formalization of the argument, based upon the claim that 'there must exist at any time a level of wage increases which is minimally necessary to reproduce consent' (ibid.: 147) errs in treating capitalism as a perpetual positive-sum game. To be accurate, all that is required to secure 'consent' is the ability to rule out other alternatives. In point of fact social democratic leaders have mostly proved their utility within capitalism by calling on their followers to make sacrifices in times of crisis, rather than by proving that gains are continuously possible: they press for class compromise *above all* in times of acute economic crisis, a phenomenon which Przeworski's logic rules out. This is clearly exemplified by the case of British social democracy. As Coates remarks, 'It is not simply that Labour politics never challenge the interconnections between the state machine and the capitalist order. It is rather that the Labour Party in power invariably *strengthens* those inter-

connections' (1975:151). In part, this is a consequence of the pressure of moderate leadership upon radical activists: as Miliband notes, there is 'no record of any Labour Party leaders ever having used their commanding position to press more radical policies on reluctant activists: the trend has always and uniformly been the other way' (1982:69).

Therborn's suggestion that the strength of advanced bourgeois rule 'probably lies above all in its polity—its political organisations and administrative machinery' (1978:195) reflects a relatively recent interest among Marxists in *institutional* aspects of democracy. It reflects the understanding that there is nothing automatic about the respect shown in democracies in advanced capitalist societies for the limits required for the reproduction of capitalism. If in large part it is the result of structural effects, it nevertheless needs to be secured through more or less appropriate, and more or less adaptable, institutional forms. A fuller analysis of the interrelationship of structural and institutional factors underpinning stable democracy, viewed from a political economy perspective perfectly compatible with historical materialism, can be found in the work of Lipset and Rokkan (1967), which places great weight upon the manner in which such factors interact in particular historical cases. Their classic analysis of the emergence of party systems in Europe focused, it will be remembered, on the timing, character and effects of successive national and industrial revolutions, and the generation out of conflicts between centre and periphery, church and state, and agriculture and industry of varying contexts within which the class struggles of the industrial era were faced. These in turn gave rise to different, enduring systems of political incorporation. At stake was the ability of pro-capitalist elites (whether liberal or conservative) to create in time the modern institutions that would allow them to meet the challenge of proletarian organization:

> Where the challenge of the emerging working-class parties had been met by concerted efforts of countermobilization through nationwide mass organizations on the liberal and conservative fronts, the leeway for new party formations was particularly small…. Correspondingly, the 'post-democratic' party systems proved markedly more fragile and open to newcomers in the countries where the privileged strata had relied on their local

power resources rather than on nationwide mass organizations in their efforts of mobilization.

(Lipset and Rokkan 1967:51)

This historical, structural, conjunctural and institutional approach, consistent with the Marxist framework outlined above, bears comparison more with Gramsci's discussion of Italian politics in the period of national unification, Tilly's broad comparative historical sociology, or Barrington Moore's analysis of the origins of democracy and dictatorship than with the decontextualized abstractions of behaviouralism. It leads us to approach Latin American political development not through the application to the region of generalizations drawn from Europe, but through a similar tracing of the impact of the national and industrial revolutions which Lipset and Rokkan take as their starting-point; in other words, through an analysis of national and industrial revolutions as *global* processes, and an examination of the form in which Latin America, as a distinctive region within the world system, experienced the process of the emergence of nation-states, and the spread of the international capitalist economy.

On these two dimensions the Latin American republics share a common history which sets them apart on crucial structural and institutional dimensions from the more successful democratic states in Europe, and from other regions of the Third World: *early political independence* from the Iberian powers, Spain and Portugal, and incorporation into the global capitalist economy at a relatively early stage of the industrial revolution through *export-led development* based upon the supply of agricultural and mineral raw materials to the industrializing centre. In contrast to the pattern of conflict between contending powers over a long period of time in Europe, state formation in Latin America stemmed from a single source, the *collapse* of Iberian rule, largely as a consequence of developments in Europe, in a narrow time-frame between 1810 and 1830; it did not coincide with a local challenge to the pre-eminence of the Catholic Church from Protestantism; nor did it lead to a strong challenge to agriculture from new industrial interests. On the contrary, the dominance of landed elites was reinforced as a consequence of rapid export-led growth, particularly between 1880 and 1930. The implications for the future development of democratic politics were momentous. As we have seen, Lipset and Rokkan argue from European experience

that pro-capitalist elites succeeded in containing the challenge of working-class parties and creating stable democracies where they were able to create modern national mass political parties at an early stage in the process of mass mobilization. Where this did not happen it was not until after the Second World War, in the specific conjuncture arising from the defeat of the axis powers, that the realm of liberal democracy could be significantly extended. In Latin America, few opportunities or incentives existed before 1930 for the construction of modern political parties into which the working class might be recruited, and the developments that took place after 1930 created new obstacles to stable democracy even as they sought to remove those already in existence.

CLASS, STATE AND PARTIES IN LATIN AMERICA AFTER 1930

The key to Latin American politics in the half-century after the crash of 1929 lies in the enduring loss of dominant class hegemony which resulted from it. Before 1930 the dominant classes across the region had not succeeded in building modern political institutions. Only the southern cone republics of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay had significantly extended participation in electoral politics, but in no case was the working class securely incorporated into nation-wide mass organizations.

In Argentina, where obligatory universal male franchise was introduced in 1912, the bulk of the working class, of recent European immigrant stock, opted not to take Argentine citizenship, while a minority supported the Socialist Party and enabled it to win representation in both Houses of Congress before the First World War. But even in the federal capital, manual workers made up only 22 per cent of the electorate in 1918, and were heavily outnumbered by professionals, who accounted for 14 per cent, and public employees, who made up 30 per cent (Walter 1977:237–8). After a half-hearted attempt to build working-class support, the ruling Radical Party (UCR) responded with a blend of repression (notoriously in the 'tragic week' of January 1919) and machine politics based upon government patronage of public employees. Far from a step towards dominant class hegemony in conditions of universal suffrage and competitive politics, the 1912 reform was 'a

stragetic retreat by the elites to buttress the existing social order' (Rock 1987:213). As such it reached its limits when the depression deprived the government of patronage resources, and undermined general acceptance of export-led development as the best hope of prosperity.

In Chile, the extension of suffrage from the 1870s onwards reflected exactly the use by conservatives of their 'local power resources' to recruit peasant clients as a means to block working-class influence. By 1921, when registration peaked at just under 40 per cent of the adult male population, politics was essentially clientelistic. Votes and support were commonly purchased with jobs and bribes, and it was estimated to cost the equivalent of $3,000 to win a seat in the Chamber of Deputies, and up to ten times as much to gain election to the Senate. This system was entirely incapable of expanding to meet the challenge of mass working-class participation: as late as 1949 the proportion of the population voting was smaller than in 1912 (Remmer 1984:77–85). In Uruguay, the combination of extremely successful export-led development and the concentration of the population in the capital also led to the development of machine politics based upon the distribution of government revenues. The political philosophy and practice of *batllismo* (developed by President José Batlle y Ordoñez from 1903) aimed at winning support from the middle classes, and from public employees in particular. It lacked the capacity for dynamic response to changing circumstances. For example, electoral legislation introduced in 1910 to accommodate competing clientelistic factions within loosely organized parties (the *ley de lemas*) continues in operation today, demonstrating the failure to develop modern political parties from the makeshift organizations of the earlier period (Finch 1981:13–14).

These represent the most advanced examples of party development under oligarchic rule in Latin America before 1930, and in none were bourgeois forces able to organize effective parties after the depression brought an end to the period of export-led development. Perón's organization of the Argentine working class, initially from his position within the military regime of 1943–6, gave him an unassailable electoral majority vulnerable only to military intervention. Only in 1983 did the Radicals succeed again in winning power through the ballot box. In Chile, the apparent continuity of democratic politics between 1932 and 1973 masked

underlying instability arising from two structural faults. The first was the failure to develop any stable vehicle for bourgeois politics: the period saw the succession in power of the Liberals, the Popular Front, the Radicals, the conservative populist General Ibañez, the independent Conservative Jorge Alessandri, and the Christian Democrats, before Allende won power by a narrow margin in 1970. No bourgeois option ever succeeded in winning re-election after losing power in the whole period. Second, the Socialist and Communist Parties remained independent and outside the system from the 1950s onwards, reaching the brink of power in 1958 and securing the presidency in 1970, while their bourgeois rivals proved incapable of either undercutting their support or accepting or modifying their programme for reform. In these circumstances, military intervention was a disaster waiting to happen. And in Uruguay, the system collapsed into incoherence between 1930 and 1973 as the logic of political competition between rival clienteles became entirely unhinged from the play of class interests arising from the stagnation of the hitherto successful export economy.

On the question of the institutional form and developmental capacity of competing political projects in the wake of the depression, each country has its own particular story to tell, and its own measure of tragedy. In El Salvador, forlorn and swiftly terminated attempts at reform launched in 1931, 1945, 1960 and 1979 punctuated periods of dictatorship and repression which represented the interests and reflected the political incapacity of ruthless capitalist modernization (Dunkerley 1982). In Colombia, Liberal-Conservative rivalry led in the 1950s to a multi-faceted crisis marked by deep splits over reform and anti-reform options in each party, the collapse of the machinery of state as a consequence of the inroads of clientelistic in-fighting, and the spiralling out of control of the antagonism between peasant supporters of the Liberal and Conservative parties respectively which had been fostered in part to block the emergence of horizontal class challenges to dominant class hegemony (Oquist 1980). In these and other cases, the key feature was the inability of bourgeois forces to develop the political and institutional capacity to secure their interests over time through democratic politics. The eventual consequence in each case was military intervention, with the resulting regimes varying considerably in their willingness and ability to respond directly to the expressed needs of the dominant classes.

It is a distinctive feature of the Latin American cases, arising from export-led development with limited industrialization, that the political incapacity of the dominant class confronted a corresponding weakness on the part of the working class itself, often divided between largely separate urban and rural contingents, and between a tiny modern factory proletariat and a far larger mass employed in small workshops or in precarious informal occupations. In these circumstances the challenges to bourgeois rule in the half-century after the depression tended to come not from parties of labour, but from *sui generis* 'parties of the state', founded and led by political entrepreneurs from executive positions within the state itself, which generated support through discriminatory use of the capacity of the state to repress and reward. These were most successful when they made the incorporation of workers into state-controlled unions their prime strategy, and combined it with a programme of state-led industrialization.

The most significant characteristics of this form of politics, generally described as 'populist', were its conjunctural success as a 'second-best' option for dominant classes bereft of options of their own, and workers hitherto used to neglect or repression; its tendency to lose over time the ability upon which this success depended both to control its working-class clientele and to keep the dominant classes at arm's length; and its *fundamental* antipathy to democracy, dependent as it was upon the use of state power to deny free political association to opposition and supporters alike. The universal response of military rule across the region as the cycle of instability unfolded after 1930 owed as much to the undemocratic character of the most successful challenges to elite hegemony as to the incapacity for democratic politics of the dominant classes themselves—populist institutions barred the emergence of competitive party politics or democratic alternatives as their own capacity to manage the polity decayed. Widespread resort to direct military rule was not the first but the third denial of democracy in twentieth-century Latin America, following upon the practices of exclusion and clientelistic incorporation pursued successively by elites deprived of hegemony and their populist rivals. These practices were not thoughtless aberrations, to be amended by exhortations to act with wisdom and courage. On the contrary, they represented rational responses which testified to the structural

limits to the political capacity of bourgeois parties and semi-autonomous populists alike.

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICA

One significant conclusion to be drawn from the preceding discussion is that in Latin America democracy and citizenship have been contradictory rather than complementary categories. It would be a mistake to regard this aspect of politics in the region as simply reflecting the fact, accepted in much orthodox democratic theory, that no real-world democracy will fully meet the normative standards of the ideal type. For it is not just that democracy has functioned *despite* relatively low levels of participation and associational activity; rather, it has *required* them, and has broken down—as in Brazil in 1964 and in Chile in 1973—whenever the assertion of citizenship has looked likely to breach imposed limits. The structural weakness of peripheral capitalism and the associated institutional weakness of locally dominant classes have combined to produce the poor record of democratic achievement in the region. The contradiction between democracy and citizenship is a structural effect of peripheral capitalist development at a specific historical moment. The perception that it remains unresolved today shows through in the account given by Diamond, Linz and Lipset, and explains the unbridged gulf between the normative standards to which they pay lip-service, and the policy advice they offer.

Other recent analyses of the Latin American transition address it more directly. Malloy (1987) bluntly acknowledges the absence of convincing general theories of Latin American development, and the many obstacles to the full development of stable democracy. His response is to accept that both democratic and authoritarian impulses are permanent features of Latin American politics, responsible for cyclical movements between the two forms of regime in the past, and to recommend 'prudential rules for action' which allow a form of democracy to survive. These centre on the suggestion that the two impulses should be contained in a single hybrid regime based upon coalitions between civilian and military leaders, strong executive power and provision for quasi-authoritarian rule in times of crisis. Like it or not, he is saying, Latin Americans should learn to live with their

authoritarian culture. Whereas Diamond, Linz and Lipset avoid the issue, he openly advocates a self-denying form of limited democracy, in which the rights of citizenship are voluntarily laid aside. O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) appear at first to take a different view, as they agree that the structural impediments to democratic consolidation are immense, but point to the change brought about by the resurgence of democratic values in the region. They attribute the fall of authoritarian rule largely to the resurgence of active citizenship, but then follow Malloy in counselling caution now that democracy has been restored, advising civilian leaders to eschew hasty social and economic reform, treat armies and bourgeois property rights as sacred, persuade trade unions to discipline their members, and create parties which function as 'instruments of social and political control' (1986:58). In other words, having praised citizenship for its role in making authoritarian rule unsustainable, they now come to bury it.

The impression that something is askew here is readily confirmed if we return briefly to Przeworski, the apostle of democratic consolidation through the rational response of workers to the prospect of progressive gains under capitalism. When he turns his attention to Latin America, he does so in the following contrary manner:

> It seems as if an almost complete docility and patience on the part of organized workers are needed for a democratic transformation to succeed. Here again it may be worth noting that the democratic system was solidified in Belgium, Sweden, France and Great Britain only after organized workers were badly defeated in mass strikes and adopted a docile posture as a result. We cannot avoid the possibility that a transition to democracy can be made only at the cost of leaving economic relations intact, not only the structure of production but even the distribution of income.
>
> (Przeworski 1986:63)

This passage contradicts his empirical and theoretical account of the European case discussed above, and in doing so reveals more clearly the structural limits to bourgeois democracy. At the same time, the parallel drawn obscures the important fact that in the European cases the regimes cited did eventually prove to have

the material and institutional resources to move, in Gramscian terms, from domination to hegemony. As we have seen, the institutional capacity of Latin American regimes has hitherto been much weaker, and this is clearly also the case as far as material resources are concerned. Concurring on the latter point, Przeworski is led to advocate a democracy within which workers voluntarily renounce all hope of material advance, in well-documented circumstances of extreme inequality in the distribution of income and wealth. This amounts to an admission that if his theory is valid, democracy in Latin America cannot work, as it follows directly from it that candidates offering material improvements will inevitably put themselves forward for election, and will attract support.

From either a normative or an analytical perspective, then, there is a deep contradiction in all these approaches. They proclaim the value of political democracy as an end in itself, only to move immediately to urge the voluntary renunciation of the rights of citizenship to achieve its consolidation. The relationship between citizenship and democracy is admittedly complex, in part because attempts to push the 'frontiers' of each concept forward keep both terms fluid (Vogel and Moran 1991). Here, the point of comparative interest is simple. In the core democracies, the focus of interest has long since moved away from concern with political citizenship in the democratic nation-state. For as long as the 'welfare state' has been an object of analysis, much debate has revolved around the extension of democratic rights to social and economic areas; and in recent years the status of the nation-state as the unit within which issues of democracy and citizenship are to be resolved has been questioned, as attention has turned both to devolution of decision-making to the local level, and to emerging supra-national entities upon which citizenship and democratic rights might be based. In Latin America, in contrast, the foundations of each are so fragile that proposals to extend their frontiers and their range take second place to the prior imperative of securing *for the first time* the basic ground upon which they stand.

In much of the region rights essential to the effective practice of liberal democracy defined even in narrow procedural terms— freedom of opinion, expression, speech, assembly and association within the rule of law; the right to cast a free vote and stand for office; competitive, free and fair elections; and institutional

arrangements which make government responsive to preferences expressed therein—do not obtain.[2] Until conditions for the exercise of effective political citizenship exist, there is little chance that currently existing institutions will survive, and as little justification for regarding them as democratic. Far from it being the case that social and economic advancement can be considered separable from and additional to the consolidation of political democracy, the realization of citizenship which is essential if *political* democracy is to be a reality itself requires substantial *social* and *economic* reform. What is required is not the extension of already secure procedural democracy and political citizenship to new social and economic areas, but substantive reform to remove social and economic obstacles to the realization of political citizenship itself.

DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA

Fox (1990:11) has recently asserted that rural democratization in Latin America requires 'a shift in the balance of forces in society'. He draws attention in doing so to a number of obstacles to the exercise of citizenship in much of Latin America: the blocking of participation outside elections by local elites and state security forces, the prevalence of clientelism, and elite resistance to the building of strong and autonomous associations by the poor themselves. In the same volume Grzybowski draws on the experience of rural workers' and rubber tappers' movements in Brazil to argue that such social movements, far from being antagonistic to liberal democracy, are striving to bring about the conditions in which meaningful political democracy can exist. He goes on to suggest that if the voice of the dispossessed rural majority is finally heard, it will inevitably demand alternative strategies of development to those pursued under the model of savage capitalism pursued by the military over two-and-a-half decades. In other words, if citizenship and democratic participation become a reality, they will inevitably lead to demands for long overdue social and economic change.

   At present leaders of such democratic political movements as those discussed by Grzybowski, with Chico Mendes the best-known example, have become targets of routine assassination whenever they have seemed to be achieving success. The oppression of the peasantry by landowners and the state is not

an issue across the whole of the region, but it remains a major obstacle to democracy in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru, to name only the most notorious cases. In El Salvador the right-wing party in power, ARENA, bases its dominance in equal measure upon clientelism and repression in the countryside, and the manipulation of electoral legislation in order to disenfranchise that proportion of the rural population it cannot intimidate or control. In Guatemala, the threat of anti-system mobilization was contained, before the formal withdrawal of the military from power, by the little matter of 40,000 murders by the security forces, and the subsequent installation of a system of regional security, still controlled by the military, that makes free political association impossible, except on pain of death (Handy 1986). Colombia's Conservative and Liberal parties have maintained their hold by the practice of traditional clientelism 'utterly irreconcilable with the principle of political citizenship', again in conjunction with repression of popular movements which has mounted as drug dealers have bought up land and moved harshly against any form of peasant mobilization (Zamosc 1990:50, 71–2).

In the whole of the 'democratic decade' of the 1980s, the conditions which deny democratic participation to the rural majority in large parts of Latin America were effectively challenged in only one case, that of Nicaragua, which is conveniently classed by theorists of democratization as a case of socialist revolution, and omitted without further ceremony from comparative debate. In the wake of the overthrow of the Somoza dynasty in 1979 the Sandinistas moved to empower the hitherto powerless majority, introducing a new constitution and creating institutions which enabled peasants and small producers not only to escape the grip of previous repression by landowners and the state, but also to win the implementation of a redistributive land reform at first resisted by the national leadership itself (Luciak 1987). In removing in a decade structural impediments to democratic participation which have been reinforced elsewhere in order to achieve the appearance of democracy with minimal risk to vested interests, the Sandinistas created the conditions for the effective exercise of political citizenship, as well as the formal institutions of competitive democracy. At the same time, admittedly, the new regime declined to observe the limits of tolerance of peripheral capitalism, prompting massive illegal

intervention from the Reagan and Bush regimes, effective by 1990 in persuading the war-weary population to elect the rag-tag coalition headed by Violeta Chamorro.

This discussion suggests that the aspirations of the Sandinistas and their followers were better attuned to the normative model of democracy endorsed by Diamond, Linz and Lipset than any of the political practices they themselves feel able to advocate. Similarly, the most authentic reflection of democratic sentiment in South America over the last decade is represented by the Workers' Party in Brazil, founded in 1979 in the wake of successful resistance to the labour policy of the military regime. Drawing for its inspiration and support upon a wide range of lay Catholic, feminist, neighbourhood, worker and peasant movements, it aims to build an autonomous alternative to the corporatist institutions into which workers had hitherto been recruited, and a vehicle for the organization of the dispossessed. In so doing it takes as its central goal 'the extension of full rights of citizenship to all' (Sader and Silverstein 1991:106). Such democratic empowerment might well lead to land reform, and the repudiation of the enormous foreign debt piled up by the former military dictatorship, again bringing into question the limits of tolerance of peripheral capitalism.

In their shared recognition of the deficiency of democratic practice in the past, and their commitment to the creation of the conditions for full citizenship in the present, the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and the Workers' Party in Brazil pose but do not resolve the question of whether peripheral capitalism and liberal democracy can be compatible in Latin America. The cases of Costa Rica and Venezuela—the two recognized examples of successful liberal democracy in the region—suggest that under certain conditions they can, but give little direct guidance as regards the cases of recent transition. In each case, high levels of participation in conditions of genuine competition and reasonably effective citizenship have been maintained over long periods. Shared structural, institutional and conjunctural factors can readily be identified, notably the relative weakness of landowners in the export period in each case, the realization of significant reforms in the period of transition (the abolition of the armed forces in the case of Costa Rica, and the oil-funded land reform in Venezuela), favourable economic circumstances during transition and consolidation, and firm anti-communism in periods

of cold-war politics. In each case a regime committed to pro-capitalist reform was able to build a popular base capable of repeatedly winning power, and push other parties to accept competitive electoral politics. If these democracies have their limitations (the communists were banned in Costa Rica until 1970, while increasing instability in Venezuela culminated in the removal of President Carlos Andres Perez on corruption charges in May 1993), they are shared by other modern liberal democracies.

There is little to suggest that in the different circumstances of the 1990s such forms of democratic consolidation will be achieved. The new democracies score well for allowing genuine competition, but badly for producing parties capable of securing enduring support. No incumbent has won re-election since the first transition took place in 1979. In Peru the presidency has gone to a different party in three successive elections, with that of the incumbent barely reaching double figures. Chile is still governed under the largely unreformed constitution bequeathed by General Pinochet, which greatly favours the right and removes large areas of national life from democratic control (Loveman 1991), while Brazil is only the most striking of a number of cases in which the party system has lurched more deeply into disarray as the transition has proceeded (Mainwaring 1991). In Brazil and Peru, presidents have been elected with virtually no previously organized party support, and have governed, as in Argentina and Ecuador, as much by executive decree as with Congress. In the light of this, neither the abrogation of the constitution by Fujimori in Peru nor the crisis which engulfed Collor in 1992 should occasion surprise. Much of the support enjoyed by the centrist or centre-right leaders of the transitions has been dissipated, not least by their refusal to contemplate progressive social or economic reform. By the early 1990s the running was being made by exponents of economic liberalization, whose efforts clearly suited the interests of international capital, but looked less likely to challenge the entrenched structures of power which have so far denied effective individual agency to the majority of Latin Americans.

It would be ironic, although perfectly explicable in terms of the current character of global capitalism, if Latin America were to enter into a period of institutional democracy at a time when states in the region, as elsewhere, were shedding responsibility

for the effective empowerment of their inhabitants as citizens. One can certainly have meaningful citizenship without democracy. It has taken the 'skilful political crafting' of political leaders in Latin America to engineer, with the enthusiastic endorsement of today's empirical theorists, a new phenomenon: democracy without citizenship.

NOTES

1   For a detailed critique, see Cammack (1991a).
2   I do not mean to imply that these conditions obtain fully in the core democracies. They clearly do not, with the United Kingdom among the most glaring offenders (see Holliday, this volume). But the broad contrast drawn here still holds.

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Chapter 9

Staying at home with the wife: democratization and its limits in the Middle East

David Pool

INTRODUCTION

Standard accounts of democracy give little or no attention to the Middle East. A recent study of democracy in developing countries in Asia excludes the region on the grounds that 'the Islamic countries of the Middle East and North Africa generally lack much previous democratic experience, and most appear to have little prospect of transition even to semi-democracy' (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1989:xx). Two comparative surveys (Lijphart 1984; Powell 1982) include Israel in a category of 'continuously democratic' but because of its particularly distinct pattern of state formation Israel will not be considered here. Turkey is included in a secondary category of 'other democracies'/'democratic regime seriously suspended'. For Lijphart, 'Lebanese democracy was a good example of the consensus model and could have served well as one of the illustrations of this model' (Lijphart 1984:40). Powell excludes Lebanon on the grounds that the majority of legislators were not members of a political party. (Powell 1982:7). Given the essence of Lijphart and Powell's conception of democracy (freedom to organize, vote and express opinion; electoral competition; accountability of governments through electoral means) and given that there was no consistent legal exclusion of parties, it makes some sense to include Lebanon along with Turkey as a state which has had lengthy periods where elections and democratic institutions have functioned.

As in many parts of the Third World, establishing and sustaining even partially-democratic systems has been difficult and authoritarian rule has been more common. Even where

political parties with a degree of internal democracy have seized power, like the Ba'th in Syria and Iraq, they have become vehicles for autocrats like Hafiz al-Asad and Saddam Hussein.

The 'democratic experience' of the 'Islamic and Arab countries' has been partial but not absent. Egypt and Turkey had early periods of consultative assemblies in the nineteenth century and Turkey and Iran in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries elected parliaments which attempted to limit imperial autocracies. During the period of the French and British mandates in the Fertile Crescent and the British Protectorate over Egypt assemblies were elected and continued into the independence period, albeit falteringly. In the Gulf, Bahrain and Kuwait have also had elected assemblies. More recently, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Algeria have undergone a degree of political liberalization with the introduction of multi-party systems and relatively free elections. It would be wrong to claim that a great deal of power has been gained by parliaments and parties and, in many instances, they have been more accountable to government for their performance than to an electorate.

Although the democratic experience of the Middle East has been limited to particular periods and the institutional form it has taken requires the qualifying prefixes of 'quasi-' and 'semi-', the lack of transition to broader participation at these different periods, the phenomenon of periodic and partial democracy and the current phase of political liberalization merit discussion.

The analysis falls into two parts. In the first part, I shall review some general and specific arguments about, and approaches to, the limited nature of democracy in the Middle East and North Africa. These include oriental despotism, modernization, the rentier state and consociational democracy. In the second part I shall present an account of the historical pattern of partial and spasmodic democracy in the Middle East, linking together three phases: the post-independence period, the authoritarian period and the current phase of political liberalization. In this last phase, it is useful to distinguish between liberalization, a process involving a shift away from an authoritarian system and the introduction of some democratic practices, and democratization, a process involving the extension of the liberalization process into a more stable and rooted political order. For all three phases, however, there has been a degree of continuity in that quasi-

democracy has generally involved establishing an electoral process with elected assemblies as its fulcrum.

APPROACHES TO MIDDLE EAST DEMOCRACY

Orientalism and oriental despotism

We can dispense with the view that there has been no democracy in the Middle East because there has been no tradition of democracy but rather an alternative tradition grounded in a culture of despotism, symbolized by the much-quoted ninth-century Caliph Mamun: 'The best life has he who has an ample house, a beautiful wife, and sufficient means, who does not know us and whom we do not know' (Kedourie 1992:15). A contemporary echo of a similar attitude can be found in the curt, and possibly apocryphal, comment of an anonymous Iraqi Ba'thist officer cited by Batatu: 'He who is not with us should stay at home with his wife' (Batatu 1978:1095). To link twentieth-century authoritarianism to an historically seamless culture and 'tradition' of power requires an analysis of why authoritarianism has been sustained in qualitatively distinct historical epochs. It also requires a more rigorous analysis of what constitutes tradition than that of randomly selected quotations. We shall show later, and have already mentioned briefly, that arbitrary sultanic rule faced severe problems from the early nineteenth century onwards as the pillars of the Ottoman empire fell.

We should add, too, that the view that Islam is utterly incompatible with democracy, whatever form the latter takes, is to view Islam from a limited and simplistic perspective. Contemporary Islam can be democratic, undemocratic and anti-democratic and the political orientations of Muslims and Islamic movements have exhibited similar variations. The current phase of political liberalization (during which Islamic movements have emerged as the dominant force within oppositions) provides a testing ground for the compatibility of particular Islamic movements with a process of political liberalization rather than the broader compatibility of Islam and democracy. In the final section of this analysis we shall return to this issue with an analysis of Algeria, where the abrupt curtailment of liberalization in early 1992 indicates that some secular

liberalizers, particularly those associated with state institutions, find democratization incompatible with an electoral victory for an Islamic movement.

Modernization and the Middle East

As in other parts of the Third World, the absence of democracy has been linked to the absence of modernity, usually conceived of as Westernization. Industrialization, urbanization, the growth in communications, the expansion of education and literacy were thought likely to create a differentiated pluralist society which would sustain a democratic order. Although this approach has been considered naive, it has acquired academic currency in case analyses of Turkish politics, where reinforcing an increase in the indices mentioned above, twentieth-century governments have been formed by avowedly Westernizing ideologues with links to the modernizing nineteenth-century bureaucratic reformers and the Westernizing Ataturk revolution. Turkey has found its place in political science works on modernization from the 1950s to the present (Rustow 1956; Ozbuden 1989). Turkey's democratic order, however, has been interrupted by recurrent military interventions. It is clear that the problems of democracy in Turkey have as much to do with the development of social forces emerging from the increase in the quotients of modernity. The difficulties of the unilineal and universalist assumptions of the modernization school are evident in the otherwise interesting piece by Ozbuden where he remarks, without a trace of irony, that 'Turkey is one of the few countries that are more democratic politically than they ought to have been according to the level of their socioeconomic development' (Ozbuden 1989:227). Nor have the 'ten theoretical dimensions', suggested by authors whose intellectual roots lie in this approach, simplified the work of the would-be comparativist. Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1989:xx) propose analysing the following:

> political culture; regime legitimacy and effectiveness; historical development (in particular the colonial experience); class structure and degree of inequality; national structure (ethnic, racial, regional and religious cleavage); state structure, centralization and strength (including the state's role in the economy, the roles of autonomous voluntary associations and

the press, federalism and the armed forces); political and constitutional structure (parties, electoral systems, the judiciary); political leadership; development performance; and the international factors.

The rentier state and democracy

Writers of the modernization tendency stressed the constraints on developing and sustaining democracy imposed by low levels of economic and social development. In the Middle East, the oil-rich welfare states of the Gulf face the reverse of this problem. In a recent collection of essays some social scientists have suggested that there are particular limits on democratic development in states which depend on rent. There are differences of perspective but they share certain propositions (Luciani 1990; Beblawi 1990). In brief, the argument is the following: state revenue is derived from external rather than domestic sources, accrues directly to the state and, as a consequence of this process, the state is markedly autonomous from society. There is no requirement to tax citizens and without taxation there is unlikely to be any demand for representation. The function of the rentier state is an allocative one: it distributes the externally earned revenues. The general connection made is between source of revenue, form of government and the attenuation of democratic demands.

There does seem a lot of sense in arguing that a state whose revenue is not predicated on developing domestic productive resources, and one in which the functions of government are allocative rather than extractive and redistributive, is a distinctive one. Although the line of analysis is both interesting and stimulating, it is difficult to accept some of the conclusions as they relate to the establishment and/or maintenance of democracy. In assuming that allocation to citizens will be sufficient to establish a stable relationship between an autonomous state and its society, the political consequences of the inequity of allocation and consciousness of that inequity are discounted. State structures responsible for unequal allocation are as likely to induce social and political protest as are structures of production, particularly when they are based on unequal relations of power. Political inequality in rich states has been as much a motor of democratic demands as inequalities in income and wealth. In the Arab Gulf, where the concept of the rentier state has been frequently applied,

it is from relatively prosperous middle classes and merchants that demands for democratization have originated (Crystal 1990). It is likely, however, that democratization will be partial: limited to citizens and thus excluding large numbers of residents. What is equally likely, and paralleling the political logic of allocation of welfare, is that rulers and ruling families of rentier states would devolve some power to ensure their survival. (The current phase of liberalization in the Middle East, as we shall see, has some elements of such a process of devolution).

Consociational democracy: the case of Lebanon

Lijphart has proposed the consociational/consensual model of democracy as one which fits societies with significant social cleavages, phenomena common to many Middle Eastern societies. In such a model, political elites act as a bridge between social segments to produce a consensus. Through their represention of group interests and through intra-elite bargaining and veto compromise emerges. Lijphart excludes Lebanon after the 1975 civil war from his category of democratic states and no blame can be placed on him for not pursuing the case to discover whether the Lebanese system operated on a basis other than on consensualist/consociational principles or whether the conditions for this kind of democracy ceased to exist. His concern was for the living and not the dead and for a limited institutional process.

My comments on Lebanon and the operation of democratic institutions there will be presented at some length because the analysis of Lebanon is similar to the one treating post-independence quasi-democracy in the Middle East. The following analysis of consociationalism and Lebanon is thus intended to act as a bridge between my discussion of approaches to democracy in the Middle East and the first part of the ensuing comparative historical analysis. Although Lebanon had the appearance of consociationalism, I shall argue that ruling-class interests were the major factor in sustaining its democratic institutions and that a similar kind of analysis can be made for the post-independence parliamentary systems in the wider Middle East.

Lebanon had the look of a consociational system, in that elections, parliaments and governments were based on the

representation by elites of major religious cleavages. Parliamentary and government elites, however, represented two wings of a ruling group which had far more in common with each other than with the religious communities which elected them. Furthermore, it was the consensus between these two wings on a minimalist state which provided the relative stability that Lebanon enjoyed between 1943 and 1975. The minimalist state perpetuated the power of this ruling group rather than providing any representative function. When Lebanon came most closely to approximate the consociational model it disintegrated.

Elite positions were distributed to reflect religious cleavages. The three *ri'asa* (presidencies), those of state, prime minister, and speaker of the assembly, were allocated to the Maronite, Sunni Muslim and Shi'a, respectively, and seats in the assembly on a 6:5 ratio of Christian to Muslim. Appointments to bureaucratic positions were made on a similar basis. There was cooperation across sects between elected politicians and candidates for election providing an institutional basis for the 'cartelization of the elite', to put it in consociational terms. For example, multiple-member constituencies with representation based on fixed sect proportions resulted in a cross-sect electoral list system. The president was elected by the assembly and thus any Maronite aspirant required the votes of non-Maronites, as any Sunni Muslim aspirant for the post of prime minister required a workable political relationship with the Maronite president who appointed him.

Elections were conducted on the basis of an exchange of votes for services with heads of families and clans delivering votes in exchange for a variety of favours. Such transactions were usually done in a personalistic way and within the confines of the sect, although not always so. Dissatisfaction of voters with their representatives would normally turn on an unfulfilled promise rather than a vote on a policy issue. The 'elite cartel', then, only partly represented cleavage interests for it equally represented the particularistic interests of individuals, families and clans. It also represented itself in a way that made for a stable system of patron-clientelism. The greatest proportion of deputies were businessmen and landlords, with a growing number of lawyers who were linked to Lebanese or foreign business interests. This ruling group determined the nature of the Lebanese political and

economic systems: a non-interventionist *laissez-faire* economy and a minimalist state.

The origins of the system lay in developments which took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when a modern capitalist economy emerged centring around the coast with Beirut at its core (Fawaz 1983; Johnson 1986). From this segment there originated a thriving bourgeoisie consisting of import-export merchants, bankers, financiers and agents of Western commercial and banking concerns. The peripheral south, north and east were dominated by the more traditional landowners, some of whom moved into commerce and business or commercial agriculture after independence. (It was a process rather similar to that which took place in Iraq and Syria, as we shall detail below). When combined, these two wings of the ruling group consistently blocked any attempt to expand the role of the state. The modern economic sector was based on imports, re-exports and finance, with banking secrecy laws to encourage the flow of funds from the early oil-producing states. Attempts to establish protected manufacturing concerns or establish state controls over banking foundered against the veto of import and banking interests. The peripheral landowners benefited from the minimal state in a more indirect way: weak security services, limited provision of education, the lack of wage or tenancy regulations provided them with social, economic and political predominance over their tenants and share-croppers.

A major outcome of this alliance was the limited provisions made by the Lebanese state. Education, welfare, medicine, housing and employment were almost wholly in the private sector. Control over and access to these goods were mediated by the political elite and were at the heart of their patronage power. In essence, the minimalist state buttressed not only a patronage system but the political position of those who operated the economy, which in turn made them the pivot of democratic politics based on the exchange of favours for votes.

The complex process of disintegration cannot be traced fully here but at its root was the inability of the patrons to provide favours on the same kind of individualistic basis, when tens of thousands migrated into the cities as a consequence of Israeli bombing of the south, and peasant dispossessions, and welfare, employment and housing demands on a large scale surfaced into Lebanese politics. The response of important segments of the

Muslim political leadership was to demand changes in the proportional basis of sectarian representation, a demand staunchly opposed by many Maronite politicians. The closer representation was linked to the essence of cleavage representation the more conflict in Lebanon became sectarian rather than multi-dimensional and the less able was the elite cartel to pursue the consensus based on a shared class interest.

In many important respects the case of Lebanon is illustrative of the problems arising from the inclusion of a Third World political system, with superficially comparable intitutional processes, into a model of politics based on the operation of Western democratic institutions with their particular characteristics. The operation of Lebanese democracy, however, does have parallels with the way in which Middle Eastern post-independence partial democracies have worked, and marked similarities with their origins. The major differences lie with the make-up of particular strata involved in the operation of a limited form of democratic institutions and processes.

PATTERNS OF MIDDLE EAST DEMOCRACY

Central to the fate of democratic institutions in the Middle East has been the relationship of the region to the international economy. It will be argued that the two phases of democracy— quasi-democracy of the post-independence period and the current phase of liberalization—are directly and indirectly linked to aspects of the development of the political economy of the area, the most important of which are:

1 The outcome of the incorporation of the Middle East into the international economy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the ensuing colonial period.
2 The nationalist-statist failure to achieve its proclaimed goal of establishing national economic independence and, combining with that failure, the economic restructuring consequent on the global crisis of the 1970s and 1980s. During this latter period there was a degree of protection from the crisis through direct and indirect access to oil revenues, although the slump in oil prices through the 1980s eroded this protective cover.

The origins of the first phase of quasi-democracy

During the nineteenth century the expansion of European imperialism corroded the financial bases of the Ottoman imperium. That system consisted of the sultan and court at the apex of an imperial bureaucracy and military both of which were organized for the extraction of tax. Although European economic and political expansion brought forth a local mercantile class, a group which might have been expected to promote itself at the expense of state power and take advantage of imperial decline, the non-Muslim ethnic make-up of the urban commercial classes forestalled such a development. The minoritarian non-Muslim merchants sought and gained the protection of the foreign consuls in Istanbul and Cairo. The indebtedness of the Ottoman empire to the European states and their banks provided these local diplomatic representatives with considerable power, and transformed the capitulations (economic privileges granted to non-Muslims in an earlier era) into a means of expanding European commerce and allowing its practitioners autonomy from imperial regulation. As a consequence these local merchants and traders sought the support of European embassies and did not, and did not need to, confront the imperial or Egyptian authorities directly.

It was from another class, originating in the nineteenth century, that the social roots of the first democratic phase can be located: the landowners. In seeking to re-assert Ottoman and Egyptian power against European encroachment, local dynasties sought to centralize and modernize army and bureaucracy. One method of financing these developments was borrowing in Europe, an ironic consequence of which was the further empowerment of European interests. A second method was the generation of revenue domestically through the sale of state-owned and communally used land to private individuals. Without dwelling on the detail of regional variations, the most powerful strata-bureaucrats, urban merchants, tribal chiefs, religious officials and, in the case of Egypt, the ruling family and even some village heads—registered tracts of communal and state land in their names. Large-scale private property ownership based on inheritable title deeds emerged and with it the first indigenous social group with a degree of economic autonomy from the ruler. For many of the new owners, however,

without the assistance of the state (in the form of provincial military garrisons) gaining benefit from the title deeds was not axiomatic. The disintegration of the Ottoman empire and the establishment of the mandate system created a new political order in the Middle East as the Arab provinces were amalgamated to form the new states of Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Jordan. The landlords were a major beneficiary of the new system as state authority was strengthened and landlord power and control over their peasantry was reinforced.

The mandate system was unlike traditional colonialism in that the British and French were accountable to the League of Nations, and one of their prime responsibilities was the 'rendering of administrative assistance and advice until such time as they were able to stand alone'. Although the British and French attempted to establish their long-term economic, cultural and strategic interests, their authority was circumscribed by the terms of the mandate. In preparation for self-rule, elections, parliaments and cabinet government were introduced and provision made for the establishment of political parties. At times parliaments were suspended as nationalists demanded greater independence and elections were administered so as to exclude leading nationalist politicians. Nevertheless, this period marked the introduction of democratic institutions in the Arab Middle East.

Post-colonial quasi-democracy

The assemblies established in the mandatory period continued after independence, as did the Egyptian parliament after independence in 1936. Although kings, presidents and prime ministers followed the colonial precedent of rigging elections and banning communist and radical nationalist parties, and there were occasional military interventions, parliaments played a significant political role from 1946–54 and 1961–3 in Syria, 1932–58 in Iraq, 1936–52 in Egypt and 1946–75 in Lebanon.

I have already dealt with the coalition of forces which sustained Lebanese democracy. In most other Middle Eastern states the dominant political groups were landowners, most of whom were also tribal chiefs, merchants and politicians. Comprising several hundred families the scale of ownership was enormous: in Egypt in 1952 the top 1 per cent owned around 72 per cent of the land,

in Syria 2.5 per cent owned 75 per cent and in Iraq 2.8 per cent owned 70 per cent. The great majority of the assembly members were from these families, their power deriving from control over their tenants and share-croppers. They had no interest in abandoning the institutions which buttressed their power, enabled them to block land reform and to which they were elected and re-elected by a captive peasantry.

Although radical and reformist parties emerged in the parliamentary period and some of their members won elections in urban constituencies, politics was dominated by shifting blocs and coalitions of landowners. Governments were formed from the more enlightened urban-based landlords, former officials or coopted technocrats and rose and fell without disturbing landlord control or their power over their peasants.

The inability of new groups to break the electoral stranglehold brought an end to this first phase of quasi-democracy. The expansion of education brought forth new strata: teachers, bureaucrats, technicians and engineers. Patronage and cooptation ceased to be a viable means of including opposition and potential opposition and, unlike Lebanon with its modern commerce and services, in most states of the Middle East there were limited employment opportunities outside state employment for this stratum. Industry was mainly of the artisanal type with only a small modern sector.

The new middle strata provided the social base for the reformist and radical parties which were nationalist and developmentalist. The exclusionary nature of the parliaments was an important factor in discrediting democratic institutions in the eyes of these new groups. Furthermore, governments and parliaments were associated with nationalist failures or betrayals of nationalism: unequal treaties with the former colonial power, permitting the establishment of foreign military bases, inability to achieve or opposition to Arab unity schemes, responsibility for the establishment of Israel and defeat in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Arab unity, full national independence, reform and industrialization were viewed as blocked by an electoral system which perpetuated the rule of landlords and governments drawn from or linked to them.

Regime change came through the seizure of state power by reformist officers after prolonged periods of nationalist and reformist agitation. Across the Middle East relations varied

between officers and civilian political movements in shaping the new regimes. In the case of Egypt in 1952 and Iraq in 1958 it was an indirect one. In the case of Syria, the Ba'th party purposely pursued a policy of recruiting officers as members or sending civilian members to the military academy. Whatever the civil-military relationship prior to the coups, expanding the scope of democratic institutions had little or no priority. In states where pro-Western regimes survived (Jordan and Iran) the nationalist-reformist threat to them inaugurated a more centralized repressive authoritarianism, but under monarchs rather than officer-presidents.

Authoritarian/state-led development

Through the 1950s and 1960s regimes fell to reformist officers who ruled in conjunction with radical civilian parties or, where they ruled alone, selectively borrowed from their programmes. Land reform was introduced to dispossess the old ruling class and undermine their power as much as for reasons of equity. The state replaced the landlord, usually through the establishment of cooperatives, and became the motor of industrialization beginning with the nationalization of foreign enterprises. A shift towards the Eastern bloc occurred, involving a realignment of sources of aid which reinforced the centrality of the state. Rejecting Western-style institutions, administrative means were employed to install a limited participation legitimated by an ideology of national unity and development needs. State control over the economy facilitated the incorporation and depoliticization of key constituencies. Complementing the growth of the state was the introduction of particular welfare benefits, such as profit-sharing for the small working class and guaranteed state-employment for graduates, and general ones, such as subsidies on basic foodstuffs and fuels. It should be added that private capital, particularly in construction and transport, persisted as did a relatively prosperous, small commercial farming sector. And although most of the economies were regulated by state planning, connection to and patronage from higher ranking government officials provided some scope for unhindered economic activities. Authoritarian state-led reform and development was the pattern even where revolution was the rhetoric.

Economic and political liberalization

State control of the economy began receding in the 1970s and 1980s, first in the minimal oil-producing states of Egypt, Tunisia and Syria, and somewhat later in big oil-producing states like Algeria and Iraq. In some states the introduction of economic liberalization proceeded along with or was followed by political liberalization. In Iraq and Syria, where regimes have an inordinate amount of blood on their hands, there has been no move towards opening up the political system, and although there is no necessary connection between economic liberalization and democratization something of a pattern appears to be emerging. The sequence is one of domestic economic crisis, in part externally induced, the introduction of economic reforms, and a process of political reform involving new constitutions and electoral and party laws, which permit the registration of opposition political parties, and seem to have the goal of legitimating new leaders and/or reforms, as well as diffusing opposition.

Economic liberalization in the Middle East and North Africa is similar in cause and process to other parts of the Third World although there are obvious variations in external pressures and regime responses. Reforms originated with the increasing need for foreign capital and hard currency to finance imports, balance of payments deficits and further development. Both private and institutional borrowing resulted in World Bank and IMF pressures to reduce levels of public expenditure, the major components of which were subsidies on basic foodstuffs and fuel and over-employment in public administration and state industries. The growth of spending in these areas was, in part, a consequence of strategies of legitimation in the authoritarianstatist period. The oil price increases of 1973–4 and 1978–9 seriously affected the non- or minimal oil-producing states of the area, although their economic circumstances were ameliorated by the flow of remittances from expatriate labour. The oil price slump of the 1980s, however, brought financial crisis to oil and non-oil producers alike, and as debt repayment levels rose the IMF and World Bank gained even greater leverage for pressing short-term stabilization and structural adjustment measures.

Government response has been to encourage foreign and domestic private capital and to reduce investment and expenditure. The consequence for most states has been rising

unemployment and austerity, in sum, a reversal of the economic policies of the past decades which only a dramatic increase in the price of oil will alter. Although governments have declared their willingness to accede to the programmes of the World Bank and the IMF, they have also attempted to minimize their consequences because of the political repercussions. Reducing food subsidies has sparked off riots across the Middle East and North Africa, with the result that many governments have proceeded very cautiously down this avenue of reform or attempted to evade it. Although the privatization of state-owned industry has been placed on the agenda, the unemployment consequences of such a measure have placed considerable constraints on government. The 'slippage', to use the World Bank term, from liberalization and structural adjustment is a function of the political risks for government and are, in large part, a legacy of the authoritarian-statist period.

The partial nature of economic liberalization has been matched in the political sphere. Electoral laws have been designed and constituencies drawn to ensure that reformist rulers and factions around them are not edged aside. The example of Turkey's first multi-party election in 1950, when President Inonu inaugurated free elections and lost, has not been replicated. Presidents Sadat and Mubarak of Egypt, Ben Ali of Tunisia and King Hussein of Jordan did not lose their positions as a result of elections and, indeed, retained the power to form governments and direct government policy. Liberalization has sustained rulers who have introduced the economic reforms, and where new rulers succeeded long-established nationalist figures like Nasser, Boumedienne and Bourguiba, the introduction of a new political process initially enhanced their political standing.

Nor has opening up politics to opposition parties and movements been without political benefit for new political leaders. The introduction of economic reforms and austerity measures engendered opposition from within the highest ranks of the former system. State economic managers, party apparatchiks and high bureaucrats are groups which had become accustomed to economic privilege, high status and much influence and power in Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria. There was also the broader constituency of the urban middle class and segments of the lower and working classes which acquired advantage through subsidies and guaranteed employment during the statist period.

Since economic liberalization cuts against the power of the former and hits the pockets of the latter, political liberalization has been used to undermine the highly placed anti-reformists and has had the consequence of fragmenting the political repercussions of broad economic discontent as austerity measures bite.

Some opposition movements and parties which have been established have also seen benefit in the greater political opportunities available to them, even in a controlled liberalization process, and have supported, or at least not opposed, reformist presidents and circles around them. Even though these parties might divide from the reformists on particular issues they are united on support for political liberalization, however partial, and opposed to the anti-reformists' entrenched power and privilege which was based on their interconnected control of politics and the economy. The fragmented nature of the opposition has also diffused discontent. Parties of left and right, Islamicist movements and, in North Africa, Berber ethnic groups have emerged. Furthermore, the move to multi-partyism has provided a mechanism for directing popular opposition to austerity measures into organized, visible and potentially manageable organizations. Although the provisions for democratization have become embodied in law, reformist leaders and governments have ensured that there are legal provisions to retreat from multi-partyism. As it is there are factors, present in some but not all states, that favour state-reformist electoral victory: the state still remains responsible for a considerable amount of economic activity and while economic liberalization remains partial, government institutions, particularly local government in the rural areas, are able to 'manage' elections, and electoral laws have been framed in such a way as to give advantage to the party of government.

It is, of course, possible that the partial incorporation of the new parties into the system will involve an impossible tension between an accountability to government for their good behaviour and accountability to their constituencies. Reformist leaders have to balance the socio-political consequences of economic and political liberalization and party leaders must balance electoral support with acceptance by the reformers who control the process. However, if there are many years of austerity ahead and, say, privatization of the public sector increases unemployment substantially, and the liberalization measures generate neither

growth nor employment, the areas of division between opposition movements and reformist governments are likely to become greater than areas of agreement over the utility of political liberalization.

While reformists would seem to be able to retrench politically, the scope for moving away from greater openness to external links or the introduction of austerity measures is rather more limited. Debt levels obviate that possibility. As the balance of risks attendant on the new political and economic strategies crystallize, a return to a new authoritarianism seems more likely than a return to full-blooded statism. One possible outcome of the new political liberalization in Jordan, Algeria and Tunisia, however, is an Egyptian-style immobilism: stalled economic liberalization and partial democratization.

For many observers, the emergence of militant Islamicist movements in the Middle East and North Africa has confirmed that Islam is the major obstacle and challenge to democratization. As we pointed out earlier, however, 'Islam' can refer to an array of cultural, intellectual, theological and political currents which take a variety of institutional and organizational forms. There is no generally shared set of beliefs and practices that are amenable to the production of a monolithic Islam or a stereotype of a believing Muslim, as much as fundamentalist Islamic leaders wish and campaign for such. Even when the focus is restricted to Islamic political movements, there are variations in their accommodation to, collaboration with and rejection of contemporary political regimes in the Middle East, and the political directions they are taking.

The process of political liberalization has, however, provided greater political space for Islamic movements. Some, like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Jordan, have continued on an accommodationist path. Some, like the FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) in Algeria have accommodated themselves to a process of political liberalization but made clear that they oppose democracy as the end result of such a process and that the future political system will be based on the *sharia* (Islamic law).

The current tensions arising from political liberalization and contemporary militant Islamic organizations are best examined in the social, economic and political contexts in which they emerge and operate. As long as Islam in its multi-faceted appearances remains a force, there will be Islamicist movements which demand

the complete Islamicization of the state. They will, however, be only one political force among many and will compete with other intellectual and ideological currents. They will not only face a challenge from secular movements of various kinds, for secularist ideas have bitten deeply into the fabric of urban societies of the Middle East, but from both Islamic modernist and accommodationist movements and from the established state *ulema* (religious teachers and jurists).

In Egypt and Jordan, the Muslim Brotherhood was given greater freedom of action and organization long before the current economic crisis, and as a consequence have proved more willing to collaborate with state authority. The newer generation Islamic movement in Egypt, formed around loosely organized Islamic societies, has been more militant and violent in its aims and actions and remained outside the political process. Unlike in Egypt and Jordan, where there have existed long-established Islamic movements with political links to president and monarch, in Tunisia and Algeria the Islamic political movements have little history and emerged in some strength at a time of political transition and economic crisis. It is ironic that the economic crisis (which led to economic liberalization which in turn led to the promotion of political liberalization) furnished the social conditions for the growth of more militant Islamicist movements. High urban unemployment, amongst young males in particular, and a severe lack of urban housing go along with a high birth rate and continuing large-scale rural to urban migration to produce the fuel for the political fire left by the failure of statist nationalism. The response of political liberalizers has varied. We have mentioned how, in Egypt and Jordan, some segments of the Islamicist movement have been incorporated into the system. In Tunisia and Algeria attempts at incorporation failed and repression has become the alternative strategy. One consequence has been that the process of liberalization has become stalled, and earlier freedoms of organization and publication suspended. The process of political liberalization has brought some real changes to Middle Eastern political systems but so far the result is a new form of quasi-democracy with statist liberalizers remaining suspicious of the commitment of new-generation Islamic movements to follow the rules of the game. Symbolic of the impasse were the events which took place in Algeria at the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992. As the FIS appeared to be

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heading for an electoral victory the liberalizing President Benjadid 'resigned' and a military-backed High Security Council assumed authority.

CONCLUSION

In this overview, I have sought to emphasize a spasmodic, discontinuous and fragmented pattern of quasi-democracy based on the introduction of parliaments and elections. The role of the state and the persistence of authoritarianism has undoubtedly been a more predominant pattern. Nevertheless, however partial the democratic experience has been at various times, parliaments have been elected and governments have been formed and fallen with votes in these institutions and, in the contemporary Middle East and North Africa, a process of partial democratization has begun. In the case of Algeria, the process has proved temporary.

Although I referred to an earlier historical pattern in which assemblies attempted to limit the arbitrary power of imperial dynasts, the stress here has been on the last two modern phases. In the first there was a relatively straightforward correlation between the operation of a form of parliamentarianism and the interests of dominant classes. Landlord control of assemblies reflected their broader position in a peasant society and agrarian economy as the dominance of bankers, merchants and landowners reflected the bifurcated commercial-agrarian social order in Lebanon.

The second and contemporary phase of democratization has emerged from the statist-authoritarian structures under the combined pressures of externally induced economic crisis, internal measures of economic reform and, to a much lesser extent, demands for greater participation and a more pluralistic politics. The latter have originated from dissenting factions within the state and from movements, including Islamicist ones, outside of state structures. Although popular demands, expressed through riots, strikes and demonstrations have coincided with the establishment of multi-partyism, the introduction of new election laws and some guarantees of freedom of expression, publication and assembly, political reform measures have been granted rather than seized. The reform of authoritarian-statism began from within. Political liberalization has been varying in its extent in Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Algeria but has generally been a response to the

requirements of introducing different packages of economic reforms and part of the political strategy of reformist presidents to mobilize support for their reforms against anti-reformists. In Algeria, such a strategy went disastrously wrong. In the case of Jordan, a conservative king has sought to buttress his position by devolving on political parties a share in the responsibility for a profound economic crisis and stringent austerity measures. The fragmentation of opposition has served both kings and presidents. Liberalizing rulers, however, remain at the apex of a system with considerable powers of corporate and clientelist control, accrued in the era of more severe authoritarianism, and in full charge of state security and the military. (It is no coincidence that liberalizers like Ben Chadli of Algeria, Ben Ali of Tunisia, Sadat and Mubarak of Egypt and the Jordanian Prime Minster Zayd ibn Shakar are men of military and security backgrounds.)

It would be a neat, if superficial argument, to link what appears to be the beginnings of an expansion of private foreign and domestic capital to the inauguration of a semi-competitive system. There is, in Egypt, evidence to link class-based party pressures for the further expansion of both economic and political liberalization. There is also evidence to indicate that the burgeoning private sector favours the protection of the state. In general, however, presidents and kings remain in charge of a state-controlled process of partial democratization as part of strategies of economic reform and regime survival. The assertion of civil society autonomous of and organized in political parties outside the state is not yet part of the picture, although continuing economic reforms and an electoral process might very well bring that about.

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Chapter 10

Between 'majoritarian' and 'consensus' democracy: the case of the French Fifth Republic

Jill Lovecy

INTRODUCTION

In any volume examining the relationship between democratic practice and differing theories of democracy, and the ways in which these can contribute to our understanding of democratization as a process, France merits a special place.

It is now two hundred years since the revolutionary turbulence of the years between 1789 and 1794 secured her decisive break with Absolutism and then unleashed Napoleon's armies across the length and breadth of Europe, redrawing the boundaries of states in their wake and recasting institutions in the name of the Revolution's ideals of citizenship and nationhood. Yet the pre-eminence of France's contribution to the emergence then of modern democratic politics has contrasted strikingly, and unhappily, with the chequered history of successive attempts by the French in the course of these two centuries to secure a stable institutional framework in which to practise democracy themselves. Thus in the summer of 1958, when a revolt by a section of France's armed forces in the cause of *L'Algérie française* triggered yet another regime crisis, the French found themselves embarking on their twentieth constitutional experiment since 1789 (Duhamel 1991:6–8).

This chapter will explore the dynamics of institutional change under the new Republic that was established with de Gaulle's return to power, and will examine the relationship between the initial constitutional settlement and the distinctive patterns of democratic practice that have subsequently developed over this thirty-five year period.

In terms of France's previous experience of democratic practice, it will be argued here that the institutional developments that have taken place under the Fifth Republic have proved doubly innovative. In the first place, that vital ingredient for democratic politics which had hitherto eluded successive republican regimes, *le fait majoritaire* (that is, government based on an electoral majority), was secured from 1962 until 1988, essentially through a constitutional innovation. Second, in what may perhaps prove to be a more enduring achievement, the new Constitutional Council established in 1958 has subsequently emerged as 'a great regulatory mechanism for democracy' (Cohen-Tanugi 1989:26), so that under this Republic, for the first time since the Revolution, there is now a means of enforcing the conformity of legislation to the norms enunciated in its founding constitutional texts.[1] Politics in France under the Fifth Republic can thus be said to have undergone a dual process of democratization.

However, these two sets of developments have involved inherently distinct modes of democratic practice. And just as France's historical experience has been exemplary in demonstrating that the constitutive, legitimizing principles of liberal democracy are complex and not readily combined in practice (Rosanvallon 1992), so, too, her contemporary experience exemplifies the costs as well as the benefits accruing, in states which have achieved formally democratic institutions, from new processes of democratization. In the case of the Fifth French Republic, the complex interplay that has resulted from this dual process of democratization has undoubtedly produced a peculiarly difficult environment for parties as the crucial vehicles of democratic politics.

In exploring these developments, the analysis presented here will focus primarily on the concepts of *majoritarian* and *consensual* democracy, which were developed by Arend Lijphart to establish a typology of two contrasting models of democratic government (Lijphart 1984). Lijphart's ideal types embody, in effect, two quite distinct organizational models for the democratic exercise of authority, by offering contrasting methods for constructing the 'majority' which democratic governments seek to represent, and be responsive to. They thus offer two differing strategies for securing the claim that democracy, by providing government based on a majority, can indeed achieve a form of government that serves the interests of all.

The decisive characteristic of Lijphart's *majoritarian* model is its concentration of powers, pre-eminently located in the government of the day, whose members are normally drawn from a single party. This is sometimes referred to as the 'Westminster' model, since, in Europe, it is the United Kingdom which comes closest to meeting its requirements (ibid.: 1–20). Such a concentration of power can emerge, and be legitimized, where a simple majority electoral system combines with the historical development of cleavages in society to provide a pattern of single-party majorities within the parliamentary arena. Governments are thus able to claim to act in the name of a majority, even though the party (or parties) of government would rarely be able to command a majority at the electoral level.

The executive dominance that characterizes this majoritarian mode of democracy means that checks and balances on the exercise of state power operate here only in somewhat attenuated forms. Either there is no codified constitutional text, or its terms are ambiguous and, in the absence of an independent constitutional court, are effectively open to interpretation by the government of the day. The structure of the state is unitary and centralized, with other levels of elective authority, where they exist, enjoying no constitutionally entrenched rights and responsibilities. Where there is a second chamber of parliament, it is confined to an advisory role or, at most, has delaying but not blocking powers. And whilst the lower house of parliament may indeed enjoy extensive formal powers, an adversarial mode of party competition and political debate, underpinned by an electoral system penalizing small parties and feeding into a more pervasive culture of party interest, ensures that these powers in practice accrue to the government of the day.

In contrast, the *consensual* mode of democracy is distinguished by its institutionalization of power-sharing: it creates a plurality of centres of power and incorporates devices designed to protect the interests of minorities and the individual citizen. The Federal Republic of Germany is perhaps the major state in Europe most closely aligned on this model of democratic government (ibid.: 21–36). The broad consensus-building impetus that such power-sharing entails, and that serves to legitimize the exercise of state power here, is most readily operable with a proportional electoral

system and a pattern of parties reflecting, and giving organized expression to, multiple cleavages.

The extensive checks and balances which are characteristic of this mode of democracy make for a quite different pattern of institutional arrangements. These include, most notably, a codified constitution with an independent constitutional court, which is able to develop and enforce its own constitutional jurisprudence, and the dispersal of decision-making to different levels of elected government, either through a federal state structure or through some pattern of constitutionally entrenched decentralization. In addition, the second chamber of parliament will enjoy blocking powers at least in respect of policies and constitutional amendments affecting this pattern of dispersal of powers. Parties, and party-based definitions of interest, are no less central to this model of democratic government, but the internal lives of parties and the interrelationship between them are crucially shaped by the demands of their institutional environment and by the resultant practice of coalition government at both central and local levels.

Lijphart's own analysis locates the Fifth Republic in an intermediary category (ibid.: 219), since its institutional arrangements combine features of both of these models. At the same time the new Republic introduced a mix of majority-plurality electoral arrangements. These have co-existed with a party-system in which the number of salient issue-dimensions of partisan conflict, and therefore the number of effective parties, has remained high in comparative terms (ibid.: 148, 151–2).[2] However, Lijphart's analysis, based as it is on quantitative data organized in relatively long time-series (covering the period 1945–80), is designed to establish *cross-country* comparisons and contrasts, and, in the case of France, demonstrates the contrasting patterns of democracy practised under the Fourth and Fifth Republics.

This chapter, in contrast, is concerned with elucidating the changes in institutional practice that have occurred *within* the lifetime of the Fifth Republic. By discussing developments in this period in terms of two successive processes of democratization and examining the complex interplay to which these have given rise, the analysis presented here seeks to build on Lijphart's categorization by exploring the dynamic character of the mix of institutional arrangements introduced in 1958.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT OF 1958

The two successive processes of democratization that have now taken place under the Fifth Republic can, at least in part, be traced back to the quite particular combination of provisions put together in the 1958 Constitution. However, although, as will be seen, in each case a crucial additional impetus has come from formal amendments to that text, made respectively in 1962 and 1974.

The confusing and dramatic circumstances which brought de Gaulle back to power in 1958 meant that the new republic was born, initially, of an ambiguous, and necessarily temporary, compromise. Identified by the partisans of *l'Algérie française* as the champion of their cause, de Gaulle's return to power was taken up by leading politicians of the Fourth Republic who saw him as the defender of republican democracy. These latter therefore provided him with a legal path to power, securing his investiture as that Republic's last prime minister and voting constitution-making powers to his government. This compromise was reflected in the political heterogeneity of those participating in the drafting procedure and in the eclectic mix of constitutional innovations which the final draft incorporated (Goguel 1959; Carcassonne 1989). Debré, de Gaulle and the leading parliamentarians who were involved, each brought to the constitution-making process differing readings of French history and different understandings of how to secure government that would be both democratic and effective (Debré 1959; de Gaulle 1970; *Avis et Débats du Comité Consultatif* 1960).

What they did share, however, was a concern to find institutional remedies for the absence of a majority in parliament, for it was this which was expected to bedevil the new republic, as it had its two predecessors. As a result the new text was designed both to strengthen the executive at the expense of parliament and, within the executive, to strengthen the constitutional prerogatives of the presidency. Contemporary observers stressed the specifically French precedents for these provisions (Duverger 1959; Harrison 1959; Wahl 1959). They are perhaps most readily understood as embodying a 'democratic dualism' (Avril 1987:30–2) since they draw on, and combine, the contrasting principles of separation and fusion of powers which, respectively, underlie presidential and parliamentary models of democracy.

Arguably a re-reading today of the 1958 constitutional text reveals rather more provisions with a potential for promoting consensual and power-sharing behaviour than of a majoritarian tendency. Somewhat paradoxically, both derived from this shared preoccupation with offsetting the expected absence of a coherently structured majority in parliament, by imposing checks on the National Assembly's powers.

A first set of such checks certainly did have close affinities with Lijphart's majoritarian mode of democracy. Collectively referred to by the term 'rationalized parliamentarism' (Maus 1984:19–30), these equip the government with the procedural devices enabling it to dominate parliament in a way that is characteristic of majoritarianism, even when the crucial element of that system, a loyal and disciplined majority in parliament, is not present. These provisions included most notably the new appointment procedures for the prime minister and other members of government, laid down in article 8, which enabled these posts to be filled without needing the support of a majority in the lower-house. Furthermore, a restrictive definition of the *domain of law* was set out in articles 34 and 37, limiting the range of policy issues which require parliamentary approval to become law, all else being deemed to fall within the decree-making powers of government. Above all the confidence procedure, created under article 49, paragraph iii, introduced a 'particularly ingenious mechanism' (Gicquel 1989:704), which was designed to enable governments to stay in office and expedite their legislative programme as long as *an absolute majority* of the members of the lower-house could not be mobilized in support of a censure motion.

The cumulative effect of such provisions is therefore to preempt any impetus towards consensus-building and power-sharing practices that might rise from France's traditionally fragmented party-system. They proved to be of some importance in the earliest period of the new Republic, until 1962, when there was no clearly structured parliamentary majority; subsequently, their availability served to underpin a new majoritarian pattern of governmental dominance over successive presidential majorities in the lower-house between 1962 and 1986. In the event, however, these constitutional provisions were to be rapidly overshadowed by the emergence of the presidency as the main focus for majoritarianism under the Fifth Republic.

A second set of provisions entailed, rather, the dispersal of the lower-house's former powers to other actors and institutions and thus brought with them a power-sharing impetus. These included a certain strengthening of the role of the upper-house in the legislative process and, most crucially, the establishment of the Constitutional Council, a body without precedent in France's constitutional history (Avril and Gicquel 1992:13–18).[3] A similar concern to promote a new pattern of checks and balances also informed Michel Debré's vision of the presidency. As Minister of Justice from June 1958, he had overall responsibility for the drafting process and, although himself a Gaullist loyalist, he brought to his role an analysis of France's constitutional requirements which was somewhat different from de Gaulle's (Goguel 1959; Debré 1981). Witness his pithy definition of the new Republic's presidency in August 1958, in a speech to the Council of State: 'the president's only power is to bring into play another power' (Debré 1959:22).

Thus the president could trigger a series of checks on the National Assembly by bringing the electorate or the new Constitutional Council into play, or even by bringing parliament itself back into play. In the first case, by dissolving parliament (article 12) or authorizing a governmental or parliamentary proposal for a particular policy issue to be decided by referendum (article 11); in the second case, by referring completed legislation to the Constitutional Council (article 61—the presidency shared this right of referral with three other office holders: the prime minister, and the presidents of two houses of parliament); in the last case, by sending a formal message to be read out in parliament (article 18) or sending back legislation passed by parliament for a further vote (article 10).

An additional, and rather different, impetus towards consensus-building derived from de Gaulle's conception of the presidency and reflected his overriding preoccupation with safeguarding France's international standing and with counterbalancing the long-standing political divisions amongst the French people which, in his view, party-based electoral politics only served to exacerbate. He therefore sought to endow one office with constitutional responsibility to represent the nation as a whole: hence the characteristically grand claims for the presential office set out in article 5.[4] Indeed his style of rally politics, promoting direct linkages between himself and the French people,

was designed to give expression to something akin to the 'grand majorities' associated with the consensus model of democratic government. Yet, as with his early referendums, such breadth of support was to be built by circumventing the intermediary role of parties, rather than by promoting collaboration between party elites.

Following the introduction of direct universal suffrage for presidential elections in 1962, the need to mobilize an absolute majority of those voting on the second ballot ensured that presidential and party politics became inextricably bound up together in an adversarial mode of electoral competition. Nevertheless, tensions have remained between successive presidents, concerned to sustain the broader legitimizing claims of their office as representing the French people as a whole, and the parties forming their presidential majorities in the lower-house, which have drawn their support from a narrower configuration of electoral interests.

However, the potential of these varied provisions of the 1958 text for promoting consensualist practices was to be held in check during the first decade or more of the Fifth Republic by the more powerful institutional dynamic towards majoritarian presidentialism.

THE FIFTH REPUBLIC'S EXPERIMENT WITH MAJORITARIAN PRESIDENTIALISM, 1962–86

Once elected as the first president of the new Republic, de Gaulle's style of 'heroic leadership' (Hoffmann 1967) and his strategy of bringing the war in Algeria to a negotiated conclusion provided the context for an initial transitional period of 'charismatic presidentialism'. Relying primarily on the constitution's provision for referendums in order to mobilize popular majorities in his support, he gave his new regime a plebiscitarian, and Bonapartistic, character. The decisive move towards majoritarian democracy, however, came with the last of these referendums in October 1962, which transformed the original constitutional balance and institutionalized majoritarianism, by introducing direct universal suffrage with two ballots for presidential elections.

Under this electoral system, incorporated in article 7 of the Constitution, only the two leading candidates of the first ballot could proceed to the second: incoming presidents would

therefore enter office with the support of a majority, if not of the electorate at least of those who had voted. This first amendment to the constitutional edifice of 1958 thus opened the way for a period of *majoritarian presidentialism*. As 'l'élu de la nation',[5] successive incumbents have been deemed to have won a mandate to govern (Massot 1986:111–16)—whatever the provisions of the 1958 text itself concerning the respective roles and powers of president, prime minister and other members of the government. Something close to Lijphart's majoritarian mode of democracy was thus established in France with a succession of loyal presidential majorities in parliament extending from 1962 to 1986, and France's fragmented party-system was reshaped by an adversarial logic.

France now experienced a first phase of democratization under the Fifth Republic, as presidential elections gave the electorate a direct role in determining who would govern. The presidential elections of 1974 thus provided the occasion for *la petite alternance* between the two main components of the French Right, with Giscard d'Estaing's election to the presidency shifting the balance in favour of the Gaullists' hitherto junior partners in government. The following presidential elections, in 1981, finally saw *la grande alternance,* with the election for the first time of a candidate of the Left to the presidency. Moreover, in the legislative elections of 1986 the electoral majority gained by the alliance of Gaullists and Giscardians resulted in these two formations, under the premiership of Chirac, replacing the Socialist-led coalition in government.

Of course factors other than those deriving from the Republic's institutions were undoubtedly important in stimulating new patterns of electoral behaviour in this period and reshaping her party-system. Extensive social and cultural changes were already getting under way as France now entered into the heyday of her thirty-year period of sustained growth and modernization from 1945 (Fourastié 1979). These afforded possibilities for mobilizing individuals and some organized interests around an altered domestic political agenda, whilst developments in the international arena from the early 1960s offered opportunities for de Gaulle to develop a distinctive foreign policy stance with his 'politics of grandeur' (Cerny 1980).

But, at heart, France's experience of majoritarian presidentialism in these years hinged on the electoral system for

the presidency which de Gaulle had master-minded in 1962. This was, indeed, a constitutional device for 'manufacturing a majority' within the electorate. This majority was thus 'not a sociological or a cultural given, but a construct of [France's Fifth Republican] institutions' (Avril 1979:59–60).

More especially, what was required for this new process of democratization to take place, and for France's version of the majoritarian model of government to work in these years, was that the parliamentary and governmental components of that majority accept a quite particular Gaullian interpretation of the constitutional settlement of 1958/1962. This period of majoritarian presidentialism therefore also hinged on the *presidentialization* of France's parties and her party-system (Wright 1975; Portelli 1980; Charlot 1983; Lovely 1991a). In effect, the parties, which constituted the successive presidential majorities in parliament, and their leading members, who accepted governmental office in this period, adopted a series of constitutional conventions. These conventions served to underpin presidential primacy within the executive, extending the presidency's prerogatives over the appointment of ministers and the resignation of governments (under article 8), over the conduct of the weekly Council of Ministers (under article 9), and over governments' decree-making powers (under article 13)—including powers of appointment in respect of a wide range of higher military and civil posts (Lovecy 1986; Mény 1989a). The adoption of these conventions was undoubtedly facilitated by the ambiguous wording and the contradictory character of some of the provisions of the original document. But in each case presidential primacy was secured at the expense of the rights of other governmental actors and thus of parliament (to whom the prime minister and other ministers, unlike the president, were bound by formal ties of responsibility).

However, since 1988, in spite of François Mitterrand's re-election to the presidency with an enhanced majority, government based on a majority has once more eluded France. This is because ultimately de Gaulle's constitutional innovation of 1962 could only guarantee *le fait majoritaire* in respect of the presidency itself. It could not guarantee an automatic spill-over, mediated via electoral behaviour and bi-polar party alliances on the second ballot of legislative elections, into the parliamentary arena. As France's domestic political agenda changed in the 1980s in response to further periods of international recession, continuing high levels

of unemployment have, together with successive governments'
priortization of anti-inflation policies, provided a far less
favourable context in which to sustain majoritarian institutional
practices.

In a preliminary transition, majoritarian presidentialism was
transformed into two, politically conflicting majorities: the
presidential majority won by François Mitterrand as the leading
contender from the French Left in the presidential elections of
1981: and the *parliamentary majority* constituted by the winning
alliance of the two main parties of the French Right in the
legislative elections of 1986. These two presidential and
parliamentary majorities then had to 'cohabit' and Mitterrand
appointed the Gaullist leader, Jacques Chirac, to serve as prime
minister from 1986. Subsequently, in the period from 1988 to 1993,
France once more had to learn to live without any clear and
cohesive majority in the lower-house of her parliament on which
to base the exercise of governmental authority. These years thus
saw a series of short-lived minority governments, led successively
by Michel Rocard, Edith Cresson and Pierre Bérégovoy.

Even in the heyday of majoritarian presidentialism there were,
in any case, other elements present from the 1958 constitutional
settlement which were not at all congruent with these majoritarian
practices. By the early 1970s the potential for a quite different kind
of institutional logic deriving from the Constitution of 1958 was
already beginning to materialize, in the form of a second process
of democratization entailing constraints on the exercise of
majoritarian power.

THE FIFTH REPUBLIC'S TRANSFORMATION INTO A STATE OF LAW

Crucially, it was that other innovation of 1958, the Constitutional
Council, which was to develop a distinctive trajectory of its own,
and one that has proved to be intrinsically corrosive of France's
Fifth Republican version of majoritarian democracy. The new
procedures established for subjecting legislation to a form of
judicial review were clearly not framed with the intention of
building-in an inherently power-constraining and minority-
protecting element. The new Constitutional Council was
envisaged rather as 'the defender of the executive' (Boulouis
1980), protecting governments from the encroachments and

harassing tactics to be expected from an unruly parliament. In the event, however, and, indeed, precisely because of the majoritarian style of executive dominance within the legislative process that was achieved from 1962, the insertion of a third institution, alongside government and parliament, into that process did result in the Council coming to operate as 'the censor of the executive' (ibid.: 27–8).

The first moves towards a more significant role for the Council in constraining the new pattern of majoritarian presidentialism came from within the Council itself. It has been argued that already in the 1960s the Council's evolving jurisprudence was suggestive of an inherent institutional dynamic at work (Avril and Gicquel 1992:134–8). By 1971 the Council had identified a much expanded 'block of constitutional norms', by which the constitutionality of legislation falling within the domain of law would henceforth be judged (Harrison 1990:605–7; Favoreu and Philip 1986:239–54).[6] The Council thus established a hierarchy of enforceable juridical norms, which governments's legislative programmes could be required to respect.

This 'juridicization of the legislative process' (Stone 1989) was fundamentally erosive of the majoritarian principle. Nevertheless, as long as the initiative for referring legislation to the Council was held only by the four office-holders listed in the 1958 text, its impact remained limited. However, following his election to the presidency in 1974, Giscard d'Estaing took the initiative by introducing a constitutional amendment to reform the procedure for judicial review. By enabling any group of sixty members of either house of parliament to refer legislation to the Council, the amendment to article 61 effectively extended the right of referral to the opposition parties in parliament.

This led to a rapid increase in the number of pieces of legislation referred to the Council, rising from just nine in the first fifteen years of the Republic, to forty-six during Giscard's presidency, and then to 123 in the period 1981–90 (Stone 1992:35). Its role now developed into that of a 'counter-power' (Hamon 1987), substantially modifying the institutional environment for French governments and for the operation of *le fait majoritaire* (Favoreu 1988). Governments and their supporters came to exercise what has been termed 'self-limitation' in the legislative process (Keeler and Stone 1987): that is, attempting to pre-empt possible negative rulings or corrective revision by the Council, by second-guessing

the latter's views in the initial stage of drafting legislation or securing appropriate amendments during its passage through parliament.

Increasingly, therefore, governments have sought to ensure that their legislative proposals will be firmly located in that constitutional middle-ground, especially in the more controversial areas of policy, by appointing committees of experts (for example, the Long Commission on French Nationality, established by Chirac in June 1987) and undertaking wide consultations in the preliminary phases of policy preparation. In short, they have taken refuge in a panoply of devices characteristic of the consensus model of government (Lovecy 1991b:52–5). Governments have thus found themselves bereft of their ability to dominate the legislative process. As the embodiment of a consensual mode of democracy, the Council and its rulings have operated to de-legitimize the policy commitments and the mandate to govern that derive from France's bi-polarizing electoral arrangements. Majoritarian presidentialism has thus been muzzled, by being subjected to 'a limitation of the normative possibilities of government' (Favoreu 1987), especially once the Council began to include 'procedural provisos' in its rulings, laying down guidelines and criteria to be respected in the subsequent implementation of individual pieces of leglislation (Stone 1989). This in turn has put a premium on less adversarial styles of electoral appeal and policy-making.

A second process of democratization has thus been consolidated through this rather unexpected revamping of the relationship between politics and the law under the Fifth Republic, with democracy in France now bounded by her emergence as a state of law, an *Etat de droit* (Cohen-Tanugi 1989:19–26; Chevallier 1988; Cohen-Tanugi 1985). France can in this respect be put alongside a number of other West European states, notably Germany, Italy and Austria since the Second World War and, more recently, Spain, Greece and Portugal.

The development of this crucial mechanism of the consensual mode of democracy has, moreover, been signally reinforced by France's participation in the process of European economic integration. In a number of landmark cases coming before the European Community's Court of Justice in Luxembourg, French companies have been able to challenge protective practices underwritten by their own state (Mény 1989c:363–7) on grounds

of discrimination or unfair competitive advantage. This subordination of governmental action to European law in policy sectors covered by the Rome Treaty and the Single European Act is particularly important in a country like France where there is a tradition of active and selective intervention by the state in industry (Mény 1989b; Hall 1986:151–5). More recently France's adoption, in 1981, of the additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights has also enabled French citizens to challenge legislation and administrative procedures on the rather wider range of principles which come under the remit of the Strasbourg court (Cohen-Tanugi 1989:32).

DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIZATION UNDER THE FIFTH FRENCH REPUBLIC

Some of the more significant developments that have taken place in France's institutional arrangements to date under the Fifth Republic have been analysed here in terms of their relationship to a dual process of democratization. In both cases the impetus for these patterns of change can be traced back to the combination of provisions put together in the constitutional text drafted in 1958, but a crucial additional impetus was provided in each case by two major amendments which have been made to that text, respectively in 1962 and 1974. Of course, as has been noted, the practice of majoritarian presidentialism associated with the first of these processes depended on sustaining a series of conventions governing the interpretation of key articles of the constitution—and therefore on the availability of a parliamentary majority loyal to the incumbent president. In contrast, the new relationship that has now emerged between law and politics is more firmly, albeit somewhat restrictively, grounded in the constitutional text.

   The democratic gains secured by the advent of *le fait majoritaire* and of a regulatory mechanism for enforcing the Constitution's norms need to be set against the new Republic's original 'democratic deficit' (Hoffmann 1991). For what made the subsequent shifts towards both these forms of majoritarian and consensualist practice possible was the initial downgrading and emasculation of the French parliament imposed by the constitutional settlement of 1958. In terms of each of the main functions which parliaments undertake in West European

parliamentary democracies—holding the government of the day responsible to, and accountable before, the elected representatives of the citizenry and voting the law—the French National Assembly from 1958 found its role much reduced.

The combination of these two modes of democratic organization over the last decade has produced a complex institutional environment for France's political parties, and one which it is difficult for the ordinary citizen to understand. The concentration and personalization of power that came to characterize France's presidentialized mode of majoritarian democracy, and the extensive opportunities afforded for patronage based on party and personal networks, are developments which have attracted recurrent criticism. From the mid-1980s opinion polls testified to growing and widespread dissatisfaction with party politics, with the political leaders of the main party formations and with what is decried as the unnecessarily jargonized character of party political debate.[7] This disaffection from mainstream party politics has itself been a factor contributing to the significant levels of electoral support gained over the last decade by the demagogic and racist politics of Le Pen's National Front. Undoubtedly the economic problems which France faced in the 1980s, and which look set to continue well into the 1990s, have imposed new strains on the fabric of democratic politics. But these have been compounded by the quite particular mix of institutional arrangements which the Fifth Republic has now acquired. Indeed by the early 1990s opinion polls were recording that a clear majority were of the view that democracy was not working well in France.[8]

Doubtless the relationship between an enforceable hierarchy of constitutional norms, applied through the jurisprudence of a constitutional court, and the principle of representative government, based on electoral and parliamentary majorities, is nowhere problem-free (Mény 1990:325–7; *West European Politics* 1992). In Fifth Republican France this relationship has, it has been argued, been complicated by the Council's unusual status as a quasi-third chamber in the legislative process (Stone 1992), whilst initiatives of the presidency remain, in contrast, 'free from control' (Favoreu 1988:123–6).

The Council's crucial role in constraining the operation of majoritarianism has already been noted. In key respects, however, party politics have overlapped into the domain of

constitutionalism, drawing its rulings—and the controversy which they have generated—into an adversarial frame of reference. This can be seen both in the appointment procedure for its members together with the procedure for referring legislation to it. Under article 56, the president of the Republic and the presidents of the two houses of parliament each nominate one-third of the Council's nine members. Most members of the Council have, on appointment, had a clear party affiliation. In the recent period of successive alternations in the composition of presidential and parliamentary majorities, the length of its members' term of office (nine years) has ensured that the party-political composition of the Council did not match that of government, most notably in 1981, 1986 and 1993.[9]

Moreover, the referral process came to be dominated in the 1980s by the parliamentary opposition. With each change in the party composition of government in 1981, 1986 and again in 1988, successive parliamentary oppositions took advantage of the 1974 reform by challenging almost all major pieces of governmental legislation before the Council. Thus whilst forty-three rulings were made by the Council as a result of referrals from the parliamentary opposition between 1974 and 1981, this rose to a total of sixty-six rulings between 1981 and 1986 and a further twenty-six in the short period of 'cohabitation', with a rising proportion of these involving at least partial invalidation of the text voted by parliament (Avril and Gicquel 1992:65). The availability of this procedure therefore served to fuel the bi-polarizing and adversarial style of party politics associated with majoritarianism at the very time when other developments in the party-system and in public opinion were underlining the fragile constitutional basis of majoritarian presidentialism.

Majoritarianism certainly continues to be sustained by the majority electoral system in force for presidential elections, and also by the availability of the procedural devices of 'rationalized parliamentarianism' incorporated in the 1958 text. But it is increasingly constrained by the emergence of other power-sharing and power-restraining institutional arrangements. This was seen in the 1980s when the adversarial character of electoral politics and the advent of politically-opposed party coalitions succeeding one another in government in 1981, 1986 and again in 1988, encouraged expectations of change in the substance of policies which were not then met. Both international constraints,

arising from continuing recession, from France's participation in the Exchange Rate Mechanism, and from judgements handed down by the European Court of Justice, as well as domestic 'normative limitations' on policy-making, deriving essentially from the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Council, contributed to the not inconsiderable policy continuity that marked economic policy, for example, in this period (Bauer 1988; Hall 1990:175–83).

However, it was in the parliamentary arena from 1988 to 1993 that the particularity of France's mix of majoritarian and consensual institutional arrangements was most clearly demonstrated. In the absence of a coherently-structured majority in parliament, successive Socialist Party-led minority governments mirrored the Republic's curious hybridity by engaging, on the one hand, in elaborately consensualist practices in the preparation of certain policy initiatives whilst, on the other hand, resorting on an unprecedented scale to the devices of rationalized parliamentarism. Most dramatically, governments in this period broke all records in their use of the vote of confidence provisions of article 49, paragraph iii. Nine bills were adopted by this procedure in the two-year period from June 1988 to June 1990: this equalled the total usage of the confidence procedure for the whole period to 1980, and was just one short of the combined total for the legislatures of 1981–6 and 1986–8. France's political parties, whether in government or outside of it, have thereby been subjected to a mix of conflicting adversarial and consensual pressures which has made it particularly difficult for them to develop coherent policy commitments and strategies, and to sustain their cohesion as collective actors (Lovecy 1991b).

These difficulties facing France's parties have been reinforced by the successive incorporation of variants on proportionality for three of the six sets of periodic elections in which France's citizens are now called on to vote, whilst a combination of plurality and majority systems has been retained for the other three.[10] The resulting mix of electoral systems requires parties to execute particular feats of tactical and strategic juggling as they switch from electoral contexts rewarding alliances to those which do not (Machin 1989, 1990). Moreover, very high levels of expenditure are incurred in this constant round of electioneering, and most especially in the presidential election campaigns themselves, when candidates make extensive use of opinion polling and the array

of other techniques that go to make up modern political marketing. This requires access to financial resources on a scale beyond those that any party can hope to raise from its membership and supporters, and over the last few years has given rise to a succession of scandals, court cases and other investigations centring on the fraudulent methods to which the main parties have resorted in order to raise funds on a large scale (primarily, as in Italy, through kickbacks on local government contracts). This provided the catalyst for legislation in the late 1980s to provide some public funding to parties, whilst also regulating the publication of party accounts and instituting an amnesty for previous offenders (Portelli 1989; Masclet 1991). Nevertheless, further scandals centring on party-funding have developed and contributed to a growing public malaise over the role and activities of parties.

The adoption of proportional electoral systems for local and regional elections was in turn linked to other reforms which have served to shift France's mix of institutions more recently towards a closer alignment on Lijphart's consensual mode of democracy. Breaking with France's Jacobin pattern of state centralization, the 1982 Defferre laws on decentralization and regionalization have provided for the state's disengagement from direct financial and administrative controls over her three tiers of local authorities and devolved responsibility onto these for a wider range of policies, whilst also introducing directly elected councils at the level of the third tier, the region. Critics of these new arrangements have argued that they have in large measure served to formalize developments that were already under way, without securing a more rational distribution of powers between each level of government. They have not, as a result, achieved greater transparency or efficiency in the policy process.[11] Nor have they promoted greater democratization by securing a closer involvement of French citizens in making the decisions that affect their localities and regions. Indeed they may rather have entrenched the position of key *notables* in the policy process, contributing to a process of 'presidentialization' at each of these three levels (Pouvoirs 60 1992).

Neverthless, this very extensive package of legislation has consolidated a wider dispersal of powers and responsibilities, enmeshing central government in a complex web of collaborative relationships (Mabileau 1991:40–9) and thus incorporating into

France's institutional arrangements that other crucial component of Lijphart's second model of democratic government, the promotion of collaboration between power centres located at different levels in the political system. This has of course been matched by the redistribution of competences between national and supra-national institutions brought about over the last thirty years by France's particpation in the process of European economic integration.

Formal recognition of the transfer of competences to which France has committed herself through treaty obligations was, however, not incorporated into France's constitution until 1992, in preparation for the referendum held in September, which approved France's ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. Mitterrand's second term as president has thus brought a third significant amendment to the 1958 text with the adoption of a new chapter XIV on the European communities and European Union (article 88, paragraphs i to iii).[12] The consensual elements in France's constitutional edifice have thereby been further consolidated at the expense of former majoritarian practices.

In the period of cohabitation and its immediate aftermath, as France prepared to celebrate the bicentenary of her revolution, many commentators emphasized the flexibility of France's current institutional arrangements and argued that these have proved peculiary well suited to promoting a broad constitutional consensus in France (Avril 1987; Furet, Juillard and Rosanvallon 1988; Gicquel 1989). This study, in contrast, while underlining the dynamic character of France's constitutional politics in this period, has pointed rather to the costs that have been associated with the increasingly complex mix of majoritarian and consensual elements which France's institutions have now acquired. It is by no means clear that the dual process of democratization examined here provides a satisfactory basis for durably undercutting the appeal of competing visions of how democracy should be organized in France—or, indeed, of those other political traditions which have defined themselves in opposition to the Republican heritage of the French Revolution—and for achieving, thereby, 'the end of French exceptionalism' (Furet *et al.* 1988).

Certainly the jurisprudence of the Constitutional Council has now established a quite new framework for politics in France, one that favours evolutive and adaptive processes of

constitutional development. Yet in view of the wider problems that have been associated with the particularly complex mix of majoritarian and consensual arrangements which have been put together under the Fifth Republic, there would appear to be grounds for contesting this prognosis. In the modern period policy disputes focusing on changes in France's international environment, and especially her place in Europe, have so often provided the occasion for the French to seek their way forward by resorting to a thorough-going re-organization of their constitutional arrangements. They may yet do so again.[13]

NOTES

1   See below, pp. 238–30 and note 6.
2   Lijphart notes that the presence since 1958 of two features normally associated with the consensus model, viz. oversized coalitions and low average durability of governments, are, somewhat exceptionally in the case of the Fifth Republic, *consistent* with executive dominance.
3   In cases of conflict between the two, the lower-house can override the views of the upper-house *if* the government so decides (article 45, paragraph iv). Article 91 of the 1946 Constitution had established a Constitutional Committee, but this was limited to regulating the relationship between the two houses of parliament.
4   'The President of the Republic sees that the Constitution of the Republic is respected, ensures by his arbitration the regular functioning of the organs of government and the continuity of the State. He is the protector of national independence, of territorial integrity, and of respect for agreements with the French Community'.
5   President de Gaulle: press conference, 31 January 1964.
6   The Preamble of the Constitution of 4 October 1958 had affirmed the French people's 'solemn attachment' to both the Preamble to the Constitution of the Fourth Republic of 27 October 1946 and to the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 26 August 1789. It was these earlier texts which were now accorded constitutional status by the Council's 1971 ruling. To date, a number of decisions have been based on the 1946 Preamble's reference to 'the fundamental principles recognized by the laws of the Republic' but the Council's jurisprudence has not built on the individual and collective rights enumerated in the same text (Stone 1992:43).
7   Opinion polls in January 1988 and March 1991 showed those expressing lack of confidence in parties and in politicians rising from 58 to 69 per cent, and from 51 to 60 per cent, respectively (whilst the corresponding figures for deputies and ministers rose from 28

to 36 per cent and from 29 to 38 per cent respectively) (SOFRES 1992:33).

8   SOFRES's regular poll question showed more judging democracy to be working poorly than well from the autumn of 1991, this gap opening up to 60 per cent as against 38 per cent by early November 1992 (*Le Monde* 19 November 1992).

9   Membership of the council was not made incompatible under the Constitution with the holding of elective office: a number of members over the years have continued to hold a local or national elective office after appointment to the Council and some have chosen to stand for re-election whilst serving on it (Mény 1992:77–80).

10 Proportionality was adopted for the direct European elections (first held in 1979), in the electoral reform for municipal elections (applied from 1983) and for the direct regional elections (first held in 1986). A proportional system was also adopted for the 1986 legislative elections, but it only partially eroded the established impetus towards adversarialism in the party-system (Knapp 1987).

11 Within the education sector, for example, the national ministry retains control over the employment of teachers, while responsibility for maintaining and building primary schools has been assigned to the municipal authorities, most secondary schools fall under the remit of the departments, with *lycée* provision and continuing education for adults being managed by the regions (Mabileau 1991).

12 Constitutional Law no. 92–554 of 25 June 1992.

13 President Mitterrand announced his own programme of revisions to the constitution on 30 November 1992. These included measures to strengthen the role of parliament in the legislative process, to extend the range of policies on which referendums can be held, to allow direct reference of legislation by ordinary citizens to the Constitutional Council, reform of the High Court of Justice and also the possible revision of the presidential term of office. The Consultative Committee for the Revision of the Constitution, which he then established under the chairmanship of G.Vedel to examine these issues, published its recommendations on 15 February 1993 but did not recommend any alteration to the seven-year term of office for the presidency (Rapport au Président de la République 1993).

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Chapter 11

Democracy and democratization in Great Britain

Ian Holliday

Scope for democratization in Britain is both ample and evident. Hereditary membership of the House of Lords and Crown prerogative are just two obvious vestiges of Britain's feudal constitutional arrangements, neither of which has any claim to democratic virtue. Reform of either—or both—could immediately extend the frontiers of British democracy. The question to be asked of Britain's present constitutional arrangements is not therefore whether democratization is possible, but whether it is desirable.

Yet even to address this question requires that another be settled first. Democracy may be a leading contemporary value—as many have noted, few states do not now claim to be democratic—but it is not primary. Rather, it is in the second rank of political values, necessarily ceding place in any hierarchy to consideration of the proper nature of the state. For if democracy is understood as government 'by the people'—the central element in Lincoln's classic formulation—then the logically prior consideration concerns the nature of government itself. Whilst it may readily be accepted that collective decisions should be taken democratically, what might be called the lexically prior question concerns the nature of the collectivity to which reference is made. In short, the frontiers of democracy extend to the very limits of the state itself, but those limits require previous specification. The extent of the domain in which democracy may properly be said to hold sway is not uncontested.

This is, moreover, no purely abstract matter. Indeed, it stands at the very heart of contemporary British debates about the desirability and feasibility of democratization. For what divides many advocates of reform is their understanding of the correct extent and limits of the political domain. Some believe that that

domain should be extended as a means of securing certain collective values, perhaps chief among them being equality. Others contend that it should instead be reduced as a means of liberating the individual from the claims of an over-mighty collectivity, or state.

Although it is therefore easy to identify discrete reforms which would undeniably and immediately extend the frontiers of British democracy, it is far less easy to agree a comprehensive and systematic programme of reform. What to one person is democratization, to another is unjustified encroachment on individual freedom. By the same token, what to one other person is democratization, to another is failure to address evident deficiencies in our collective arrangements.

This, then, is the context in which any discussion of democracy and democratization in Britain must take place. It imposes a very clear structure on analysis. The first requirement is a proper understanding of the state, and therefore of the permissible extent of democracy. This is essentially a theoretical exercise, and is conducted in a cursory fashion below. Once this exercise has been undertaken, it is possible to embark on analysis of the British case, through successive consideration of the present state of British democracy, of proposals for reform, of the desirability of change, and of prospects for change. These various exercises structure the debate which follows.

MODELS OF THE STATE AND OF DEMOCRACY

Models of democracy depend on models of the state. The two which may be used to structure discussion of possible democratization in Britain are drawn from Held (1987). They are participatory and legal democracy, which relate to visions of the state in which compulsory collective action is respectively extensive and minimal.

In the participatory state, derived from the likes of Pateman, Macpherson and Poulantzas, compulsory collective action—and therefore the domain of politics—extends to a great number of social institutions, ranging from the workplace to local, regional, national and (in theory at least) international communities, and control is exercised in each case by majority vote within an inclusive constituency. Here, the domain of politics is wide, and the frontier of democracy is correspondingly extended.

By contrast, in the legal state, derived from the likes of Nozick and Hayek, compulsory collective action is sharply curtailed (although voluntary association is not), and the individual is to a very great extent left to his or her own devices within a market order. In the minimal state, the domain of politics is narrow, and the frontier of democracy is correspondingly reduced. (Voluntary associations may be assumed to have the freedom—which compulsory association does not—of choosing without restriction among decision-making procedures.) Thus, whereas democratic control is extensive in the participatory society, in the minimal state—which implies a legal model of democracy—democratic involvement is sharply circumscribed, and the rule of law becomes the central mechanism of a market economy in which control is exercised through the market-place.

Differences between the two models may briefly be reviewed at greater length. At the level of principles, the chief difference is that in the participatory state the role of collective choice is maximized, whereas in the legal state it is minimized, and individual rights are fiercely protected. At the level of detail, the constitution of the participatory state extends political—and ultimately therefore democratic—control to such matters as monetary policy, taxation, government borrowing, redistributive and welfare measures, and to such social institutions as the workplace, school and hospital. As Radnitzky's (1991) outline of an ideal constitution makes clear, the constitution of the legal state prohibits government involvement in monetary policy and direct taxation of income, treating all other forms of taxation—and all forms of redistribution—as constitutional matters, places constitutional limits on government revenues and borrowing, and outlaws all forms of protectionism, securing instead the free movement of goods, services, capital and people. Evidently, the limits of democracy in this state are closely circumscribed.

These are, then, opposed views of the state in which rights to self-development are held to have strikingly different bases. They mark out distinct theoretical limits of democracy. Only rarely will the discussion which follows even approach either of these limits. This is, however, unimportant, for the main function of this initial theoretical discussion is to provide a framework within which competing democratization proposals may be assessed. The fact that none of these proposals approaches either ideal does not diminish the utility of this exercise.

THE PRESENT STATE OF BRITISH DEMOCRACY

From one perspective it might seem odd that the state of British democracy is currently in question. For many years Britain was considered by native and foreign observers alike to be the model polity. In the wake of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 it was held throughout the civilized world to embody the virtues of enlightened government. In the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789 its gradual democratization was viewed—notably by the British themselves—as a vastly superior alternative to revolutionary upheaval in many parts of Europe. In more recent times of imperial withdrawal and dismemberment, British democracy was neatly patterned across the globe in whole or in part, as the Westminster model was confidently exported to countries emerging from colonial rule to attain full statehood. In democratic as in earlier manifestations, the British polity was for many years held to be without equal.

Yet from another perspective there is nothing in the least bit odd about contemporary debate of the nature of British democracy. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the constitution underpinned substantial economic growth and success, and even in the middle years of the twentieth century was one of the foundations on which—as Lady Thatcher is very keen to remind us—Britain resisted the tyranny which was sweeping much of Europe. In recent years, however, it has underpinned nothing more commendable than relative, and occasionally absolute, economic decline. Though many other factors have played a part, it is decline which is central to many Britons' current dissatisfaction with their constitution.

The consequence is that dissatisfaction began to develop in tandem—though also at a slight lag—with debates about decline. It could be seen in the early 1960s, when the 'suicide' (*Encounter* 1963) of the British nation was first discussed in earnest. However, at this time debate was couched chiefly in the language of modernization, and the bases of Britain's constitution were only rarely held to require reform, such changes as were made being essentially additional to existing arrangements. It could be seen more clearly in the mid- to late 1970s, when the spectre of 'overload' (King 1975) appeared to raise the urgent need for radical reform of the British constitution (Brittan 1975), and when proposals for a measure of

devolution to Scotland and, perhaps, Wales were debated at length and put to referendums.

Yet little changed. On the one hand, neither the Scottish nor the Welsh referendum obtained the majority of votes required to trigger change. On the other, the incoming Thatcher government sought by its actions to demonstrate that talk of ungovernability was misplaced, and that debate of reform was therefore redundant. It succeeded in its first aim, but failed in its second. Indeed, with each new manifestation of governing competence on the part of the Thatcher administration demands for reform grew. They were, however, in many ways different from previous demands, for in the 1980s debate about British institutions focused not so much on efficiency, the theme of the 1960s, or ungovernability, which had dominated large sections of debate in the 1970s, but on the more basic themes of democracy and democratization. Faced with a regime held by many to be the most centralizing since the seventeenth century, critics voiced demands for democratization of the British system.

However, important as this was, pressure for change was provoked by more factors than simply the perceived centralization of successive Thatcher governments (Burch and Holliday 1992). Domestically, pressure for change derived from a series of both general and specific factors, some of which related to the Thatcher governments, and some of which related to wider forces operating on the British polity in the 1980s. It was reinforced by a number of external factors, none of which was particularly pressing in the British context, but each of which helped to establish a general climate for change.

Domestic factors were multiple. At the general level, the perceived centralizing tendencies of the Thatcher governments provoked both democrats who sought to voice a concern about the decline in British democracy, and anti-Conservatives who objected not so much to the means as to the ends of government policy. Often the two types of concern were merged in a single individual, and when they were not the latter group often provided tactical support to the former. Also at the general level it has been argued that a displacement mechanism operated during the Thatcher years, whereby individuals who, in the 1960s and to a lesser extent in the 1970s, would have been involved in economic planning, were pushed into the political sphere of constitution-mongering by the ascendary of free-

market economics (Willetts 1992). Beyond this, and essentially unrelated to any change perpetrated by Thatcherism, were continuing calls for modernization of Britain's governing institutions, and demands for codification of principles which were becoming increasingly indistinct with the developing heterogeneity of British society and of the traditions it now embodies.

At the level of specifics, a number of the Thatcher governments' actions operated to focus concern about the state of British democracy. In England, abolition of the Greater London Council and the six metropolitan county councils in April 1986 provided dramatic evidence of centralization, as one tier of local government was swept away, and its powers were transferred chiefly to a series of *ad hoc* bodies, none of which was directly elected and therefore immediately accountable through the democratic process. In Scotland, no single event of comparable drama was enacted, but the cumulative impact of more than a decade of Thatcherite radicalism, culminating in imposition of the community charge or poll tax one year ahead of its introduction in the rest of Britain, was if anything far greater. Although it consistently voted anti-Conservative in large numbers at the general elections of 1979, 1983 and 1987, Scotland found itself forced to endure not simply Conservative government, but also government which was widely perceived to espouse a peculiarly English radicalism which had no more than a very limited Scottish constituency (Holliday 1992). In Wales and Northern Ireland such radicalism was heavily mediated by secretaries of state who acted more often than not to tone down local application of national principles. Nevertheless, in much of Great Britain a number of specific factors operated to provide dramatic confirmation of the more general argument that British democracy was under threat.

In turn, reinforcement of each of these domestic factors was provided by events elsewhere in the world. Three were pre-eminent. To begin with, British membership of the European Community increasingly brought into question the nature of Britain's internal political arrangements, in particular as European policy came increasingly to dominate British. Here, Britain's record number of references to the European Court of Human Rights was a notable embarrassment. Second, EC membership had an indirect demonstration effect on British political arrangements

through Britons' increased exposure to, and awareness of, continental practice which tends to include such mechanisms as proportional representation of one kind or another, and an entrenched bill of rights. Third, revolution in Eastern Europe, always conducted in the name of democracy, had an unquantifiable but clearly destabilizing effect on domestic political arrangements not only in Britain, but also in a number of other European states such as, for example, Spain, where demands for independence by some autonomous regions were encouraged by events in the former Soviet bloc.

On their own, very few of these factors would have been sufficient to provoke fundamental challenge to Britain's political arrangements. Together, they generated substantial movement for change.

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

Proposals for change have not, however, been uniform. Along one dimension they can be seen to stretch from incrementalism to radicalism, encompassing on the one hand limited amounts of devolution to Scotland and, perhaps, Wales, and on the other fundamental reform of the British constitution to the point at which a largely new set of political arrangements is creatively codified in a written constitution. Along another dimension, which essentially replicates the left-right spectrum, they stretch between the two extremes of the models of participatory and legal democracy sketched above. The interaction of these two dimensions generates a simple two-by-two matrix of proposals for democratic change, on which actual reform proposals could be plotted.

That this exercise will not be attempted here reflects the fact that very few reform proposals have been advanced with any precision. In the current state of British constitutional debate, different collections of proposals are often developed in relatively unsystematic ways, and it is very difficult to impose a coherent structure on them. Among the very few exceptions to this general rule—such as Mount (1992)—two will be assessed in detail here. One is the draft constitution produced by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) (1991), which is in many ways the most impressive current contribution to debate. The other is the 'incremental agenda' for constitutional reform developed by Frank

Vibert (1990) of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). Although there is a large degree of overlap between these two main proposals, they may usefully be employed to illustrate quasi-participatory and quasi-legal approaches to reform of the British constitution.

The two approaches are best investigated through analysis of distinct categories of reform proposal, drawn from Vibert (1990), which help to show that the IPPR and Vibert approaches are distinguished both by the content of their reform proposals, and by the priorities they establish. The four main categories of reform proposal, some of which overlap, relate to the legitimation of authority, the exercise of authority, the role of the state and the domain of governance. Two further linked questions also arise. The first concerns the desirability of codification in a written constitution. The second relates to the correct degree of incrementalism or radicalism in reform. The linkage between these two questions arises from the fact that whilst even an unreformed British constitution could be codified, there is a clear tendency to radicalism once the issue of codification is raised. These questions will not be considered yet, as they have no bearing on the tension under investigation between participatory and legal approaches to constitutional reform.

Proposals relating to the legitimation of authority chiefly involve removal of hereditary privilege—currently vested both in the Crown and in the House of Lords—and reform of the electoral system. Both the IPPR and Vibert advocate the former reforming measure, though each equally notes that removal of privilege does not necessarily entail abolition either of the monarchy or of an hereditary peerage. However, whereas the IPPR is a strong advocate of both proportional representation and fixed-term parliaments—opting for four years as an appropriate term—Vibert takes an agnostic position on electoral reform, nevertheless hinting that change is desirable for symbolic reasons and suggesting that experiments be undertaken in elections other than those to the House of Commons. New Right support for fixed-term parliaments can, however, be discovered elsewhere. Riker (1982) is, for example, a trenchant critic of current British arrangements, seeing in them excessive room for manipulation of the political business cycle. Similarly, Mount (1992), though not an advocate of proportional representation, also comes out in favour of fixed-term

parliaments. In short, the major difference between the two competing approaches on proposals relating to the legitimation of authority concerns means rather than ends, Vibert being considerably more cautious than the IPPR.

In considering the proper exercise of authority, the major issue is limiting state power. At this point, differences of principle begin to emerge between the IPPR and Vibert. For whilst Vibert does not go to the full length of advocating the many limits on state power included in Radnitzky's outline of an ideal constitution, he does seek to constrain public authority to a greater extent than does the IPPR. He thereby aligns himself with the IPPR in seeking to enforce parliamentary control of the executive—by strengthening the scrutiny powers of both the House of Commons and of a reformed Second Chamber—and in calling for a fundamental review of the role and function of local and regional government in the British political system. However, whereas the IPPR places great stress on entrenched powers for sub-national tiers of government, Vibert's distinctive concern is the creation of an independent central bank. Whilst recognizing that independence is often a mirage—as is amply demostrated by the experiences of both the US Federal Reserve in relation to the deficit and the Germany Bundesbank in relation to reunification—Vibert none the less holds that such a proposal is a valid second best to the monetary constitution outlined by Radnitzky. This, then, is the first indication of a major difference of approach to constitutional reform on the parts of the IPPR and Vibert, a difference which resides in contrasting views of the correct shape of the state and of the corresponding nature of the political domain.

That difference is amplified when questions relating to the role of the state are investigated. Here issues which are considered extra-constitutional by the IPPR are (apparently) raised to constitutional status by Vibert. Thus, although the IPPR accepts that the role of the state in such areas as law enforcement and surveillance of information properly comes within the bounds of constitutional debate, it does not envisage the constitution regulating the role of the state in such sectors as the economy or welfare functions. Vibert himself proposes few detailed measures in these areas, but he does suggest that they may properly be considered in constitutional terms, thereby hinting at the much more radical position taken by Radnitzky.

In the linked field of issues relating to the domain of governance, the IPPR and Vibert join forces in advocating a bill of rights as a means of protecting the individual from an over-mighty state, but part company when the issue of taxation is addressed. Again it is unclear from Vibert's proposals how exactly he proposes to regulate taxation by constitutional means, but nevertheless evident that he believes this issue to raise constitutional questions, thereby again suggesting an alignment with Radnitzky's position.

Comparison of the two leading current proposals for reform of the British constitution demonstrates that debate is at least partially structured by the participatory-legal tension outlined above. Indeed, the fact that the two sets of proposals are in basic alignment at a number of points should not be allowed to obscure the equally clear fact that their inspirations are in many ways different. This difference is perhaps as well demonstrated by the distinct priorities as by the varied contents of the two reform agendas. For in raising to constitutional status issues relating to the role of the state and the domain of governance, Vibert reveals that he is concerned to place limits not only on the state but also—in consequence—on democracy. Such a concern is in no sense as pressing for the IPPR, informed as it is by a quasi-participatory agenda.

In the context of this debate about reform of the British constitution, the desirability of change may be considered. This involves assessment of the two main cases for change, of the proper speed of reform, and of the case for codification.

THE DESIRABILITY OF CHANGE

It is evident that valuations of the desirability of change are not uniform. On the one hand, democratization proposals are a function of more basic understandings of the state and of the correct extent of the political domain. On the other, the claims of democracy itself must be traded against other political values, among which, importantly, are the essentially conservative values of continuity, stability and a preference for organic change.

First taking democratization proposals in isolation, the basic tension regarding the proper reach of politics has already been discussed and need not be rehearsed again. It can generate

strikingly different proposals for reform. Yet what is also notable about existing reform proposals is the extent to which they converge on a shared basic reform agenda, indicating that the penetration of democratic values into some of the central institutions of the British state is far from complete. On grounds of democracy alone, it is impossible to justify aspects of the British constitution such as the House of Lords and Crown prerogative. Equally, however, it must be admitted that no firm conclusions about the British electoral system, the territorial distribution of power and the rights of the British subject can be drawn on purely democratic grounds. In each case, a theory of the state is required to reinforce any claim.

At this point, then, democratization proposals diverge. Participatory democrats tend to promote a proportional electoral system in the name of representation, devolution of power in the name of participation, and a bill of rights which includes important social entitlements. Legal democrats, by contrast, are chiefly concerned that the state does not infringe individual liberty, and whilst they may support proportional representation, devolution and a bill of rights, in each case their leading interest is less the character of collective decision-making than its scope and extent. Thus, their bill of rights is in essence a clear constraint on elective majorities rather than an extension of their domain. Indeed, because they place individual values above collective ones, legal democrats only envisage a small sphere in which joint decision-making—and hence democracy—can operate.

In truth, then, the shared agenda of participatory and legal democrats is limited. Both may, for example, advocate a bill of rights, but its content in each case will—or certainly ought to—be strikingly different. No legal democrat is likely to support the IPPR's list of social and economic rights (article 27), which includes (non-enforceable) rights to an adequate standard of living, to social security, to enjoyment of the highest possible standard of physical and mental health, to education and to strike. Three main issues, however, arise and are equally pressing for both. First, why should reform take place at all? Second, how should reform—if desirable—proceed? Third, should the British constitution—whether reformed or not—be enshrined in written form?

The first issue—which is actually an objection—derives from the various conservative commitments already mentioned and

generates resistance to all forms of creative social engineering. It is currently expressed by most of the Conservative Party hierarchy—having been a major part of the Conservative platform in the closing days of the 1992 general election campaign—and features in the most recent exposition of modern Conservatism, produced by David Willetts (1992). On the one hand, the argument is that the British constitution is not broken, so it does not need to be fixed. On the other, it is that gradual change is in fact taking place, as it has done for centuries (Patten 1991). Yet the first of these two arguments ignores the fact that the British constitution is actually strikingly incapable of coming to terms with many of the major challenges of modern democracy, such as the Scottish demand for greater Scottish control of Scottish affairs, and the more general demand for democratic participation in government structures which remain strongly centralized. Similarly, the second ignores the fact that in many important areas, such as the two just mentioned, the British constitution is deeply inertial. It is hard to see that either objection to democratization is valid *per se*.

The second issue is, however, more substantial. The objection to incremental change is that it might never take enough steps actually to reach the desired end, and is one of the reasons why the IPPR decided to take the radical step of producing a draft constitution. The objection to radical change is that it could be both destabilizing and mistaken. In these circumstances the compromise solution of incremental radicalism would seem to be appropriate, particularly in an area in which one change is highly likely to lead on to another, such that the prospect of perpetual postponement of the desired end is substantially diminished. Yet change of any kind requires that the basic tension between participatory and legal democracy be first—or at least quite quickly—resolved.

This is, moreover, a leading consideration in addressing the third issue. Although no written constitution is entirely rigid in the provisions it makes, and although each contains procedures for its own adaptation and revision, the very point of a written constitution is that it should be difficult to change. It could itself, therefore, prove to be a source of problems in a changing society. Indeed, the sorts of changes which are gradually sweeping Britain today indicate the extent of possible difficulties. A constitution which had, for example, been codified as recently as the middle of the present century might soon be felt to entrench

entirely unwarranted social rights. In these circumstances, it could be argued that the only constitution which should be codified is one which expresses common ground between participatory and legal democrats. However, this might prove to be of such limited extent as to make the resultant document entirely anodyne and, moreover, excessively prone to judicial interpretation.

Indeed, juridification of politics is one of the major problems created by a written constitution. Vibert is right to argue that codification generates welcome transparency in institutional arrangements, for entrenchment ensures that no fundamental change can be enacted without broad debate. However, his further contention that juridification of politics should not be considered a threat, but should instead be seen as an opportunity to generate alternative channels of constitutional debate, is less acceptable. Channels of constitutional debate are properly political, and codification can only displace them into non-political arenas.

Democratic renewal in Britain is therefore desirable, though it quickly needs to be given strategic direction and would not necessarily benefit from developed codification. One result of such renewal might be emergence of a more democratic political culture in Britain. Equally, however, prospects for change are determined at least in part by the extent to which such an emergence is already taking pace.

PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE

Indeed, prospects for change depend on the interaction of elite and mass attitudes. Neither a revolution purely from above nor one purely from below is feasible in this sphere, where substantial amounts of consensus are necessary to successful and lasting change. At both elite and mass levels, recent years have witnessed partial collapse of the constitutional consensus.

At elite level, it is from one perspective surprising that the breakdown in constitutional consensus has not been more pronounced. This is because the challenge to the post-war economic and social consensus which was launched by the various individuals and institutions associated with the Thatcherite project might reasonably be expected to have generated a parallel challenge to the constitutional consensus.

Indeed, German theorists of the social market economy, who provided much inspiration for Thatcherite thinkers, have always had a developed interest in constitutional issues (Graham and Prosser 1988), and as has already been noted, Hayek, for instance, is a leading theorist of legal democracy. Furthermore, many prominent members of Thatcher's governments at one time or another expressed support for some aspects of constitutional reform. Lord Hailsham, Sir Keith Joseph, Sir Leon Brittan and Lord Havers are, for example, all on record as advocates of a bill of rights (Zander 1985). From another perspective, however, Thatcherism's failure to generate a constitutional dimension is less surprising. In this domain, as in others, power corrupts thought processes, if nothing else. Lord Hailsham—the critic of 'elective dictatorship' (Hailsham 1978) until himself appointed to government in 1979—is only the most obvious illustration of this phenomenon.

Nevertheless, Conservative reforming measures have not been non-existent. Indeed, Willetts's (1992) assertion that democratic renewal has taken place under the Conservatives must be taken seriously. The measures he identifies range from forcible democratization of local government to the Citizen's Charter. Each of these measures is legitimately included in a description of recent democratization moves, and can in fact be added to. For what is clear is that the new public management which is being pursued by the Conservatives entails an entirely new vision of the proper relationship between the individual and the state. Instead of being the essentially passive recipient of services produced by a monolithic state, the individual as consumer—though not, as it happens, as citizen—is being slowly empowered to make both choices about public provision and claims against the state. This process is visible in health and education reform in particular, but is by no means restricted simply to these fields. If all goes to plan, it will soon be the common feature of the traditional domains of both central and local government.

Such evidence is properly admitted to a discussion of democratic renewal, for it fits very clearly into a vision of democracy inspired by the legal model. More generally, it is evident that government by contract (Mather 1991) can enhance any form of democracy through the gains in transparency and accountability which it generates. Yet current Conservative reform goes nothing like far enough in meeting the full requirements even

of the legal model, and as it does little to advance the participatory cause it can legitimately be criticized for its democratic deficit. Willetts's essential complacency in insisting that the detailed measures taken by successive Conservative governments offer all that the practical democrat could realistically hope for or desire is quite correctly dismissed.

The result of pervasive Conservative complacency is that the greatest challenge to the elite consensus on the constitution has come from those excluded from power by more than a decade of Conservative ascendancy. The British centre parties, in their various guises, have long been exponents of constitutional reform. They have, moreover, been joined in recent years by the Labour Party, which reacted to the shock of heavy defeat in 1987 by shifting its ground on constitutional issues, and which engaged in a similar process following the still greater shock of a quite substantial defeat in 1992. The Plant Report, which was commissioned before the 1992 election but published after it, endorses many central aspects of the IPPR programme, and clearly represents a major current of Labour thinking. Yet there remain aspects of the status quo—such as the extent of executive dominance, commitment to a 'neutral' civil service, and the limited powers of parliamentary select committees—which are virtually untouched even by reformers' aspirations, never mind any achievements they may secure.

The breakdown in elite consensus on the constitution therefore remains only partial. Not only are the Conservatives still resolutely committed to the Union, to the present electoral system, to no more than a loose assemblage of citizenship rights, to only a partial opening of government, and to many other aspects of the status quo, but also important parts of the opposition remain no more than timid reformers.

Prospects for reform are not, however, simply within the control of political and administrative elites, for pressure for change is so widespread at the start of the 1990s that before too long management of it will inevitably involve concession and compromise. The main trigger for reform has for a long time been Scotland, and remains so today. For although the main 'victors' of the 1992 general election north of the border were initially held to be the Conservatives—less as a result of the 1.6 per cent improvement on the 1987 outcome in their share of the vote than as a result of their unexpected survival as a political force in

Scotland—it quickly became clear that a party which had still only polled 25.7 per cent of the Scottish vote remained in a strategically weak position. United opposition is now all that is needed to provoke a significant challenge to the Union itself. There is every prospect that the second Major government will face such a challenge, and that the question of reform of governing arrangements in Scotland will become an important aspect of British politics.

Indeed, the relevant questions in Scotland would now seem to be not whether, but when and how, though there is always the possibility that once a 'price' is attached to the 'prize' of devolution or independence the Conservatives' position will significantly improve. Should it not, and some measure of concession is indeed granted to Scots, the intriguing subsidiary question concerns the possibility of a knock-on effect not simply in Wales, but also in England. Here, a campaign is gradually gathering pace which seeks to develop an English regional tier in line with continental European practice. Beyond this campaign there is always the possibility that once the status quo is seen to have been substantially breached, other measures—such as an extension of proportional representation from a Scottish Assembly to British elections to the European Parliament and even to Westminster itself—will become a great deal less resistible.

Popular pressure for change could, then, be sufficient to initiate a movement which quickly becomes difficult to control. The Charter 88 grouping is well placed to encourage such pressure. At this point, however, attention returns to political elites, and party strategies for managing and directing that pressure become highly important. Whilst it is clearly to small parties' advantage to align themselves with the movement for change, and whilst the Labour Party might soon see that it is itself in this category, the most interesting questions in much constitutional debate relate to the position and strategy of the Conservative Party which is currently, and is likely for many years to remain, a leading force in British politics and the dominant force in English. So long as the Conservative Party remains strongly opposed to the series of reforms currently being advocated by a broad section of British political opinion, it is likely that many reforms will be fiercely resisted.

Yet it is not clear that it is in the party's long-term interest to retain a resolutely oppositional stance with respect to

constitutional change. On the one hand, such a stance could be both strategically and tactically inept, leading eventually to a situation in which the Conservative Party is marginalized from a debate which has captured almost every other element of British political opinion. On the other hand, it could increasingly diverge from the Conservatives' wider political programme, for any party which is seriously interested in rolling back the state and redefining the state-citizen relation must in the end address itself to constitutional issues.

Indeed, if, as Thatcher recognized, the change which she sought to promote in Britain was primarily cultural, then constitutional arrangements, which are central to a nation's political culture, must ultimately be addressed. As Stephen Haseler (1991) has noted, Britain's institutions remain paternalistic. If the civic culture of an open society is to be fostered, Britain's constitution must be reformed.

There is, moreover, the possibility that a more active Conservative stance on constitutional issues could permit it to dominate this area of debate in the same way that it has recently come to dominate other areas which were once thought to be unfavourable territory. In short, it would seem to be in the Conservative Party's interest to switch from peripheral and in many ways virtually invisible reform of existing constitutional arrangements to a far more positive reform agenda.

The final question which needs to be addressed concerns the mechanics of reform. Brazier (1991), in correctly noting that constitutional change is virtually impossible without a broad degree of consensus, delivers a pessimistic assessment of prospects for change and suggests that only a Constitutional Commission is likely to deliver lasting reform. Yet such a device is itself an unrealistic prospect. Far more likely is a gradual process of specific institutional reforms which may, in the end, be codified in a written document. Here, Vibert's gradualism would seem to be far more realistic than the IPPR's radicalism.

CONCLUSION

British democratization is both desirable and feasible. Yet democracy is not in itself the ultimate political value. Rather, it depends on a theory of the state to set the limits of its proper

domain. Only when this has been done can the frontiers of democracy be accurately established.

This necessary ordering immediately suggests that a process of democratization which even approaches the participatory model is highly unlikely in the British context. The movement in British politics is from collectivism to individualism, and in these circumstances the extension of the political domain required by participatory democracy does not come within the scope of practical politics. Furthermore, despite the fact that the linked issues of constitutional reform and democratic renewal have been dominated in the recent past by forces opposed to Conservatism, it is by no means clear that this situation will continue into the distant future. A competing vision of democracy is on offer, and there is every reason to suppose that it could provide the Conservative Party with promising terrain on which to fight its political opponents.

If this does indeed prove to be the case, the only reasons why it should not become a central feature of party policy are the party's traditions, the inevitable inertia which is generated by an organization as complex as the Conservative Party, and the corruption of reforming constitutional zeal generated by a long unbroken period in power. This is a formidable array of reasons, but it may not always prevent the Conservative Party from developing a reformist constitutional agenda.

Were it to do so, real constitutional debate would be joined, and the possibility of genuine democratic renewal would open up. The most likely result of a reform process in which the Conservative Party played a leading part is a solution in which the political domain is substantially restricted, but within which domain democratic participation is substantially increased. Whilst this solution might suggest closer approximation to the legal than the participatory model of democracy, it could be sufficiently participatory to generate a broad degree of consensus. Democratization in Great Britan, though apparently stalled at present, is by no means a lost cause.

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Part III

Conclusion

Chapter 12

Democracy and democratization

Geraint Parry and Michael Moran

Nearly three decades ago a distinguished political theorist pictured liberal democracy as an embattled form of government in danger of decline:

> Fifty years ago the world was almost the preserve of the Western liberal-democratic capitalist societies. Their economies were triumphant, and so were their theories. Since then, two-thirds of the world has rejected the liberal-democratic market society, both in practice and theory. From Lenin to Nkruma and Sekou Touré, the value system of the West has been spurned, either in the name of Marxism or in the name of a Rousseauian populist general-will theory… It is the mediate principle of liberal democracy that the other two ideologies reject—the mediate principle that the ultimate human values can be achieved by, and only by, free enterprise in both political and economic life, only by the free party system and the capitalist market system.
>
> (Macpherson 1964, reprinted 1973, pp. 183–4)

It is obvious that events of recent years have falsified much of Macpherson's account. Leninism and African socialism now seem almost as anachronistic as the golden age of constitutionalism to which he in turn looked back. The principles underlying the 'free party system and the capitalist market system' are more firmly in the saddle than ever. Indeed, they seem more dominant now than in the golden age of democratic constitutionalism before the First World War. In 1914 many states which could now claim to be in the democratic camp lacked the full attributes of democratic government: the

United Kingdom had a restricted franchise; India was under colonial rule; Germany was a qualified autocracy; in the Mediterranean countries democratic government was either absent, limited or unstable; many of the presently emergent democracies of middle Europe were part of the old Austro-Hungarian empire; Russia was an Imperial autocracy.

In the period since the First World War democracy has seen the rise, and then the fall, of many ideological rivals. Various brands of Imperial rule; Marxism-Leninism; Fascism; authoritarian populism of the sort represented by Peronism; what Macpherson himself called the 'Rousseauian' theories of African socialism; all have come and gone. Are we then observing the onward march of democracy, the resumption of what James Bryce called a 'natural trend', a 'general law of social progress'? (Cited in Huntington 1984:196.)

The contributions to this volume suggest otherwise. It is worth remembering, in the present euphoria about the spread of democracy, just how unexpected have been many recent spectacular examples of democratization. It is not only left-wing critics of pluralist democracy who have been wrong-footed by history. Even an observer as acute as Huntington was certain in the mid-1980s that 'the likelihood of democratic development in Eastern Europe is virtually nil' (Huntington 1984:217). Evidently there is much uncertainty and contingency in the process of democratization. There is little evidence of the existence of 'a general law of (democratic) progress'. It is not at all inconceivable that a decade from now the 'triumph of democracy' will itself appear an interlude. The contributions to this volume emphasize the uncertain nature of democratic development. Beyond the areas covered in the preceding essays, however, there remain three important questions about democracy and democratization. They concern issues neglected in the body of this book: the significance of the United States in the progress of democracy; the relationship between the nation-state and democratic politics; and the changing meaning of democratic citizenship.

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIZATION

To the extent that ours has been the 'democratic century' it has been so in large measure because it has also been the American century. America's influence on the development of democracy

has been significant in three ways. First, at crucial historical moments American political and military power has been used to push the political systems of other nations in the direction of democracy. The most successful example was the imposition of democratic institutions on the old Axis powers after the end of the Second World War. A more recent instance is provided by the efforts of successive American administrations overtly to shape political developments abroad—through, for instance, the Reaganite 'Project Democracy' scheme (Huntington 1984:197). Second, American power in the 'production structure' (Strange 1988:62–87) has exerted a powerful influence in favour of liberal, free-market economics—the kind of economic arrangement most commonly associated with democratic politics. Finally, the United States has exercised extraordinary influence in what, following Strange again, we can call the political 'knowledge structure'— the stock of information, images and symbols on which political argument and enquiry draws. (As a single illustration consider the dominant position of American political science in the world community of political scholars, a superiority reinforced by the increasing dominance of American as the international language of scientific communication.) In short, the United States was a pioneer of democratization and has been the most powerful national actor in the world system: its role as pioneer and as hegemonic power ensured that it was the centre of a system diffusing democratic institutions and ideas across the globe. The history of democratic 'triumphs' is thus in part the history of the triumph of American notions of democracy. In these circumstances the character—and especially the changing character—of American democracy becomes an issue of the utmost importance.

    This is not the place to draw a detailed picture of the changing character of the American model of democracy. Three important features are nevertheless worth stressing, since they raise question marks about the nature of the democratic process in the United States, and therefore about the most important democratic nation-state in the world today. They are: the problematic nature of the American party system as it has developed in recent years; the intense strains placed on established models of accountability by the changing relationship between organized interests and the American state; and the juridification of the political process.

Parties have been, and remain, central to most models of democratic politics. In the process of democratization in Eastern Europe—a process described in Waller's contribution to this volume—party formation is crucial. In the United States parties historically played major roles in the mobilization of interests, in the integration of migrants into the world of American citizenship, and in structuring the political loyalties and voting intentions of citizens (Greenstein 1970; Campbell *et al.* 1960). By comparison with the 1960s parties have declined. The signs of decline are numerous. A smaller proportion of the American people than hitherto is prepared to commit itself to identification with one or other of the two major parties. More serious still, there has been a significant long-term weakening in the *intensity* of party identification. The party's roles in interest representation have been challenged by specialized pressure groups. Party organization at the local level has weakened significantly, and the rise of electronic campaigning has greatly reduced the importance of party as a means of mobilizing voters (Cain 1992; Lowenstein 1992). Although there was some revival of party in the 1980s—notably through internal reform and through the growth in the resources and power of national party institutions—their decline as vehicles of interest representation and electoral campaigning continued apace (Ceaser 1990).

The decline of party has been particularly damaging to the capacity of American politics to produce stable voter coalitions. Parties were an anchor of voter loyalty and, that anchor removed, there has occurred large-scale disaffection with the political class, and rapid surges and falls in support for maverick candidates. When a maverick millionaire offering quasi-utopian promises attracted the support of significant numbers of Polish voters in the first popular post-Communist election for president we took this as a sign of a lack of experience in the politics of democracy. Yet the phenomenon of Ross Perot, the maverick billionaire who briefly rode high on the opinion polls in the American presidential election of 1992 on a diet of equally vague promises, shows that large numbers of Americans are also available for mobilization by forces outside the conventional party system.

Accountability must lie at the centre of any model of democracy, and ensuring accountability in the American political system is now recognized as a serious problem by scholars as different in their political persuasion as Lowi (1969) and Wolfe

(1977). The origins of this problem lie in the rise of the interventionist state created by the New Deal. That state suffers from an accountability deficit. Policy outputs are shaped by bargaining carried out in networks populated by actors lodged in federal agencies and in well-organized special-interest groups. Significant parts of the state have been 'franchised'—Wolfe's image—to private interests or to regulatory agencies tied closely to those interests.

This accountability deficit is itself one of the reasons for the juridification of the political process. By this we mean the increasing extent to which attempts are made to use the courts and the judicial process generally to pursue political objectives. Of course in a constitutional system like the United States the courts have always enjoyed an especially important part in political argument. But the connection between law and democratic politics is tense, because the adversarial character of the courtroom process sits uneasily with the bargaining and compromise characteristic of the political process in pluralist democracies. One sign of juridification is the growing workload of the institutions whose function is to adjudicate on the supposed meaning of the constitution, notably the Supreme Court: between 1953 and 1988 the number of cases disposed of by the court rose fourfold. This growing workload reflects the increasing use of litigation as a political strategy by singe-issue interest groups. Resort to the courts to settle a political issue is not new; but what is new is the rapidity with which groups turn to the law, and the extent to which litigation has been incorporated into their customary battery of political tactics. Beyond the world of high political issues like abortion, the low politics of the regulatory agencies have also become entangled in an extraordinary complex jurisprudence (for the example of financial regulation see Moran 1991).

We have sketched these strains in the American democratic process—the decline of party, accountability deficits and juridification—because the world-wide process of democratization in recent years involved diffusion from the most important and powerful of all democratic systems. That diffusion is problematic, because it is emanating from a democratic centre which is itself undergoing intense strains.

It is also problematic, of course, because of limitations on the 'exportability' of the American model. Since de Tocqueville

observers of American institutions have recognized that democratic practices on the other side of the Atlantic are part of American exceptionalism—a product of features unique to that society. The complications of exceptionalism have been intensified by the emergence of the US as a superpower. America's global role has meant that the diffusion of democracy has been influenced by something more than the ideological hegemony of the (American) democratic model; diffusion has also depended on the policy priorities of the American state. Where those ruling priorities have dictated support for democratic practices—as in Europe after the Second World War—democracy has flourished. Where the interests of the American state have been linked to authoritarian forces—as in much of Latin America—American influence has been destructive of democracy.

Recognizing that democratization happens through a process of diffusion helps to clarify another important feature of recent political change. Democratic government is characteristically practised at the level of the nation-state, but these states do not operate sealed away from their environment. They exist as part of a changing international political and economic system. Indeed, as is plain from the accounts of Latin America, China, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union offered in the preceding pages, the character of the international economic and political system has been crucial to the fate of national-level democracy. There is a large (if contested) literature on the impact of the multinational economy, especially the multinational corporation, on the viability of national political systems. But it is now becoming clear that emergent *political* institutions beyond the nation-state also raise important questions about the functioning of democratic politics.

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM AND DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

An examination of the impact of the changing international system on democratic government could take many forms. Take as a timely instance the changed role of the United Nations. As long as the Soviet Union remained a major power, and a rival to the United States, the United Nations had a limited capacity to act collectively. The decline, and then the dissolution, of the Soviet Union has changed the environment of the UN dramatically. The

growing importance of 'peace-keeping' activities, culminating in the full-scale war against Iraq, is a striking illustration of the change. If the renewed capacity of the United Nations to act collectively is maintained, then questions about the UN 'constitution'—about lines of accountability, decision rules and the distribution of power inside the organization—will have to be incorporated into discussions of democratization.

The role of the UN raises potential problems for the functioning of democratic politics. The recent history of the European Community, the most important and powerful of all supranational systems, takes us from potential to actuality. The problems posed for democratization by the EC have their origin in the transformation of the Community in recent years. After its enlargement by the entry of the UK, Denmark and Ireland in 1973 the Community entered a period of relative quiescence, but since the mid-1980s there have been dramatic changes. Three are particularly important. The first is the attempt to empower the Community institution with the strongest claim to some democratic legitimacy, the European Parliament. The parliament was first directly elected in 1979. The Single European Act of 1986 created a 'cooperation procedure' which allows the parliament to offer amendments to drafts of proposed Community rules (Lodge 1989). The treaty negotiated at Maastricht in December 1991 strengthens the cooperation procedure (although at the time of writing the fate of that treaty is still uncertain). The second change is the successful attempt, dating from the inauguration of a campaign for a 'single market' in the mid-1980s, to widen the range of the Community's responsibilities. The third, and perhaps the most important change, is the shift to a more authoritative and less consensual style of decision-making within key Community institutions. The most obvious examples include the introduction of qualified majority voting for some key policy areas in the Council of Ministers, replacing previous conventions which rested on unanimous decision-making; the development under President Delors of a more activist conception of the European Commission's role in policy origination; and the growing importance of the European Court as an independent policy initiator through its authoritative interpretation of the Community's founding treaties.

Not all of these changes should be interpreted as problematic for the process of democratization. On the contrary, there is

evidence that the European Court in particular may act as a safeguard in Britain against the sort of 'elective dictatorship' discussed in Holliday's contribution to this volume. Meehan (1991) has also demonstrated that in social policy the Court has been important in creating social citizenship rights common across member states. Indeed, the activism of the Court, qualified majority voting in the Council of Ministers, the cooperation procedure for the European Parliament and the introduction of direct elections for the parliament, all signal the attempt to create a framework for more democratic decision-making at the Community level. But as the widespread perception of the existence of a 'democratic deficit' in the Community shows, these attempts have been only partially successful. Three great problems exist in democratizing the Community: the problem of bridging existing democratic deficits; the problem of creating stable institutional relationships at the centre of the Community's political system; and the problem of grounding a democratically organized European political system in a common sense of citizenship.

Even its most robust defenders do not pretend that the attempts to empower the European Parliament, or the activist stance of the European Court, bridge the democratic deficit in Europe. Indeed, even within national democracies assemblies based on territorial units of representation are known to face great problems in grappling with the complexities of modern government. In the major democracies only the American Congress, and perhaps the German Bundestag, can convincingly claim to exercise significant control over the activities of executives. The cooperation procedures introduced under the Single European Act mark an advance in democratic control; but if we were to rank democratically elected assemblies by their power, there can be little doubt that the European Parliament would come near the bottom of the list. What is more, alongside the undoubted advances made in recent years in bridging the democratic deficit are institutional developments which mark a retreat from democratic control. A striking instance is provided in the sphere of money and banking. In some of the most important member states, notably Britain, the last generation has witnessed increasing control of the non-elected central bank by elected politicians. The monetary regime operated under the existing European Monetary System, by contrast, has conferred great power on the one central

bank—the Bundesbank—which still retains a substantial measure of 'independence' (from democratic control). What is more, the proposals for a 'Eurofed'—a Community-wide central bank—follow more closely the German model of independence from democratic control than the model of a democratically controlled central bank evolved in England in recent decades (Harden 1990).

The character of a proposed 'Eurofed' links to the second difficulty identified above: the problem of creating stable institutional structures at the centre of the emergent EC political system. Everyday hostility to the European Community is sometimes expressed as hostility to a powerful Brussels bureaucracy. Yet the most striking feature of the Commission bureaucracy is its weakness. It lacks the most important resource of all bureaucracies, personnel: the Commission's staff of around 11,000 makes it the equivalent of a fairly small Whitehall department (Nugent 1989:59). The Commission's resources are quite inadequate to carry out the advisory, executive and monitoring activities commonly associated with the operations of bureaucratic institutions. These institutional weaknesses are reflected in other parts of the Brussels associational structure. The Commission, because of its scant resources, is commonly forced to rely on interest-group associations to provide information, advice and even policy implementation. Yet European-level associations of interest groups are themselves often weak, their grand titles concealing institutional impoverishment. Mazey and Richardson's study of the world of lobbying in Brussels demonstrates these points: the bureaucracy is overstretched and fragmented; networks are unstable and poorly developed; associational structures are weak; control over policy by any of the actors is poor (Mazey and Richardson 1992). Effective democratic control is premissed on the existence of effective representational structures, in territorially based assemblies and in functionally organized groups. Neither form of representation is well developed in the Community.

The problems faced by the European Community are of course not special to Europe, but therein lies their significance. The development of the EC is, in important respects, a functional response to changes in economic structures which have threatened the viability of the democratic state organized at the national level. But the creation of alternative democratic structures at the supra-national level encounters formidable

problems. The The probem of bridging the democratic deficit in the institutions of the Community as presently organized, and the problem of creating the kind of stable institutional structures which make democratic control possible at the national level, are compounded by the third problem identified above. Democratic government and citizenship have been historically linked: the 'transformations' charted by Dahl (1989) in his history of democratic theory and practice are as much a history of transformations in the theory and practice of citizenship as in the theory and practice of democracy. Democratic government is presently practised most effectively in nation-states where citizenship amounts, not only to a set of common entitlements and duties, but also to a common sense of civic belonging. Since democracy and citizenship are bound together, the development of democratic government at the level of a supra-national European Community is hardly likely without the development of a system of European citizenship. Some of the framework for a system of citizenship entitlements does exist in the social sphere (Meehan 1991). We can also see some of the symbolic apparatus of citizenship: passports, an EC driving licence, an anthem, a flag; but as Laffan (1992:125) points out, the development of a system of European citizenship parallel to the citizenship of member states is no more than an ideal.

Even to speak of the ideal of European citizenship is to beg a large analytical question: what can citizenship mean in complex, pluralistic societies? Setting aside the problems of constructing institutions and realizing entitlements, there exists the problem of conceptualizing citizenship itself. To that problem we now turn.

DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AND EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION

The major task facing contemporary democratic theory is to investigate the nature of citizenship and, consequently, the institutions through which citizenship may express itself at the close of the twentieth century. No doubt every generation is fond of reflecting on its own uniqueness, and those at the turn of centuries find special excuses to do so. One salient feature of the present *fin de siècle* experience is the contrast between the triumph of the idea of democratic self-determination on the one side and on the other a sense that in an era of globalization there appears

to be so little opportunity for any known collectivity to exercise significant autarchy.

Citizenship in the past held significance for those who possessed it because it connected them to some set of authorities which had a plausible claim in fact, and not merely in law, to be able to make and enforce the rules by which they lived their lives. Such citizenship may involve only a minimal recognition of the legitimacy of a particular territorial jurisdiction. It may, however, imply a more full-blooded commitment to a community whose life-style one not only shares but which has shaped one's own self-identity (for further discussion see Parry 1991).

In both cases citizenship assumed a considerable element of self-determination on the part of the political authorities. The modern world makes such an assumption to a diminishing extent. Of course there were always in the past stronger and weaker states, alliances and treaties, subscriptions of authorities to transnational churches. However, nowadays the strongest of states are entangled in relations of ever more complex economic and political interdependence resulting in a closer intermingling of domestic and international political issues. Interest rates, and consequently recession and unemployment, around Europe have been heavily influenced, to put it at its mildest, by the economic consequences of a political decision to reunify Germany. Nations compete with favourable tax conditions for investment to persuade multinationals to build their plants in their country and, hence, to encourage economic recovery. Conversely, international regulatory devices are established to try to level the global economic playing field. Consider, for example, the restrictions on state aids imposed by the EC, the common prudential standards established by the international banking community, the pressures in GATT to equalize trading conditions across a growing range of sectors. In the EC the level economic playing field inevitably requires equalization of aspects of welfare payments the rights to which had become one criterion of modern national citizenship (Meehan 1991).

One minimal definition of democracy is that it is a 'political system in which the whole people, positively or negatively, make, and are entitled to make, the basic determining decisions on important matters of public policy' (Holden 1988:5). In the light of growing interdependence it could be argued that citizens of even the most powerful democratic nations are now regularly

discovering that these 'basic determining decisions' are falling within the competence of authorities beyond their own state. In addition they may discover that they have to share their right of basic decision-making with the citizens of other nations (for excellent discussions see Held 1991; 1992).

The autonomous, self-determining democratic citizens will, therefore, discover that however much they may be prepared to trade some personal control in order to share with their fellows in a collective decision, that act of political will which ends deliberation cannot be entirely self-contained. Yet the difficulties faced by citizens at the supra-national level have their counterparts at levels below the nation-state. Here, too, citizens are insufficiently empowered to contribute to making determining choices. It is a cliché to write of the pluralist nature of modern, advanced societies. Nevertheless, it can be argued that what is termed liberal, pluralist democracy has not fully come to terms with the society it is supposed to govern.

Liberal democracy is grounded upon the autonomy of the individual and its system of representation is based on the votes of these individuals who are usually grouped for electoral purposes within somewhat arbitrary geographical boundaries. These boundaries are arbitrary because it is the rough numerical equality of votes, rather than the importance of local communities which is the paramount (but not the entire) concern. Within those boundaries are contained persons who, in the ideal-typical liberal democracy, have so far as law and government are concerned no particular identity. They are choice-making agents—so called 'abstract individuals'. One prevalent view of a well-constructed liberal democracy is that it will be one which permits such agents to pursue the life styles they have chosen, consistent with similar choices by others, and which lays down ground rules for these choices which do not promote one plan of life over any other.

This neutralist enterprise has been much critized as a will-o'-the-wisp. At a fundamental level its understanding of the self has been held by communitarian thinkers to ignore the way in which a person's identity is actually constituted by the community to which he or she is attached (Sandel 1982). Our selves are 'encumbered' with traits which are formed by our community. There is clearly some truth in this view although, as Kymlicka has shrewdly warned, it needs careful formulation if it is not to fall into the errors of exaggeration on the one side and

triviality on the other (Kymlicka 1990:207–15; 1991). The most serious exaggeration occurs as a result of a certain tendency of the communitarian school to concentrate on the way in which supposed national community shapes personal identity. Historically this is understandable—it is one's status as French or British or American which is one of the most prominent constituents of identity. At the same time, equally recognizable is the monistic and exclusivist nature of such national communities.

It is arguable, however, that in the 'advanced' societies in which most liberal democracies are situated what is as significant as overriding national identities are the multiple identities which go to make up plural societies. Each person's 'identity' is constituted from a number of simultaneous identities. Some may be 'given' (e.g. gender), others chosen (chess-player). This sharp contrast is, however, questionable—gender may be given but the extent to which one's gender is seen as a truly significant part of one's life can be a matter of reflection and self-determination. These identities derive from one's work, religion, relationships with a partner, parental status, leisure, etc. Many result from an associative life as member of a group. In some cases such groups can take on the more intense qualities of a community even though they may not be spatial communities, for example members of the 'academic community' (Plant 1978; Wellman and Leighton 1979).

The major claim of pluralist theories of democracy has been that these multiple identities can be readily given social and political recognition through the operation of interest groups. The barriers to the formation of groups are, it is claimed, low and most groups carry sufficient electoral clout, at least in coalition with other interests, for it to be to the advantage of competing party politicians to pay attention. The multiple groups do not necessarily result in a war of every group against every other because of a number of factors promoting a minimal consensus on the rules of the competition. Although groups compete, any individual may identify himself or herself by reference to several of these groups and will, it is suggested, not press conflict to the point of endangering the common ground.

Critics of such notions of group politics ever since Rousseau have argued that in the course of emphasizing the role of partial societies the notion of citizenship and collective identity has been

lost. A particularly perceptive and witty onslaught has been launched by Benjamin Barber. He has drawn a satirical sketch of the voter in a pluralist democracy whose voting intentions and political party identity are at odds (he is a union man with Democratic sympathies but also a 'moral majoritarian'; he believes in equal rights for women at work but is a traditionalist inside the family; resents high taxes but wants social security)—so at odds, indeed, that he is incapable of any resolute conduct as a citizen (Barber 1984:208). Yet there is also truth in the pluralist contention that we form our opinions very much out of our experiences in these lesser associations. We have to view the whole from a point of view or, in our present society, from many points of view (see also Young 1989:257). Ghita Ionescu once advanced a distinction which was intended to capture both the tendencies at issue. He wrote (Ionescu 1975) of 'centrifugal' and 'centripetal' elements in modern politics. The centrifugal factor was characterized by the tendency of the corporations and groups of modern society to pull apart and pursue their own separate direction. Politics was, or should be, the 'centripetal' factor conciliating the interests and ensuring their representation. Accordingly.

> …politics is centripetal, as opposed to society, which is centrifugal. And further, the more centrifugal the society, the more centripetal its politics should be.
>
> (Ionescu 1975:3)

The present volume contains, apart from Ionescu's own contribution, evidence enough of the centrifugal forces which have convulsed formerly autocratic regimes but which also constitute threats to the stability of any emergent democracy. Nevertheless it is arguable that *both* the centrifugal *and* the centripetal tendencies require strengthening and institutionalization. It is excessively optimistic to suppose that the modern citizen can, in communitarian fashion, be overwhelmingly centripetalist. It may even be undesirable. Men and women, at least in 'advanced, modern' societies, are inevitably part of the centrifugal forces as they play a variety of roles. What may be required is that they are enabled to contribute more to the constitution and reconstitution of those roles, possibly to their transcendence.

One of the major justifications for democracy is that it has some claim to be the political system which is more capable of providing the conditions for the promotion of human agency (see Gewirth 1982; Plant 1991:252–92). It enables more people to have a say in shaping the plan of life they prefer. If this is so it would appear to follow that, in order for a citizen to exercise such agency, the partial associations that form modern states should themselves be democratized. Dewey, in his version of active pluralism, made the point when he wrote of the importance of 'having a responsible share according to capacity in forming and directing the activities of the groups to which one belongs and participating according to need in the values which the groups sustain' (cited in Tiles 1988:211). The extension of this argument relies on the view expressed by Dahl, in connection with workplace democracy, that the arguments for democracy in the state apply equally well to the lesser groupings in which we find ourselves (Dahl 1985; but see Sartori 1987). It is in these ways that the values implicit in pluralist democracy may be made more explicit in practice. That is to say the democratic spirit would permeate the plural components of society. More of the *demos* would, if they so wished, be involved in the decisions which affected their lives immediately in their various associations and, through these, in the wider national life.

At the level of international institutions such processes of representation are still more complex. But here too there is a role for the representation of interests as well as of territorial units. There are interests and aspirations of, for example, European Community citizens which transcend boundaries in ways to which the nationally-based representatives may not respond— environmental questions, issues affecting women in work, desires to aid famine victims. We saw earlier that the associational structure at the Community level is weak and fragmentary. Into the gaps in this structure come all kinds of lucky or privileged interests. It is conceivable that, instead of this unacknowledged world of privilege, it would be better to create a decently resourced, functionally-based representative institution, with the explicit purpose of supplementing the effective representative role of the European Parliament.

The theorists of functional representation in the first decades of the century were amongst the first to tackle the issue of new social representation. The work of Duguit, Figgis, Laski and the

Guild Socialists has been neglected for some years (for an excellent recent discussion, however, see Hirst 1989). When some of their complex structures of government are examined the reasons can be too readily apparent, yet their concerns deserve an airing as the new century approaches. All wished to preserve the autonomy of the partial societies within the state against its erosion by the sovereign state. G.D.H.Cole also argued that the multiplicity of human interests was such that no single body, such as a national parliament, or person, such as a constituency MP, could represent any single individual. Rather, there should be a variety of representative bodies for the different functions a person performed in a society. Each person might have votes in a number of representative bodies—for work, leisure interests, welfare institutions. Notoriously, despite the intricate constitutional frameworks proposed, such functional theories never solved the problems of integration. They might have succeeded in representing the centrifugal forces but could not represent the equally essential centripetal element.

There is, of course, a strong affinity between such functionalist representation and corporatism in its purest form. Corporatism seeks to reconcile centrifugalism and centripetalism by institutionalizing the representation of a reduced set of functional interests. These are seen as the irreducible essential factors of modern capitalist economics—business, labour and the state. But in this case pluralism gives way to elitism. The peak associations of business and labour are not (and perhaps cannot be) satisfactorily elected, and rendered representative and accountable. They also tend to exclusivism, omitting major rivals to entry into the deliberations. And even more than other functional theories there is a danger of freezing a particular set of interests at the expense of representing the shifting character of modern society (for a more positive view, see Cawson 1983).

Must we then accept the inevitability of limited, liberal democracy, as the realists argue? Or is there some possibility of facing up to the challenge, which Dahl has said is the major task facing contemporary theory, of democratizing modern corporate society (Dahl 1982:80)? It is not here a question of proposing to construct ideal constitutions in the manner of the Guild Socialists. Instead the object should be to develop tendencies already latent in contemporary political systems. A representative democracy which deserves the name would be one which took 'subsidiarity'

seriously. It would not only decentralize as far as possible to the lowest territorial units. In addition it would encourage viable representative processes in the workplace, in the institutions of healthcare and welfare, in schools (Hadley and Hatch 1981:112–69; Gyford 1991; Hoggett and Hambleton 1987; Held and Pollitt 1986). Ware's work (1989a; b) on 'third force' organizations between the market and the state in Anglo-American democracies shows how important these organizations are to the modern state. 'Not-for-profit' organisations do much more than raise charitable funds: they are central to implementation and to the regulation of service standards. In health, in housing, in provision of personal care, states rely on voluntary, non-profit-making organizations to deliver services to citizens; and the maintenance of delivery standards rests heavily on the standards of occupational probity set and enforced by autonomous professional associations. In Britain the schools are in the process of being transformed into partially autonomous agencies governed by elected bodies. In each case the potential of centrifugalism is counteracted by the centripetal activity of the state in setting performance standards. Of course, there is a danger of a degeneration into a kind of 'performance indicator pluralism' in which the state reshapes the behaviour of interests and associations; yet the scope for extending representative and direct democratic institutions here is immense. At the very least such organizations draw into the public sphere numbers of citizens who come to occupy a place somewhere between activists and politicians or officials. These members of the public run housing cooperatives, community centres or environmental trusts. They have been involved in neighbourhood redevelopment. At their best such organizations can be 'bottom-up' and more could be made fully and democratically representative of their communities.

A representative democracy would also go further than it does at present in institutionalizing the right of affected interests to be consulted over the policy which establishes the performance standards (Young 1989; Offe 1984). In Britain this would reverse the Thatcher approach to the interests. In the USA it would accept, rather than challenge, the politics of interests. However, the concomitant is that the interests themselves should be as democratic and as representative as possible (see also Hirst 1990:1–37, for a similar line of argument). One major movement in the last quarter of the twentieth century in calling into question the

inadequacy of modern pluralist democracy has been feminism. Whatever the differences within its ranks feminism is united in drawing attention to the way in which liberal democracy has operated whilst denying or, at least, inhibiting the conditions of full agency of half the population. What this may suggest is that in addition to any improvement in the background economic conditions of women there need to be opportunities for them to express their distinctive voices in areas which might be of particular concern to them, such as the provision of facilities for those who wish to combine a domestic and an outside work role (Young 1989).

Somewhat similar arguments may apply to other disadvantaged groups. The disabled, for example, need ways of influencing the design of public buildings. Taken further, a host of minorities might claim a special say in the policies which most closely affect them—amateur cricketers on the provision of sports teaching in schools, academics on the methods of maintaining freedom of expression in schools and universities. The pluralist might respond that these considerations are already taken into account by the system of pressure-group influence and consultation. There is, spread throughout the modern democratic state, a regulatory structure which links 'centrifugal' society to 'centripetal' politics. Indeed the links have become stronger in recent years in the British economy as the state has codified and institutionalized self-regulation. In a wide range of financial markets, in professions like law, and even in universities, the delegation of public functions to special interests has become more explicit and more subject to public supervision. Of course pluralists will recognize the limits and the dangers of such arrangements: the in-built biases in the selection of the interests privileged by regulation and consultation; the problem of monitoring democratic practices within regulatory organizations; the danger to the autonomy of groups in forging too close a partnership with governments. At best there is here only an approximation to the ideals of pluralism let alone of democracy (Lindblom 1977; Dahl 1982; Jordan and Richardson 1987).

An alternative way of representing multiple interests which has been proposed might be to hold an opinion poll on a range of policy options. The poll might be of a random sample of the population or of those supposed to be particularly affected and

interested in the particular issue—women, disabled, amateur cricketers. Even allowing the contestable claim that sampling methods have become highly accurate, it is unlikely that a public brought up on a notion of individual autonomy will accept the statistically correct *chance* of being polled as and equivalent to the democratic *right* of voting, however unsatisfactory voting systems may be. Nor is the analogy with the ancient Greek democratic practice of choosing officers by lot satisfactory (Burnheim 1985; McLean 1991). The Athenian lot presupposed homogeneity of political outlooks, the very lack of which is at the centre of modern concerns over the process of representation.

A democratic associative life should be more than consultation by opinion poll. It will involve *forums* in which interests can be articulated, in which they can conflict and, where possible, be reconciled through dialogue. This is to agree in large part with Iris Young when she says that in

> a heterogenous public, differences are publicly recognised and acknowledged as irreducible, by which I mean that persons from one perspective or history can never completely understand and adopt the point of view of those with other group-based perspectives and histories. Yet commitment to the need and desire to decide together the society's policies fosters communication across those differences.
>
> (Young 1989:258)

Such ideas are far from being without their problems. Any interest-based representation risks embedding in aspic a particular pattern of social groups. The participatory demands of both decentralization and interest representation are considerable and tend to be easier for the more advantaged in society (Pizzorno 1970; Parry and Moyser 1991). This is one reason why such interests should not possess a veto power, as Young seems to advocate (see Phillips 1991), but be given primarily a consultative role, perhaps even formally through a second chamber. Where they do possess autonomous decision-making power, they should operate within guidelines laid down by the conventional representative democracy—the example has been given earlier of self-governing schools operating a national curriculum.

In this way the associations and interests of civil society should form one of the sources for what has been variously termed 'preceptoral politics' (Marquand 1988:229) 'discursive democracy' (Dryzek 1990) and 'deliberative democracy' (Miller 1992). The democratic citizenship which Barber (1984) has lauded would occur where citizens who have also had opportunities to have their interests fully represented can by 'democratic talk' contribute to the determination of the general rules within which the group life of civil society can operate. It is unrealistic to suppose, as Rousseau seems to have done, that one can 'think one's own thoughts' about the public good without those thoughts being in some way shaped by the multiple partial societies as well as the larger association to which one belongs. National, and transnational, citizenship, it is being argued, is constructed out of the building blocks of the associations and identities which each is more likely to acquire in modern society. This is much in line with Dewey's argument that the public is necessarily concerned with the external consequences of the actions of its plural component interests. As has been repeatedly emphasized, centripetalism must counteract centrifugalism. Both form part of the experience of modern active citizenship.

There are many other possible dimensions to democratization which might enable a level of active citizenship beyond that typical of the so-called advanced democracies. Some democrats, for example, are tempted by ways in which devices of direct democracy, such as the referendum employing a home voting machine, might supplant or at least supplement representative democracy. But representation must remain, in the modern world, the linkage which connects state to civil society. Strengthening this linkage so that citizens can in some recognizable way be 'made present again' (to revert to the distant origins of the verb 'to represent') in the decision-making centres is thus a compelling task. This may consist, modestly, in enhancing the authority of existing national or international representatives by improving their capacity to advise and consent, to criticize and investigate and, generally, to ensure accountability. And it may, as has been suggested here, involve enriching the multiple courses of individual and group life so as to genuinely 're-present them' in public affairs. For, to repeat, effective democratic control is premised on the existence of effective representational structures.

For advanced liberal democracies such democratization is still some way off, although, as we have suggested, some hints of it already exist. For newly democratizing countries it will be as much as they can do to hang on to the conventional liberal institutions. And there remain those many countries for whom the provision of the conditions of agency still entails ensuring minimal protection for life. Democracy is an uncomfortable political destination, for in its modern pluralist form, it sets us free; and with freedom comes anxiety and even agony. As our contributors have shown, the road to that uncomfortable destination—democratization—is often hard, long and uncertain. Is this preoccupation with freedom and its attendant anxieties only a luxury that prosperous societies can afford? Is it, indeed, a reflection of the hegemony of a particular 'Western' value system (Parekh 1992)? We think not. The history of the post-war world has shown us that poverty, corruption and economic inefficiency have too often flourished because societies had too little democracy, not because they had too much. For the impoverished of the Third World or of the former Marxist autocracies democratic government is not a luxury to be postponed until material comfort arrives; it is a pre-condition (but, sadly, not a guarantee) of economic progress. Our recent history has also shown that whatever existential agonies attend the exercise of democratic freedom they are as nothing to the more prosaic agonies imposed by the brutal alternatives to democratic government.

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