

**Oakeshott and anti-rationalism: a criticism of
modernity**

By

AK Molnár

Contents

- **A tradition of the criticism of modernity**
- **The wisdom of institutions: in between the reality of mass individualism and an utopia reloaded**
- **The problem of political knowledge and action in the criticism of Modernity**
- **In Defence of Practice: Oakeshott reads Michael Polányi**
- **Oakeshott on *artes liberales* and political agency**
- **Conservatives' Paradox**
- **The limits of knowledge: violence and good order**
or the arrogant pretense of knowledge
- **Mania: The Dilemma of Truth Claims: being otherworldly in the world.**
- **On good order: peace and conflict, immanency and transcendence**
- **Conclusion**

A tradition of the criticism of modernity

Nowadays, moviegoers are very familiar with prison dramas. These stories are exciting because the hero has to be strong in the interest of justice and truth in a world where there is no law to implement justice. The ever-innocent hero in these stories finds himself in a world where there is no law, where force alone organizes human relations. Among prisoners there is no consensus, common sense, or intersubjective norms which could control the acts of individuals and decide their conflicts apart from eternal struggle. While the prisoners' world is so chaotic, it is also very strictly organized and conditioned by means of walls and cages, a detailed time-table and by the fact that their spatial movements are strictly regulated. However, this is not carried out in a normative way. The walls and iron cages define conditions without necessitating any obedience - the personal ethical problem of obedience does not emerge here. The walls and cages represent a kind of force for people they surround, and from their point of view these are arbitrary. These walls and cages are not legitimate among prisoners, in as much as they control people without reference to their normative-ethical imagination, because, as I have mentioned, the world of prisoners lacks any norms. This world is chaotic without a sense of justice and self-control, so the only effective controlling agencies for sinners cannot be legitimate and non-normative at the same time. In these stories there are two kinds of arbitrariness or forces: one among the prisoners, the other from outside, and the two create conditions of eternal chaotic struggle. Probably a good example for this paradox is the image of the market. On the one hand people refer to it as a field of struggle among unlimited self-interests, where force is the only relevant factor (this picture is rather far from the premodern view on 'fair' which means - up to now - mutuality, the ethics of Gospel (Mathew 17.)); but on the other hand market is seen as something that operates under strict, 'objective' rules and laws which are independent of the will or self-interest of agents.

Too much or too little control, and control in general, that is, the problem of order and freedom is one the oldest problems in social and political thinking. My supposition in this paper is that there is not only one kind of control - an idea opposed to the originally Whiggish view of modern history as progress in the direction of more freedom and less control. The paradoxical idea of too much control and too much freedom at the same time is rather modern, at least it is a paradox which became dominant in the critique of modernity after the French and industrial revolutions. Both historical events questioned the existing controls in social life and focused attention on the possibility of the re-creation of new kinds of control. It has been widely referred to as the phenomenon of decline of religion, old and established customs and morality. (A clear example is the notion of the market: on the one hand, the market is seen as a field of eternal conflicts between money-minded people, while on the other hand, the market is thought to be governed by strict iron laws of economics.) But even if the emergence of modernity created new problems, the answers were to be found in the traditional ideas and concepts. I am going to illustrate this paradoxical critique of modernity by means of a few significant authors.

The social paradox (sociodox) of Chaotic Prison seems to be the result of the demolition and evaporation of norms and laws as well as the adherence to them. This sociodox, the coexistence of chaos and despotism, is rather typical in modernity, the age after the industrial and political revolutions. The notion suggests that neither people nor governors are bound by any limits. Somehow, there is too much libero

arbitrio, and, at the same time, it does not exist any more. Those thinkers who were sensitive only to one side of this sociodox, wanted either liberation or order. According to these images there is chaos or anarchy and defencelessness, serfdom; the same world, however, is perceived as uniform, homogeneous, systematic and despotic. Both despotism and chaos lack any norms, in both states of human world there is only will (the will of one or the wills of many) and it is the strength of will which determines everything. Neither despots nor anomic people acknowledge any limitations above their arbitrary will. In this sociodox, the peculiarity of modernity is that despotism (omnipotent over-control) coexists with chaos and ungovernability (impotence, and chronic disobedience and conflicts among individuals). Of course, the problems of too much and too little control, order and freedom have a long history in our culture. But this sociodox, an image which connects the notions of too much and too little control and interprets them not as alternative but as inherently related phenomena, is rather modern. The French and the industrial revolutions questioned the traditional controls and thematized the problem of their recreation or the implementation of new kinds of control. However, even if there are new problems, these are experienced mainly in terms of old notions. In this paper I try to illustrate this critique of modernity via some of its influential representatives.

The origin of the image of Chaotic Prison can be found partly in Plato's texts and partly in the Exodus, two texts which are the sources of most of our common ideas. Plato did not really favour democracy, but he hated despotism even more. His main criticism of democracy was that it resulted necessarily in despotism. I will not try to provide a thorough-going analysis of Plato's text, rather turn to his description of democracy, where he points out such vices as money-minded thinking, uninhibited wishes, and the loss of the sense of moderation. „And he lives on, yielding day by day to the desire at hand. At one time he drinks heavily to the accompaniment of the flute, at another he drinks only water and is wasting away; at one time he goes in for physical exercise, then again he does nothing and cares for nothing; at times he pretends to spend his time on philosophy; often he takes part in public affairs; he then leaps up from his seat and says and does whatever comes into his mind; and if he happens to admire military men, he is carried in that direction, if moneyed men, he turns to making money; there is no plan or discipline in his life but he calls it pleasant, free and blessed, and he follows it throughout his time.”¹ „And you know that in the end they take no notice of the laws, written or unwritten, in order that there should in no sense be a master over them.”² The „spirit of anarchy” and „exaggerated liberty” lead democracy necessarily into the serfdom of despotism, because people start to look for certainty. Thus, limitlessness is connected to despotism and serfdom; for Plato the two poles are opposite to each other only in logic, but not in social practice, which is not logical. Whilst in Plato's description there is a chronological succession between chaos and despotism, in the Exodus serfdom and immorality exist together. Before the Exodus, the Jews lived in serfdom, they lived under the despotism of pharaohs. However, the Jews were morally corrupt, they had idols and foreign gods. The promise of Canaan was not only a promise of collective freedom, a life without serfdom, but also of a moral upgrading. Obedience to divine law liberates the people from worldly power because by adhering to this law they find peace and harmony without any necessity for a system of coercion to ensure peaceful cooperation.

The two phenomena are connected - freedom and true morality, despotism and immorality. Augustine spread the idea in Christian thinking that, as a result of original sin, the lack of true faith and morality are necessarily connected to arbitrary power or

coercion. From the point of view of the present paper, this image of *civitas terrena* is highly important. In the *civitas terrena* the original sin results in vain, wilful, self-interested people who are necessarily in conflict with each other and only arbitrary force may implement some, relative peace among people. Since there is no morality among people in the *civitas terrena*, this power is necessarily arbitrary and cannot be morally legitimated. It is meaningless to think of morally conditioned power when people are an immoral mob. In this social setting the controlling agency cannot depend on the approval of individuals. The citizens of the City of man, *civitas terrena*, can approve only sinful things, thus their control cannot and should not result from their will. In order that those corrupted individuals can coexist only a despotic power can control and oppress their licentiousness for the sake of relative peace. The solution is true faith and the love of God, which create real peace among people, and in this case - if man is obedient to God - people do not need any human power. The more people can live peacefully without outer controlling agency, the less they need a despotic power. It is an important point for us that in Augustine's thinking there is only one kind of faith, one proper love. Sin and sinful self-love are not other kinds of human attitude, but the lack of the real and true one. Everything that exists is a creation of God, and God cannot be the creator of sins. So the *civitas terrena* is not another kind of society, another order, but the lack of society and order. There is only one type of society, the *civitas Dei*. So the world of chaotic wills and despotic power is not another order or society, but the absence of social order. Perhaps I do not have to emphasise how critical this Augustinian view of society is. Its critical potency describes the normative image of the City of God as the only real society. In any other case, power is arbitrary and despotic, independent of any norms the subjects might have. The idea of *civitas terrena* is too close to the Chaotic Prison to suppose this similarity is merely accidental.

The paradox of Chaotic Prison was used rather often to criticize modernity, so this idea is not only normative, and therefore critical, but it is anti-modernist. Edmund Burke was one of first who used this illuminating paradox to criticise modernity, that is, the social results of the French revolution. He characterized the French state and society (that is, the collapse of society in revolution) as a state in which there were too strong controls (the new ones) and too weak controls (the old ones). This paradoxical view was connected to his deep conviction that society and control cannot be created rationally, and that both social relations and control are non-rational. Burke wrote that individual actions, behaviour became arbitrary, confused on the interpersonal level, therefore life was experienced as chaotic on this level; on the other hand, the government concentrated an enormous amount of power, but because of the lack of obedience, the government was able to control people by means of the continuous presence of force. Such people are apt to break laws and rules as soon as the guards look the other way. On the interpersonal level people are amoral and wilful, and they do what they want. And the same „mob” attitude characterizes the revolutionary government - it is not limited by divine law, governors do what they want. On both levels, force, coercion alone may organize human relations. There are too many rules and limits, but, at the same time, there are no rules and limits. From this point of view the question is not whether there is natural law or not; for Burke, the important point is that in former times people assumed that natural law existed and adjusted their actions to this supposed law which was embedded in tradition. So the natural law was taken for granted in tradition.

Burke refused the atheism of radicals as dangerous to society, because for him atheism was connected to individualism. „In the mean time a system of French conspiracy is gaining ground in every country. This system happening to be founded on principles the most delusive indeed, but the most flattering to the natural propensities of the unthinking multitude... A predominant inclination towards it appears in all those who have no religion, when otherwise their disposition leads them to be advocated even for despotism.”³ The radicals have a twofold character: they are immoral and they harm natural law because of their blind faith in their own reason, therefore they endanger the very existence of society. Revolutionary politics were over- and under-moralised: independent of and even in opposition to traditional morality and religion, in eliminating traditional morality and life they eliminated the sources of obedience and the limits of power; at the same time, in its efforts to spread the perfect morality and religion, this politics represented a new kind of despotism. Burke depicted the revolutionary politics and its results as anarchic and despotic. The consequence of a politics which aims to reconstruct society is not the creation of a new order, or a new society, but rather the end of any society or order, and the end of freedom which supposed the existence of society and order. „They have found their punishment in their success.”⁴ If power goes beyond the barrier, it overturns and destroys itself.⁵ Many „even in France, have been made sick of their theories by their very success in realizing them.”⁶

In the description of the new world there are two opposing categories: chaos and too little freedom. This world is chaotic and despotic at the same time: „people at once in bondage and confusion”.⁷ And this new world stems from the original sin: „It’s spirit lies deep in the corruptions of our common nature.”⁸ The rationalized state is both more and less efficient than the earlier state. Only those people can be ruled who are apt to be obedient, and the means of revolution are not sufficient to form the habit of obedience. In Jacobinism, bonds cannot remain stable and certain, and amidst social and political uncertainty and limitlessness there is only one measure for everything: self-interest. „That what was done in France was a wild attempt to methodize anarchy; to perpetuate and fix disorder. That it was a foul, impious, monstrous thing, wholly out of the course of moral nature.”⁹ Violent politics is the only possible form of politics in chaos which is the very result of rational plan for social reconstruction.

The new world is not only chaotic but also despotic and violent, and these characteristics are much worse than in the case of any previous political power. According to Burke, after the revolution, power remains but in a new and irresponsible form, more violent, without limits and often concealed. „It is to delude ourselves to consider the state of France, since their Revolution, as a state of Anarchy, it is something far worse. Anarchy it is, undoubtedly, if compared with Government pursuing the peace, order, morals and prosperity of the People. But regarding only the power, that has really guided from the day of the Revolution to this time, it has been of all Governments the most absolute, despotic and despotic, and effective, that has hitherto appeared on earth.. Their state is not an Anarchy, but a series of short-lived Tyrannies.. France has no public; it is the only nation I ever heard of, where the people are absolutely slaves, in the fullest sense, in all affairs public and private, great and small, even down to the minutest and most recondite parts of their household concerns.”¹⁰ „Individuality is left out of their scheme of Government. The state is all in all. Every thing is referred to the production of force; afterwards every thing is trusted to the use of it. It is military in it’s principle, in it’s maxims, in it’s spirit, and

in all its movements. The state has dominion over minds by proselytism, over bodies by arms... France has, since the accomplishment of the Revolution, a complete unity in its direction. It has destroyed every resource of the State, which depends upon opinion and the good-will of individuals. The riches of convention disappear... the command over what remains is complete and absolute.”¹¹ Revolutionary politics militarized political life demanding greater sacrifices from citizens citing the dangers, besieged situation and permanent state of emergency. This new power is „the display of inconsiderate and presumptuous, because unresisted and irresistible, authority”.¹² This power does not win obedience from the affections of people but it forces them and is based on their fear.¹³ „Troops prevailed over the Citizens... Twenty thousand regular Troops garrison Paris. Thus a complete Military Government is formed. It has strength, and it may count on the stability of that kind of power. Every other ground of stability, but from military force and terror, is clean out of the question... The whole of their Government, in its origination, in its continuance, in all its actions, and in all its resources, is force; and nothing but force. A forced constitution, a forced election, a forced subsistence, a forced requisition of soldiers, a forced loan of money.”¹⁴ The common character of chaos and despotism is that both are opposite to the recognition of divine, or natural, or whatever kinds of transcendental limits independent of the will of individuals. The evaporation of these limits creates chaos in everyday life and despotism in public life. The only alternative to society based on customs, traditions, habits is the anarchistic, rebellious one which is under the coercion of military or economic power. „Kings will be tyrants from the policy when subjects are rebels from the principle.”¹⁵ The new despotism emerges necessarily because, trying to reconstruct a new and perfect society, revolutionaries ruined the old one and melted people into a chaotic and turbulent mass. The result was not a new order, but the lack of any order and society, where power is necessarily despotic, that is, outside the control of citizens. The „will to power” is the only motive of the mob as well as politicians, both groups are the same: they are without any sense of limits beyond their will. The radicals „will find themselves engaged in a civil war with those whose cause they maintain.”¹⁶ The paradoxical description of revolutionary France was connected in Burke’s case to a critique of rationalism. Rationalism is *per definitionem* in conflict with society, because the Cartesian ratio, whatever it is, opposes existing traditions, prejudices, lifeworld, and political rationalism tries to transform the social setting in accordance with abstractions alien to existing society. The Humean critique of rationalism was widened by Burke, who emphasized that political rationalism not only eliminated existing society and obedience, but, in this way unintendedly, undermined its own normative power. The point was for him that there was only one kind of normative power and obedience, and they were rooted in tradition. Rationalism on the other hand hopes that control has other possible methods which differ from the normative one and require neither coercion nor obedience. However, Burke emphasized the vanity of this hope. The result of political rationalism is that when the institutions, traditions, religion, habits - that is, society - limit and support the power at the same time, the only possible way of control is the limitless and uncontrollable force: „you have industriously destroyed all the opinions and prejudices and, as far as in you lay, all the instincts which support government. Therefore, the moment any difference arises between your National Assembly and any part of the nation, you must have recourse to force. Nothing else is left to you, or rather you have left nothing else to yourselves.”¹⁷; „On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid

wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported only by their own terrors and by the concern which each individual may find in them from his own private interests.. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law.”¹⁸ The necessary result, originating from the nature of society, is not government but force. Tradition is the sedimentation of the wisdom rooted in our ancestors’ experience, so the wisdom embedded in tradition may inform the long-term effects and side-effects of actions; tradition limits the human mind and activity in terms of these effects not evident for atomized minds. This intersubjective wisdom, measures are only partly conscious and not systematized, but they are „natural”, that is, taken for granted by their owners. Montaigne and Hume spread the notion of the importance of custom in social life, and Burke re-emphasized that the main characteristic of custom was its origin in the continuous past of social life.¹⁹ The significance of the concept of tradition - lifeworld was that it replaced the concept of sociability as an explanatory idea of social integration. The idea of tradition - lifeworld is inherently normative, critical: if sociability is a natural characteristic of human beings, the implication is that they will live in society forever. But if social existence is a result of intersubjective, common knowledge rooted in the past, society will receive a normative meaning: the non-historical society, any kinds of plan to reconstruct society is meaningless and harmful. After the collapse of this tradition - lifeworld, the coexistence of human beings is possible, but it is not society with its self-organizing and self-sustaining intersubjective meanings. The several descriptions of modernity, whether they are critical or not, agree that tradition is fading away, but on the other hand, a stronger and non-personal dependency and control is emerging. For Burke, tradition was not a formal notion, an eternal phenomenon, but rather a way of thinking and form of human relations that was not modern.

For Burke, order was an important condition of true freedom, but he thought that order that was consciously created rather than having emerged historically was impossible, and the experiment to create such order to be a monster, „an opinion at once new and persecuting is a monster.”²⁰ The order without historical precedent instituted by revolutionaries or rulers is *ab ovo* alien to people and coercive. A new power is never limited, because it is new. Limitation is not a value in itself, only the historically emerging and taken-for-granted limits. The intentionally introduced new controls and limits refer to ratio in opposition to existing tradition. And this new power is a dictatorship because it does not acknowledge any limiting law or morality above itself; the new power tries to create and introduce laws, rather than to accommodate itself to the existing ones.

The best follower of Burke was a continental author, Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville depicted the same picture of Chaotic Prison in a somewhat different context. The chaotic prison for Tocqueville was not a consequence of the activity of sinful radicals, but the result of the necessary democratizing tendency in Western societies. Practically, Tocqueville was more pessimistic than his tutor, but both of them described modernity in a critical way through this paradoxical picture. „It cannot be absolutely or generally affirmed that the greatest danger of the present age is license or tyranny, anarchy or despotism. Both are equally to be feared; and the one may proceed as easily as the other from one and the same cause: namely, that *general apathy* which is the consequence of individualism.”²¹ „The principle of equality, which makes men independent of each other, gives them a habit and a taste for following in their private actions no other guide than their own will.. disorder must

instantly reach its utmost pitch and that, every man drawing aside in a different direction, the fabric of society must at once crumble away.. For the principle of equality begets two tendencies: the one leads men straight to independence and may suddenly drive them into anarchy; the other conducts them by a longer, more secret, but more certain road to servitude.”²² The explanation of this sociodox is that people in a democracy behave and think in the same way, same style, they become homogeneous, but nonetheless remain unpredictable in everyday life.

In Tocqueville's description, the American way of thinking is rationalist and individualist - individuals do not trust anybody. This „heterogeneous and agitated mass”²³ ruined tradition and authority, so these people - characterized by „envy, hatred, uncharitableness, pride and exaggerated self-confidence” - mistrust the judgement of one another. „Everyone then attempts to be his own sufficient guide... Thus that independence of mind which equality supposes to exist is never so great, never appears so excessive...”²⁴ This voluntarist individuality is connected to the elimination of traditions and authority as well as to the tyranny of public opinion. For Tocqueville, as for Burke, tradition was somehow the embodiment of eternal law of God. So a rebel against tradition is also a rebel against God. „What force can there be in the customs of a country which has changed, and is still perpetually changing, its aspect, in which every act of tyranny already has a precedent and every crime and example, on which there is nothing so old that its antiquity can save it from destruction, and nothing so unparalleled that its novelty can prevent it from being done?... What strength can even public opinion have retained when no twenty persons are connected by a common tie, when not a man, nor a family, nor chartered corporation, nor class, nor free institution, has the power of representing or exerting that opinion, and when every citizen, being equally weak, equally poor, and equally isolated, has only his personal importance to oppose to the organized force of the government?”²⁵; „In the age of equality all men are independent of each other, isolated, and weak.”²⁶ The loss of tradition is the loss of rules, limitations, and such loss results in unpredictable, that is, meaningless actions. „every man, at his own will and pleasure, forsakes one portion of his forefathers’ creed and retains another; so that, amid so many arbitrary measures, no common rule can ever be established, and it is almost impossible to predict which actions will be held in honor and which will be thought disgraceful.”²⁷ Democracy progresses amongst ruins that are its own creations, and it „constantly advanced in the midst of the disorders and the agitations of a conflict.. hence arises the strange confusion.”²⁸

The chaotic effects of democracy strangely oppose Tocqueville’s other, oft-quoted view of democracy in which the emphasis is on the tyranny of public opinion over individuals and on the homogeneity of individuals’ mind. „It seems at first sight as if all the minds of the Americans were formed upon one model, so accurately do they follow the same route.”²⁹ Whilst every individual insists desperately on the freedom of thought, democracy makes it impossible by means of the equality of *life conditions*. Democracy controls individuals by these conditions and much less by normativity. „In democracy... all men are alike and do things pretty nearly alike... men and things are always changing, but it is monotonous because all these changes are alike.”³⁰; „It is the vehemence of their desires... perturbs their minds, but disciplines their lives.”³¹ For Tocqueville, the expressive, romantic individual is not the alternative of the tyranny of democracy, but these are correlated phenomena, two sides of the sociodox of modern democracy. The problem with democracy is the lack of limits and the lack of the sense of limits. „it may be asked what we have adopted in

the place of those institutions, those ideas, and those customs of our forefathers which we have abandoned. The spell of royalty is broken, but it has not been succeeded by the majesty of the laws. The people have learned to despise all authority, but they still fear it, and fear now extorts more than was formerly paid from reverence and love... we have destroyed those individual powers which were able, single-handed, to cope with tyranny."³² In the state of equality and weakness, force is seen by everyone as „the only argument for the present and the only guarantee for the future."³³ Democracy is worse than what went before. Of course, a lot of authors wrote about the elimination of good old rules, morality, etc., and the lack of any new ones in the present. The modernists typically hope that they can create or detect new rules, morality, or a new kind of social control in the place of any morality. But, on the other hand, since Burke, we have become familiar with the notion that mind, tradition, lifeworld cannot be created rationally and intentionally. These important phenomena of social life are unintended results of the activity of many people and generations, and if there is an intention behind their emergence, it is the „invisible hand” of Providence.

In spite of the above, democracy can exist in America, because - besides the self-governing townships - there is a common religion which limits individuals. Religion supports democracy by means of the limitation of thinking. These limits are not arbitrary, according to Tocqueville, but true, whilst the forced limits of public opinion over the individual mind are arbitrary. „Thus, while the law permits the Americans to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving, and forbids them to commit, what is rash or unjust."³⁴ Liberty especially needs religion, because in despotism there is a political control, but in liberty it is replaced by religious morality. „Religion is much more necessary in the republic which they set forth in glowing colors than in the monarchy which they attack; it is more needed in democratic republic than in any others. How it is possible that society should escape destruction if the moral tie is not strengthened in proportion as the political tie is relaxed?"³⁵ As in Biblical thinking, man has to be obedient to God (as in Paradise) or to another man. Liberty and order can exist side by side, if (the true) religious morality governs individuals. But if this morality evaporates, public opinion and bureaucracy replace it, and there will be too much control and too little order, too much liberty and the absence of liberty. „But what now remains of those barriers which formerly arrested tyranny? Since religion has lost its empire over the souls of men, the most prominent boundary that divided good from evil is overthrown everything seems doubtful and indeterminate in the moral worlds; kings and nations are guided by chance, and none can say where are the natural limits of despotism and bounds of licence."³⁶ ; „I doubt whether man can ever support at the same time complete religious independence and entire political freedom. And I am inclined to think that if faith be wanting in him, he must be subject; and if he be free, he must believe."³⁷ It is worth recalling Augustine: only true faith and love can liberate man from serfdom and rule of other men; whilst the erroneous love and its product, self-love necessarily bring about the domination of man over man. In democracy, neither the government, nor people are obedient to eternal moral laws, that is why they are voluntarists without any sense of limits, thus, government is despotic, while people's lives are chaotic. The evaporation of Christian religion, and with it, the evaporation of traditions and customs, means the elimination of any intersubjectivity: the individual stays alone. „Thus not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever

upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart.”³⁸ Somehow, despotism goes together with atomisation of society, the absence of a common lifeworld. „Despotism, which by its nature is suspicious, sees in the separation among men the surest guarantee of its continuance, and it usually makes every effort to keep them separate. No vice of human heart is so acceptable to it as selfishness... Thus the vices which despotism produces are precisely those which equality fosters. These two things perniciously complete and assist each other. Equality places men side by side, *unconnected by any common tie*; despotism raises barriers to keep them asunder; the former predisposes them not to consider their fellow creatures, the latter makes general indifference a sort of public virtue.”³⁹ (emphasis is added) Despotism is particularly dangerous in the age of democracy, because democracy by nature tends to eliminate common morality, lifeworld and, by doing so, to bring about the condition of despotism; while despots try to do the same intentionally. The closer the members of a democracy are to the citizen of *civitas terrena*, the more despotic democracy becomes. The lack of common morality brings about chaos, unpredictability in everyday life which makes the people of democracy give more and more power to government and administration in order to somehow cope with and regulate the unbearable chaos: „the dread of disturbance and the love of well-being insensibly lead democratic nations to increase the functions of central government as the only power which appears to be intrinsically sufficiently strong, enlightened, and secure to protect them from anarchy.”⁴⁰ One form of democratic despotism is the above mentioned public opinion; the other one is bureaucracy. „It is easy to foresee that time is drawing near when man will be less and less able to produce, by himself alone, the commonest necessities of life. The task of the governing power will therefore perpetually increase, and its very efforts will extend it every day. The more it stands in the place of associations, the more will individuals, losing the notion of combining together, require its assistance: these are causes and effects that unceasingly create each other.”⁴¹ The individual in a democracy „exists only in himself and for himself alone... Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate. This power is absolute, minute, regular, provident and mild... For their happiness such a government willingly labors, but it chooses to be the sole agent and the only arbiter of that happiness; it provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry... what remains, but to spare them all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living.”⁴² Like Burke and unlike the modernists, the new kind of control, limitation did not fire Tocqueville with enthusiasm, rather it terrified him. For Tocqueville, the alternative of the despotism of public opinion and benevolent bureaucracy was not the romantic, unbounded, expressive individual, but the one who is regulated by the common Christian religion-customs. The important point in Tocqueville’s description is the danger bureaucracy poses. (Since Max Weber, the danger of a new kind of despotism originating from bureaucracy has been a commonplace in social thinking. But this problem was not realised by 19th century liberals who hoped that societal progress could be achieved by the benevolent social engineering of bureaucrats. J. S. Mill typically did not worry about new kinds of dependency and bureaucracy, but trusted its enlightened power.) It is worth pointing out that Tocqueville, Carlyle, and later Weber saw the essence of the new kinds of power of bureaucracy in the creation and limitation of conditions, a kind of restriction of alternatives, which is opposite to the old-fashioned normative rules and authority.

But much as the mass, containing atomized and self-loving individuals, needs the benevolent power of bureaucracy, these individuals are not obedient even to them, because the common religion-custom which used to create the habit of obedience has disappeared. „They are naturally impatient of regulation, and they are wearied by the permanence even of the condition they themselves prefer.”⁴³; „This same temper, carried with them into political life, renders them hostile to forms, which perpetually retard or arrest them in some of their projects.”⁴⁴ This kind of man „perpetually oscillates between servitude and licence”.⁴⁵ This kind of people who lack the habit of obedience and the sense of normativity need a new kind of control, which is situational, factual, and not normative.

If individuals are not embedded in society any more - that is, if they have fallen out of the governing and limiting tradition which was a stock of the experience of previous generations - society either collapses as such, or else it receives a new meaning. And indeed, the meaning of society in modernist thinking differs from that in the thought of critics of modernity. The elimination of customs, tradition-lifeworld goes hand in hand with licentiousness, ungovernability, because the elimination of tradition-lifeworld means the elimination of limits, measures above individuals. Thus, this social change has resulted in a citizen of *civitas terrena* who is self-loving, conflictual and does not acknowledge any limits above himself. Burke, Tocqueville and others emphasized that authority did cease in modernity, while a new kind of power emerged which seems to be greater. In this new situation, similarly to individuals, power seems to be arbitrary, even if it refers to a universal rationality. The „bureaucratic individualism results in their characteristic overt political debates being between an individualism which makes its claim in terms of rights and forms of bureaucratic organization which made their claims in terms of utility... The mock rationality of the debate conceals the arbitrariness of the will and power at work in its resolution.”⁴⁶ Arbitrariness means arbitrariness in the relation with intersubjective, common rules, habitual morality; rationality is meaningless in terms of tradition-lifeworld. The power, just like every individual decision, is necessarily arbitrary because of the lack of a common, habitual morality, lifeworld.

Beside Tocqueville, Carlyle was another important follower of Burke’s image of the Chaotic Prison. Although Carlyle was romantic, whilst Tocqueville was classicist, both of them continued Burke’s critical view of modernity. Let us remember that in Tocqueville’s case modern despotism was not connected to the government, but to impersonal life-conditions and the bureaucracy which shaped them. When these authors use the image of Chaotic Prison, they speak about too much and too little control, they refer to the new and to the old controls, respectively. In connection with the notion of too much control, Tocqueville mentions the new kind of control, which, due to its newness, is an alien form. And when he depicts the weak control over individuals, he refers to old, customary, taken-for-granted rules. Traditionally, the problems of control and rule are parts of natural law thinking. As early as Hooker, we can find two interpretations of the law of nature: it could mean normative rules (like the ability to realise right and wrong), and it could also mean „factual” necessities originating from the nature of society. While normative rules can be broken by rulers - and, in this case, they become despots - social laws cannot be broken by anyone because of the harmful consequences. Burke identified tradition with normative laws of nature, and for him it was important that the normative laws of nature made social life and liberty possible. But, on the other hand, during modernity, the idea of factual social law became increasingly popular. The emerging social

science at the beginning of the last century undermined the notion of normative laws of nature - because of their arbitrary, non-rational character - whilst it emphasized the importance of factual social laws. The latter ones could explain unintended social phenomena, and the emerging social science increasingly hoped to acquire a knowledge of these laws in order to create a developed society. This way of thinking was connected to the progressivist movement which hoped to eliminate old normative controls and to create new society by means of new norms (New Christianity, Religion of Humanity, etc.) or hidden social laws. This kind of "hidden hand" explanation originated from the search for causes. The notion of order of tradition-lifeworld was succeeded by the notion of the system of mutual and causal dependence, and the notion of historical formation of the first one was succeeded by the notion of causal, necessary processes and trends: „Order is nothing but necessity... connected chain of causes and effects.”⁴⁷ Society is a network of impersonal, unchangeable and covert necessities. None of the motions man underwent was spontaneous, these were dependent on causes, wholly out of the reach of his own powers. Man „is *continually impelled by causes, which, in spite of himself, influence his frame, modify his existence*, despite of his conduct... every movement of his duration, he was nothing more than a *passive instrument in the hands of necessity*.”⁴⁸ (emphasis is added) This argument of causal-functional necessities, based on the notion of laws inherent in social life, was related to utilitarian and instrumental meanings in d’Holbach’s case. The original program of 18-19th century rationalism was to discover these factual, objective social laws in order to create a new, real eternal moral order on their basis. The emerging social science, as opposed to today’s, did not enjoy the sense of chaos, but was terrified by it and tried to cope with chaos rationally. The modernists can be differentiated from their critics by means of their optimistic view: both of these groups sensed some chaos, the erosion of taken-for-granted traditional morality, but the modernists had strong hopes for a new and better society, man and control. „Nevertheless, confusion... is nothing but the passage of a being into a new order.”⁴⁹ The modernists have tried to create a new normative order which would be based on the necessities operating in society. „Morality... ought to possess stability; to be at all times the same, for all the individuals of the human race; it ought neither to vary in one country, nor in one age from another... we must take for the basis of morality the necessity of things.”⁵⁰ This project was represented in social sciences by positivists, like J.S.Mill and Durkheim. They tried to replace existing personal traditional morality - which they thought was arbitrary, contradictory, unintelligible - by a rational and real one. Funnily enough, the modernist thinking labelled the taken-for-granted lifeworld as arbitrary and as humanly created - and since the Reformation, radical thinking has been suspicious of everything humanly created, above all, of the Catholic Church -, whilst they labelled the new morality and new kind of control and institutions as natural, although these were overtly created, invented and implemented by people in front of the very eyes of their contemporaries. The modernist, liberal as well as leftist thinkers preferred the factual social laws to traditional, personal morality; they thought it was possible to organise a society where control was exercised mainly by factual social law, where the necessities of factual social laws would replace obedience and traditional arbitrary normativity. That is why the modernist way of thinking was very sensitive to social laws, and an elective affinity joined social science to these political wings. Social laws allow conditional (factual) control instead of normative rules. While normative control works in terms of right-wrong, meaningful-meaningless, conditional control works in terms of effective-

ineffective adaptation (useful-useless). The latter one is commonly called functional or technical rationality.

In the 19th century, sociology was a moral science, as in the case of J.S. Mill and Durkheim, and one of its basic problems was the experience of anomie, that is, the collapse of traditional morality. I call the notion of anomie a sense of chaos. This sense was connected to the search for „objective” social laws which could explain unintended social phenomena and which were thought to offer the most effective methods of control apart from the intentions (traditional morality or anomie) of the members of society. „Objectivity” became one of the most important characteristics of these social laws, because „objectivity” means that these laws are out of the scope of human will. These laws can be used by social engineers, but nobody is able to resist their force. These laws are more convenient means for governors than normative rules and orders, because the latter ones allow alterations, disobedience, whilst objective social laws do not carry the problems of obedience and legitimation. Modernists suggested these laws because of their marvellous efficiency in social control. Somehow, the more emphasis was added to factual social laws in social thinking, the more sceptical social scientists became about the normative interpretation of the law of nature and traditional morality. „There are *two kinds of independence: dependence on things*, which is the work of nature; and *dependence on men*, which is the work of society. Dependence on things, being *non-moral*, does no injury to liberty and begets no vices; dependence on men, being out of order, gives rise to every kinds of vice, and thorough this master and slave become mutually depraved. If there is any cure for this social evil, it is to be found in the substitution of law for the individual; in arming the general will with a real strength beyond the power of any individual will. If the laws of nations, like the laws of nature could never be broken by any human power, dependence on men would become dependence on things; all the advantages of a state of nature would be combined with all the advantages of social life in the commonwealth. The liberty which preserves a man from vice would be united with the morality which raises him to virtue. Keep the child dependent on things only... *Let his unreasonable wishes meet with physical obstacles only, or the punishment which results from his own actions, lessons which will be recalled when the same circumstances occur again*. It is enough to *prevent him from wrong doing without forbidding him to do wrong.*”⁵¹ (emphasis is added) It is easy to see the advantage of this kind of control: in the case of control by means of factual social laws there is no more personal domination and dependence, and together with this, the problem of obedience also ceases. In the emerging situation, there is no need for normative legitimation any more, because this control is not normative, but factual. If it is impossible to rebel against or deviate from orders, obedience is not a question any more. The use of factual social laws for control - when „things”, that is „objective situation” control - covers the necessary arbitrariness of power. The advantage of this kind of control is its more effective, impersonal and non-normative nature. These characteristics (1) can put aside the problem of normative legitimation, and (2) may allow any kind of individual morality. This kind of control liberates government as well as individuals from moral bounds: the individual may think and live as he wants, and the government may also act as it wants. In this case governmental activity does not claim any moral support from citizens, as it can work effectively without a legitimating consensus. „The very words *obey* and *command* will be excluded from his vocabulary, still more those of *duty* and *obligation*; but the words strength, necessity, weakness, and constraint must have a large place in it.”⁵² Therefore, the

control based on factual social laws is recommended for the government in modernity partly because of its efficiency, and partly because this kind of control is not bound normatively by any existing traditional morality and is able to work without taking them into consideration. Thus, the emergence of this form of control may be interpreted as a liberation, because it does not need any kind of virtue or common moral behaviour of citizens, and furthermore, this kind of control is supposed to be able to reform and change society, because it can work effectively without the intentional support of people.

Rousseau's view became rather widespread in 19th century social theories. These theories characterised modernity by the impersonal, factual, „objective” laws and necessities coming from them: „superordination and subordination are quite indispensable means of organization and their disappearance would destroy one of the most fruitful forms of social production. It is thus our task to preserve superordination and subordination as long as they have these positive consequences, while at the same time eliminating those psychological consequences that make such relationships abhorrent. This goal is clearly approached to the extent to which all superordination and subordination become merely technical forms of organization, the purely objective character of which no longer evokes any subjective reactions.”⁵³ During the 19th and 20th centuries, social relations have been increasingly interpreted as factual laws and necessities, determinations. Whether the significance of this kind of relationship or its recognition has grown is an important question, however, it lies outside the scope of the present paper. Their attitude towards these factual, impersonal and immoral social necessities differentiates modernist thinkers from those who are critical of modernity. Modernists have interpreted these relations as liberating processes which might create a new society that combines freedom and accountability, predictability. In this context, order was followed by system, and freedom was pushed back into private life. In modernist thinking, these factual necessities advance the increase of individual freedom. „If the notion of the personality as counterpart and correlate must grow in equal measure to that of objectivity, then it becomes clear from this connection that a stricter evolution of concepts of objectivity and of individual freedom go hand in hand... on the one hand the laws of nature, the material order of things, the objective necessity of events emerge more clearly and distinctly, while on the other we see the emphasis upon the independent individuality, upon personal freedom, upon independence in relation to all external and natural forces becoming more and more acute and increasingly stronger.”⁵⁴

However, there was another interpretation of the same experience of emerging modernity. In Carlyle's description, the image of chaos in everyday life and that of impersonal necessities received a rather different colouring. Together with romanticism, he picked up the line of Burke's critique of rationalism. Chaos and the necessary tendencies of despotism were interpreted by Burke, as well as Carlyle, as the results of spreading rationalism and the experiment to create a new society rationally. In this interpretation, means-end rationality is both a sign and a means of a new kind of impersonal and despotic control: „we should be tempted to call it (present age), not an Heroic, Devotional, Philosophical, or Moral Age, but above all others, the Mechanical Age. It is the Age of Machinery, in every outward and inward sense of that word; the age which, with its whole undivided might, forwards, teaches and practices the great art of adapting means to ends.”⁵⁵ And this way of thinking was thought to be the most dangerous in politics, where it was becoming increasingly dominant. In a society which works like and is thought of as a mechanism, a machine,

men „are to be guided only by their self-interests” and „the faith, hope and practice of every one founded on Mechanism of one kind of other”.⁵⁶ This society is and is seen by its members to be a great wheel with necessary rotations. Carlyle was frightened by the factual social laws social thinking had just revealed, because these could take freedom away. „For it is the ‘force of circumstances’ that does everything; the force of one man can do nothing... We figure Society as a ‘Machine’”.⁵⁷ In Carlyle’s thinking, the instrumental and calculating rationality was connected to the notion of impersonal, factual necessities. It is not too hard to notice the impact of Carlyle’s criticism of the „steamengine Utilitarianism”⁵⁸ on Weber’s famous metaphor of the iron cage of bureaucratic rationality. „If *Mechanism, like some glass bell, encircles and imprisons us*”.⁵⁹ (emphasis is added) For Carlyle, on the one hand, mechanism meant the organizations and relations based on instrumental, calculating rationality, which relations and type of institutions flooded even religious life, but mainly politics; on the other hand, it meant a notion of society characterized by impersonal factual, objective necessities against the individual. He saw the man of his age as a cripple who needed the help of mechanisms, and, exactly because of this, this man could be controlled by the developing life-conditions determined by mechanisms. As opposed to him, modernists were enthusiastic about the possibility of reconstructing society by means of these factual social necessities, because they thought these factual, objective necessities to be much more effective than moral control. Furthermore, they regarded factual laws to be liberating, because these laws were amoral, that is, they could work without any moral support. They operated as „invisible hands” without any intentional or moral support from the members of society. This state of social life filled romanticism with anxiety. But Carlyle advocated social order against social system. Whilst Carlyle typically connected the notion of too much control, which originated from the use of factual, amoral social laws and necessities, to instrumental, utilitarian rationality, he described the chaotic state of his age as a result of the elimination of a commonly shared and taken-for-granted, and in this sense „natural”, morality in interpersonal relations. The sense of a chaotic, unarranged and disorganized condition of society appeared on the interpersonal level. „Things... are growing disobedient to man... no man feels himself safe or satisfied.”⁶⁰ „That waste chaos of Authorship by trade, that waste chaos of Scepticism in religion and politics , in life-theory and life-practice.”⁶¹ He links chaos to a certain type of man, to a „sort of heart, from which, and to which, all other confusion circulates in the world”⁶² It is hard not to notice the reference to Augustine’s *civitas terrena* which is a result of a type of man characterized by a particular type of feeling (self-love, disobedience, libido dominandi). The sense of chaos or anomie has been, and still is, rather general. However, in this tradition of the critique of modernity, chaos is not the necessary concomitant of the transition of modern society, but is seen as a collapse of society, because this tradition holds only one form of society to be possible: the society that is based on common tradition - lifeworld. Just as in Augustine's case, for whom there was only one possible order: the one that came from God; in his thinking, nothing could exist without God’s intention. Sin is simply the lack of right action, so there is no such thing as an anomic social order: it is the absence of society. Modernity is not a new and different kind of society, but the lack of society, because it is without the traditional lifeworld which contained God’s moral laws. There is no other kind of morality, thus there is no other possible way of social relations that merit the label 'society': „we have departed far away from the laws of this Universe, and behold now lawless Chaos and inane Chimera is ready to devour us!”⁶³ The „chaotic, ungoverned,

of Devil, not of God.”⁶⁴ „Unnature, what we call Chaos, holds nothing in it but vacuities, devouring gulfs.”⁶⁵ In Carlyle’s case, as in Burke’s or Tocqueville’s case, the sense of chaos went hand in hand with the sense of too much control. His age was „nothing but Mechanism and Chaotic Brute-Gods.”⁶⁶

However, this critique of modernity, the view of chaotic prison, is not typical only among our ancestors alone, it is rather general in contemporary social thinking as well. I would like to illustrate this view by citing just two examples from two different kinds of thinking. In MacIntyre’s case this sociodox is rather clear. On the one hand, he often refers to the moral disorder, „the disorders of moral thought and practice”⁶⁷, as something that goes together with „private arbitrariness”.⁶⁸ The type of man that characterises this disorder is called „emotivist”, which means that there are no impersonal criteria, standards of justice, generosity and duty. „The specifically modern self, the self that I have called emotivist, finds no limits set to that on which it may pass judgement... the emotivist self lack any such criteria.”⁶⁹ „Whatever criteria or principles or evaluative allegiances the emotivist self may profess, they are to be constructed as expression of attitudes, preferences and choices which are themselves not governed by criterion, principles and choices which are themselves not governed by criterion, principle or value... the emotivist self can have no rational history in its transition from one state of moral commitment to another... It is a self with no given continuities.”⁷⁰ The emotivist self does not acknowledge any intersubjective criteria, common measure, or limits above the individual, and regards society to be simply a field of struggle of random wills. MacIntyre’s anti-hero is Max Weber, in whose thinking the endless struggle and incomparativity characterise the world of values which determines the goals of human actions, and there is only one kind of intersubjective criteria: the efficiency of rational bureaucracy, that is, the utilitarian effectivity in terms of means and ends. That is why MacIntyre describes modernity as bureaucratic individualism which means unpredictability on the interpersonal level, in lifeworld, and strict predictability on the level of bureaucratic planning and control of society at large. The typical man in modernity is expressivist. He places his critique of modernity - where the processes of moral-epistemological democratization (everyone has the right to find out the categories of right and wrong and the convenient actions) and elitism (some experts with qualifications and methods have the right and duty to organize other members of the society in terms of their knowledge) coexist - in the framework of the sociodox of emotivist self and bureaucrats: „The contrast between this democratization of moral agency and the elitist monopolies of managerial and therapeutic expertise could not be sharper.”⁷¹ „But in fact what is crucial is that on which the contending parties agree, namely that there are only two alternative modes of social life open to us, one in which the free and arbitrary choices of individuals are sovereign and one in which the bureaucracy is sovereign, precisely so that it may limit the free and arbitrary choices of individuals... the politics of modern societies oscillate between a freedom which is nothing but a lack of regulation of individual behavior and forms of collectivist control designed only to limit the anarchy of self-interest... bureaucracy and individualism are partners as well antagonists. And it is in the climate of this bureaucratic individualism that the emotivist self is naturally at home.”⁷²

However, this view of sociodox is typical mainly among conservatives. The modernists are modernist because they think it possible to create a different society which works by means of a different and new kind of amoral, liberating and effective control based on factual social laws. However, the sociodox of the Chaotic Prison has

not been the sole property of conservatives. The modernist Marx described capitalism as the struggle of egoistic individuals and at the same time as a system dominated by iron laws of necessities; this view is also a mixture of chaos and domination. The same sociodox can be found, as I have already mentioned, in Weber's writings. Nevertheless, Weber is closer to the romantic or premodern critique of rationality, as he connected the notion of too much control to rationality in the metaphor of the „iron cage”. Habermas, together with other members of the Frankfurt School, borrowed this line of argument from Weber in the analysis of the relation between rationality and domination in modernity. Habermas is particularly interesting in this tradition of critique of modernity, because, as a leftist, he has an ambiguous view about modernity. Modernity as such is basically full of conflicts and lasting immorality, that is, *civitas terrena*, even if the root of these conflicts is not the immorality of men, but the instrumental and functional rationality. „*We can speak of the 'fundamental contradiction' of a social formation when, and only when, its organizational principle necessitates that individuals and groups repeatedly confront one another with claims and intentions that are, in the long run, incompatible.*”⁷³ This world of necessary conflicts is opposed to the world of communicative action (communicative rationality), which is a sort of millenarian community where neither power and authority, nor conflicts exist, which is a terrain of mutual understanding. In the communicative community, the old problem of European tradition, that of the subordination of man to man would not exist any more.

Meaning is something opposed to chaos. The basic function of world-maintaining interpretations is to cope with chaos, that is, to master contingency. Chaos is the lack of *nomos* (custom, law) as well as the loss of meaning. Meaning is closely connected to order. Habermas does not speak about „too much freedom”, he talks about the „loss of meaning” much more often, that is, as I have already mentioned, another side of chaos. Chaos means the lack of a meaningful and ordered social world in which man is able to orient, that is, the actions of others are not clearly contingent but more or less foreseeable and the motivation of others' actions is meaningful, that is, intersubjective. Meaningful social order is also the existence of common, intersubjective explanations for invisible-hand-like, unintended consequences. The loss of meaning, or Berger's notion of the „homeless mind”, refers to the sense of everyday chaos or *anomie*. The loss of meaning, homeless mind or the complaints about licentiousness refer to the unstable and inscrutable nature of everyday life and the concomitant conflicts. And if meaningful social order is lost, normativity is also lost. It does not seem too hard to connect the notion of the loss of meaning to the idea of Chaotic Prison, because, for example, Augustine mentioned the Tower of Babel as an instance for *civitas terrena*. In the metaphor of the Tower of Babel, disobedient people lost their common language, they lost any intersubjectivity and any possible integration. They were dropped into a meaningless, contingent world in which any cooperation or any social relation became impossible. People who are incapable of orienting and mapping their social world are disordered. In this story, chaotic world is not connected to much liberty, but to the loss of meaning. Habermas' critique of modern lifeworld is not a complaint about licentiousness, but the loss of meaning and incapacity for communicating. He explains this loss of meaning „*as effects of the uncoupling of system and lifeworld*”⁷⁴ The loss of emanating as a special phenomenon of modernity is a result of the rationality of system-integration which is fused with the political system (the state). It is called the colonization of the lifeworld by means of media of system-integration.

Habermas explains the sociodox of Chaotic Prison in a theoretical framework borrowed from Lockwood. The system-integration divorced from the social one, a process which is followed by the colonizing attempts of system-integration, that is, system-integration tries to shape social integration in accordance with its own functional needs, independent of the historically emerging elements of tradition-lifeworld. Because of the invasion of system-integration (instrumental and functional rationality) lifeworld becomes fragmented and chaotic. Hume's or Burke's critique of rationalism was based on the argument that society, that is, tradition-lifeworld cannot be created rationally, and even the attempt to do so demolishes society and freedom. We can find the same argument targeted against instrumental and functional rationality in Habermas, who developed his critique of the big and arbitrary welfare state in connection with the nature of system-integration. He perceived the loss of freedom as a result of the "iron cage" - a notion taken from romanticism via Weber. The iron cage is „an administered, totally reified world in which means-end rationality and domination are merged.”⁷⁵ Following Weber, Habermas exploits the traditional argument of anti-rationalists which describes rationality as a means of arbitrary power, despotism and something that homogenises life-styles and results in the loss of meaning. (Despite its reactionary origin, this argument is rather common among the members of the Frankfurt School.) As a means of a new kind of power, rationality is responsible for modern anomie because it demolishes both normative tradition-lifeworld and normativity in politics: „a colonization of lifeworld by system imperatives that drive moral-practical elements out of private and political public spheres of life.”⁷⁶ (This invasion of system-integration into tradition-lifeworld was brought about by the attempt to create obedience (engineering mass loyalty). This attempt was not successful, its unintended result, however, is that „the communicative practice of everyday life is one-sidedly rationalised into a totalitarian into a utilitarian life-style." The loss of meaning is a consequence of the fragmentation of tradition-lifeworld caused by this attempt of system-integration to create a new and functionally convenient lifeworld. „This communicative infrastructure is threatened by two interlocking, mutually reinforcing tendencies: *systemically induced reification* and *cultural impoverishment*.”⁷⁷ The system-integration (political system) is increasingly independent of lifeworld, that is, increasingly norm-free, which is nothing but arbitrariness from the point of view of individuals. And this norm-free system-integration invades lifeworld and deprives it of its intersubjective, common normative structures. This colonization of lifeworld results in „a loss of meaning and freedom”, that is, chaos coexists with the loss of freedom. What is necessary for freedom is an intersubjective, meaningful order and not a system. This colonization is the supercession of normativity by instrumental and functional rationality: „when interactions are no longer coordinated via norms and values, or via process of reaching understanding, but via the medium of exchange value... they transform social and intrapsychic relations into instrumental relations.”⁷⁸

But with the loss of meaning the possibility of normative consensus, that is, legitimation is also lost. Habermas, in a rather similar way to Burke, writes about the necessary failure of the attempts to engineer mass loyalty, obedience. The „political system... cannot produce mass loyalty in any desired amount.”⁷⁹; „A legitimation deficit means that it is not possible by administrative means to maintain or establish effective normative structures to the extent required. During the course of capitalist development, the political system shifts its boundaries not only into the economic system but also into the socio-cultural system. While organizational rationality

spreads, cultural traditions are undermined and weakened. The residue of tradition must, however, escape the administrative grasp, for traditions important for legitimation cannot be regenerated administratively. Furthermore, administrative manipulation of cultural matters has the unintended side effect of causing meanings and norms previously fixed by tradition and belonging to the boundary conditions of the political system to be publicly thematized.”⁸⁰; „The cultural system is peculiarly resistant to administrative control. There is no administrative production of meaning... The procurement of legitimation is self-defeating as soon as the mode of procurement is seen through. Cultural traditions have their own, vulnerable, conditions of reproduction. They remain „living” as long as they take shape in an unplanned, nature-like manner, or are shaped with hermeneutic consciousness... A cultural tradition loses precisely this force as soon as it is objectivistically prepared and strategically employed. In both cases conditions for the reproduction of cultural traditions are damaged, and the tradition is undermined.”⁸¹ Tradition sets limits to action, but tradition as such bounds administrative or any rational action, because it cannot be manipulated. By means of its media (power and money) the norm-free political system is growing too big and invades lifeworld in order to shape it in accordance with its own needs. Without the support of tradition-lifeworld, the political system cannot gain legitimation, that is, obedience and loyalty. It is true that the norms of tradition-lifeworld do not limit the will of individuals and political system any more. But the lack of obedience to this norm-free, arbitrary political system (which is rational from its own point of view, but arbitrary from the point of view of citizens) increases the extent of the rational invasion of lifeworld by system-integration. Habermas’s view is based on the traditional dual conception of power/authority in social thinking. On the one hand, Habermas refers to normative control which allows the possibility of disobedience, and therefore needs obedience, that is, legitimation; on the other hand, he also refers to control via media which shape conditions and allow no alternatives, and therefore does not need obedience, that is, legitimation. The latter form of control is norm-free: based on rational social and economical laws, it operates via „factual” conditions.⁸² Its media make the modern welfare state too strong (second kind of control), but at the same time, the chronic absence of mass loyalty, obedience highlights its serious deficiency in regard to the first kind of control. That is why the welfare state tries to engineer the first kind of control (that is, legitimation, obedience) via the second one (that is, rationally exploiting its media for condition-formation).

Putting aside Habermas’s modernist optimism, which supposes that lifeworld can be recreated by communicative rationality, his diagnosis of modernity fits in the tradition of social thinking described above. The loss of meaning is a loss of normativity in everyday life: instead of normative control, the political system deploys a norm-free control which does not require obedience. „In this process, free communication can be replaced only by massive manipulation, that is, by strong, indirect control.”⁸³ Through its media, the political system attains an omnipotence (both power and money is based on utilitarian means-end calculation), but it suffers from a deficit in legitimation and obedience. Habermas’s utopia is a lifeworld which gives place to communicative activity, meaningful and mutual, without coercion and asymmetrical relations - a vision similar to the *civitas Dei*. But in this imagery, society is a *civitas terrena* which, because of its utilitarian rationality, lacks normativity, where only an arbitrarily forced control can sustain a relative peace and cooperation. And this control (power) cannot be norm-bounded, since norms have evaporated from lifeworld, and they cannot be recreated by a rational use of money or power. The

members of system-integration (political system), the technocrats, see themselves to be rational, but from an outside perspective they appear to be not reasonable but arbitrary, because their activity is determined by an instrumental and functional rationality which, by its origin, has nothing to do with any reason embedded in existing tradition-lifeworld. But there is no return to Paradise; in modernity, tradition-lifeworld and normativity have ceased to exist, so even if the political system would like to anchor its activity in norms of tradition-lifeworld, it would not be able to do so.

The colonization of lifeworld is the implementation of the explicit predictability-needs of several organizations against the opaqueness of everyday life. Any predictability that existed in lifeworld, was always limited, and even though there were boundaries, they were fading away. Individual freedoms, just like predictability, were limited in tradition-lifeworld. The project of the Enlightenment tried to enhance both together by means of creating new norms. Despite its failure, ever since this project, there has been a common experience of a new and enforcing opinion, a monster. An important difference between modernists and their critics is that the former think of the elimination of tradition-lifeworld as emancipation, while the latter interpret this experience as anomie.

The non-normative limitations (despotic as well as „factual”) are outside of society, so they do not need legitimation, because they do not need obedience, which is an old dream of utopian thinking. The critics of „factual” control often point out one of its important characteristics. Namely, that this kind of control is not manifest, it tries to exploit the „objective social and economical laws and necessities”, but it is always ambiguous whether these objective laws or the political system using them are „responsible” for the situation. (From the point of view of the present paper it is not important whether these objective laws really exist or not; and whether social engineers are able to use them for their purposes or not.) One of the essential statements of this tradition of the critique of modernity is that power, norm-free control has become more hidden and much less responsible.

In this paper I tried to illustrate a paradox image of society (a sociodox) which spread after the collapse of the notion of the laws of nature. This image is based on the critique of two basic presuppositions fundamental in sociology. The first one is that there are no normative laws of nature („natural” normativity); an idea which led to the notion that every moral claim is arbitrary. The other presupposition important for the self-image of sociology is about the existence of factual social laws, necessities, which can be discovered by rational methods and can be used rationally as a means of controlling people. The presupposition of social and economical laws is inherently connected to the new kind of control, which tries to shape conditions via universals like power and money. Since Adam Smith, one of the main activities of social science, and also the basis of its claim for being a legitimate science, has been the search for meaning of unintended social phenomena. Since the *Wealth of Nations*, social and economic thinking had to reflect upon the problem of an „invisible hand”, that is, how people achieve an end which was not part of their original intent. Smith's explanation to account for unintended consequences lay with Providence, but the social sciences secularized the invisible hand and offered plenty of explanations for this phenomenon. When critics of modernity refer to rationality as an irresistible means of control, they mean the supposedly discovered rational explanations of the „invisible hand” and the instrumental-rational use of these functionally rational explanations. The use of such explanations, whether they are correct or not, helps

controlling agencies to create situations in which people can act only in a certain way, or to reach some goals which were not intended by any subject.

The social evaluation of everyday morality, non-reflective habits and prejudices was a reaction to Cartesian rationalism and puritanism. Descartes, who was uneasy about the idea that thinking could be a product of customs, directed his scientific method to depart from customs and tradition-lifeworld. Tradition was also an enemy for puritans, because tradition was equated with Catholicism and the existing social world which they saw as something sinful and rotten. The re-evaluation of tradition-lifeworld took place mainly among the English sceptics and in Scotland in the 18th century⁸⁴, but its earlier examples in social thinking were also targeted against innovating reformation.⁸⁵ For them, the morality of everyday life, custom, meant regularity and meaningful relations regardless of their origin or the existence of arguments. This world meant the society for them, and it contained natural, taken-for-granted and efficient normative controls and limits, even though these were not always clear and were rarely reflected upon. This emphasis was a reaction to the failure of the efforts for rational justification and systematization of morality in the 17-18th century. This failure resulted in the demolition of the normative meaning of the law of nature, and in the increasing fashionableness of its „factual” interpretation. This early rationalization project was indirectly an avantgarde in the demolition of existing tradition-lifeworld and its limiting, controlling norms. The common elements of the above mentioned examples of the sociodox of the Chaotic Prison are: (1) that egoistic (sinful) man means the elimination of tradition-lifeworld, its norms, limitations and meanings which results in a chaotic, meaningless world where individuals are mutually defenceless against the arbitrary will of others; (2) that society, interpreted as tradition-lifeworld, cannot be created rationally; (3) the parallel phenomena of increasing power and decreasing authority which results in anomie, legitimation problems and the emergence of a new and irresistible form of control. The new is never natural, never taken for granted but something alien, thus arbitrary in terms of existing norms of historically established common tradition-lifeworld, so, new control is always felt to be more coercive than the customary one. The sense of „unnaturalness” of the new kind of control is brought about by the fact that it does not acknowledge the habitual, customary limits which could bound the controlling activity of the political system. But the new kind of control typically tries to redraw these limits, it always attempts to define its own conditions and borders, that is, it tends to be self-defining, which is to say it knows no limits. The closer the description of modernity is to Augustine’s *civitas terrena* and the meaningless world of the Tower of Babel, where vain, self-loving individuals are in eternal conflict and struggle, the more the political and social control looks (and/or is) arbitrary and despotic.

The wisdom of institutions: in between the reality of mass individualism and an utopia reloaded

The praxeological starting point of present paper is simply that human beings act, that is, they have goals and purposes and they try to achieve them. But goals, means and situations can be understood only by - using Ryle's phrase⁸⁶ - thick description. That is, all the people on the Kossuth square, in Budapest, standing side by side and shouting seem unreasonable and irrational. Maybe, someone will say so. But they protest, they want the Prime Minister of Hungary to go. So, without this thick description we cannot understand them. Apart from modern social science, people's ideas, their knowledge and its origin is at stake. Ideas are important because of their – although not logical – consequences. The convictions and ideas people hold say a lot about their actions, their choices, about the situations they can perceive and answer. Ideas can incite passions and revolutions or may moderate them, as well. Apart from the basic presumptions of modern social sciences and economics, people's actions can be less explained by impersonal “forces”, “causes” or some other favourite toys of these moderns sciences. Focusing on people's vested interests some usually presupposes that these are given, however, not only historians of ideas but political actors are also well aware of the significance of interest formation. This paper is interested in some epistemic aspects of globalization..

Modern soothsayers prefer talking about necessities, implicitly negating moral and intellectual agency of man. Referring to technological, economical or political necessities they imply that man does not act, but he is acted upon. My generation in Hungary was grown up in an intellectual life of satellite state, where any criticism concerning socialism was put aside by referring to economical or geopolitical necessities. This kind of scientism neglects to pay due attention to the role of ideas and debates.

I'm going to focus on the problem of the origin of our knowledge: globalization has mad problematic the reasonableness by demolishing our institutions, a space where wisdom may emerge from trial and error, and from the interaction of several generations and contemporaries. Our past does have relevancies for our action, namely, most of our knowledge came from the past. We may act reasonably according to our past experiences and knowledge.

1.

Globalization is the steady decline in importance of national boundaries and geographical distance as constraints on mobility and connections. Technological innovation made connection easier, but mainly economical and religious, and later political motivation moved this process.

According to globalists the key political issue of our time is to ensure the potential gains of boundlessness. In globalist thinking boundaries are not perceived as wall defending something (let's say, “our world” or “our home made order”), but as divining lines which may make conflicts, enmities and arrest world peace, harmony and its economic blessings.⁸⁷ Global co-operation and global institutions and arrangements are seemed to be fruitful to eliminate, or at least to control the problems inherited from our dark past, full of limits and limitations. But, what is more, according to globalists, the blessings of globalization or openness cannot be reached without conscious efforts. Paradoxically, they claim governments to lower or even abolish all man-made barriers, first of all, nation state created one, to mobility of

goods, money, people and ideas. Beside clearing the way in front of globally free movement of anything, nation state has meaning in globalist agenda only as a corporation with the Prime Minister as chief executive.

Progressives have been supposing that the origin of our present problems, conflicts is the lack of adaptation to the changed environment/necessities. If we change, we adapt ourselves to a situation described by them, and this adaptation – commonly called “progress” – may result a world free from problems and conflicts. The only source of our present problems, resentment against globalisation is mal-adaptation to the environment. Adaptation, that is, change *per definitionem* is always good. The question is not whether such a progress makes people happy, but it makes them happier than they would otherwise have been. Once upon a time, progress and its necessities were interpreted as nation building, today as globalization.

Globalization usually classified into economical, technological, political and cultural branches (the last means, first of all, the Anglosaxon mass culture). But the dominant theme, I guess, the mismatched national states and global markets. Anxiety concerning globalization is often labelled as xenophobic or worst, while globalists can see mainly the rosy possibilities of the phenomenon. However, our tradition contains the Pythagorean and Aristotelian aversion from boundlessness (*apeiron*), and the positive evaluation of limits (*peras*). The first is somehow chaotic, indefinite, indeterminate and infinite, that is, formless, always changing and in flux. In the context of globalization nation states usually connected to self-determination and safety, that is, therefore limits and boundaries regained their traditionally positive meaning.

Political and cultural globalization meant that there is one and rational, therefore context-free and universalizable solution for all social, moral and political problems. Universalism has an elective affinity to rationalism in politics and moral thinking.⁸⁸ Diversity of cultures and contingency of situations are seen as obstacles, potential source of danger for modern harmony, that is, for peaceful political hedonism. Diversity and contingency are seen dangerous as potential sources of conflict.

This universalizing and rationalist way of thinking, called commonly modernity, means the eradication of traditional, historically emerged identities and knowledge, and the emerging homogeneous and easily manipulated mass society without moral or physical limits and boundaries. This homogenizing universalism created the political nation as well, an universal mode of association, *via* the elimination of local institutions as competing authorities and loyalty claims by centralized nation state.

The question is whether globalization is simply the recent step in the modernization process, which was preceded by the nation state? In this case, the conflict between globalists and nation states would be a home affair of the progressives. Or, are the conflicts around globalization something different?

2.

Some liberal and Marxist thinkers presuppose that economy (or technology) is the infrastructure of society, the basis which defines the politics, ethics, culture, identity, the so called super structure. Marx wrote in *The Poverty of Philosophy* that the hand mill gives us feudal society, the steam mill industrial capitalism, so productive forces, technology determine the human relations, social, political and other aspects of human life.

*Labor is organized, is divided differently according to the instruments it disposes over. The hand-mill presupposes a different division of labor from the steam-mill. Thus, it is slapping history in the face to want to begin by the division of labor in general, in order to get subsequently to a specific instrument of production, machinery... Under the patriarchal system, under the caste system, under the feudal and corporative system, there was division of labor in the whole of society according to fixed rules. Were these rules established by a legislator? No. Originally born of the conditions of material production, they were raised to the status of laws only much later. In this way, these different forms of the division of labor became so many bases of social organization. As for the division in the workshop, it was very little developed in all these forms of society.*⁸⁹

The socialist experiment was based upon this, so-called, materialist metaphysics. Ironically, this experiment sought to introduce new economic laws by means of political power. It was really a system of the sense of centralized panoptical surveillance in economics as well as in other spheres of life. But contrary to socialist experiment, capitalism is not a system – it does not built up from blocks, interconnected by necessities. Even if there are global economy and technology, these do not define politics or culture, that is, the mode of our political association and our idea of good life. Many critics as well as supporters of globalization presuppose a kind of economical-technical over-determination. Of course, technology is not neutral. It spread the importance of efficiency against wisdom and *phronesis*, plurality, judgment. Still, even in case of socialism it may be false to talk about necessities: there were several kinds of socialism; and there are endless versions of political society connected to market economy. My point is that even if there are economical and technological constrains, it depends on our moral and political imagination and knowledge, what kind of political society and way of life may emerge.

Both critics and supporters of globalization agree that this economical and technical *phenomenon* produces the decline of nation state or any kind of state. And if they are right, what is emerging instead?

The dominant criticism of globalization is characteristically anti-capitalist, it is a criticism of free market which cannot be controlled by the existing nation state institutions and legislation. And nation state is seen by these critics as a quasi-Socialist state: a means to reduce the unwanted effects of market economy. Criticism of market may refer to the consequences of free market and competition, like poverty, unfairness, exploitation. Or, this criticism may point out that pure and perfect competition is an ideal, and there are always power relations; non meritocratic values but networks and force decides the competition. Whilst the first criticism says that fair competition results unfair results, so it is bad; the last criticism teaches us that there is no fair competition, what is called this way is only the veil of pure power relations, oppression or exploitation.

Globalization is often described as economical and technological dominance or, at least, dependence, but in both cases it would be a control from without of nation state. The modern conception of Sovereignty of nation state eroded, decision allegedly made by the majority of voters has been becoming increasingly irrelevant.

But, it can be said that the conflicts of globalization are home affairs: these are conflicts between industrial and agricultural producers and buyers or consumers. Practically, everyone is consumer, but less and less people are producer, less and less

people are involved in the labour market. So, the globalization vs. nation state conflict may appear as the conflicts of producers and consumers.

Mainly the producers are sensitive for global competition and they claim reinforced state sovereignty to defend them – that is, their market position - by means of market control and redistribution. As I can see, nation state and state sovereignty for them mean the productivist or welfare state which is an opaque and anonym redistributive structure – irresponsible but successfully manipulative. Still, they hope more access to its control than to the deeply irresponsible and anonym global market and institutions. However, anti-globalists do not necessarily prefer nation state. Instead, they prefer state or any other regulating agency. Society has ceased in the sense of self-regulation, and nation state as a different kind of self-regulation method followed it. Globalization means that social ordering does not seem to be national, it seems not to be correlated with nation state, but with several agencies which govern from distance by trans-national regulatory apparatus. Criticism of market and globalization are not only against competition, but also for some version of statism, because state as such seems to them eligible for self-control.

Our question is rather simple: what kind of political society we live in?

Does the proposed mode of life differ in the case of either globalist or anti-globalist? What is called nation state is a real alternative to globalized way of life? As I can see, both are based on political hedonism and mass individualism.

The promise of mass individualism is the satisfaction of material wishes by a rational and universal organization – let it be world market or some trans-national (bureaucratically regulated) association. There is seemingly only one task, the opinion management, that is, keeping at bay those opinions which are potentially dangerous for the peaceful mass consumption. Those who disturb the peaceful consumptions are not heretics, but they are trouble-makers, speaking hate speech. The today dissidents are those who are loyal to some particulars: they are not revolutionaries, but traditionalists, nationalists and religious people (today, called fundamentalists). They are, first of all, anti-hedonist and anti-secularist., that is, they refuse founding the moral and political order only upon human empirical wishes. These contemporary dissenters claims moral or religious limits against boundlessness.

Political hedonism would found order on the satisfaction of human wishes, and allegedly accept any kind of whimsical wishes, therefore it describes itself as tolerant, apart from those so-called oppressing norms which would limit human wishes. So, every community and institution, fist of all the churches, are bigot and against human freedom. Of course, political debate with these intolerant institutions is impossible, therefore, they must be excluded from the neutral public by the honest moderns.

3.

In the following section I describe the epistemic situation in mass democracy, with special reference to post-socialism.

The modern mass democracy created a strange form of individualism on mass scale: mass individualism combined the radical human rights thinking with market liberalism. Whilst the first emphasizes rights without duties, the last spread the view that anything can be solved by human choices. Basically both thinking flatter to mass individuals: there is no bad choice, one has the rights to do whatever he wants.

Egalitarian democracy is often criticized because of its relativism, and mass individuals are frustrated because they value foremost his difference from the others, but nothing is worth differing, nothing is better than anything else. They may choose,

but they may not choose well. Even making a value judgement is seen as moral failure, and neutrality or tolerance are the most preferred virtues. There is no wrong choice or life-style, and anything make them upset what makes them remember for their conscience or the morally good. Today, anti-clericalism cannot be explained by the authoritative activity of churches, from this point of view it is most important that even the existence of churches makes mass individuals remembering for right and wrong.

The frustrated and angry mass individuals self-confident, still they claim security by the state, in practice, they claim a guaranteed life-style. It means that the main task of the state today is the elimination of the unpleasant results of the wrong choices of mass individuals. The political hedonism would build political order on the satisfaction of human desires, and it can call itself tolerant, because formally it accepts any claim and labels any moral as oppressive, which would limit these desires and wishes. Neutrality is able to get relativism and hedonism dominance by expelling all morals from public life, which would limit desires.

Present democracy, people believe, can satisfy diverse needs, and, really, it renders easily all contending beliefs inoffensive or ridiculous. In modern democracy, on general, and in post-communism, in particular, the only legitimate public belief is egoism and the private pursuit of economic well-being. The dominant political hedonism claims productivist or welfare state, and makes all ideas unattractive and unpopular, unless they appeal to economic interests. Its strength is not in its forced liberal ideal, but rather in its renunciation of all ideals, apart from empirical individual well being. By means of an apolitical economical and social policy, democracy created a consumer culture as Tocqueville foreseen some generations ago.

Modernity is rationalization, universalization and massification. Mass individual, rooted out from communities and institutions, is solitary, alienated therefore more vulnerable and destitute. Modern state as well as economy inimical towards collective identities, as potential source of conflicts and technically not easily manipulated. The pre-modern institutional-communal (local) control was replaced by state bureaucratic controls, agencies which govern from distance, and wisdom by alleged technical rationality.

Today everything is justified or legitimated by its functional contribution to the empirical satisfaction of mass individuals, just like in Plato's *pigs' polis* based on the merely appetite.⁹⁰ Anything limiting human wishes is labelled as despotic or inhuman. Because, only the claims for the satisfaction of empirical wishes are legitimate issues in public life and the means to satisfy them, public debates limited only to them.

The presently dominant utopia in public's mind connected to the self-image of productivist state. One of its elements is the still dominant hope of progress, that is, the promise of an ever improving world in terms of satisfaction of empirical desires. Progress, hopefully, will result harmony of the economic interest of all members of society or world is a modern idea, opposing Montaigne's teaching that the gain of one is invariably the damage of others, no man profits but by the loss of others. The other element of this utopia is universalism, the final end of conflicts emerging from nations or from other particulars. This hope and promise of the end of conflicts, that is, finally politics, is an anti-political. The moderns' political hope is anti-political.

Economical-technical globalization contains the utopian promise of anti-politics: the administration of things, managerial policy characterized by protection, peace, harmony and security. The difference between liberals and socialists – two branches of moderns – is that liberals think that order is able to consolidate itself by

means of economics (economic cooperation and/or competition). But today nation, particulars are anathema for both liberals and socialists.

4.

As David Hume wrote in his essay, *Of the First Principles of Government*⁹¹, government is always government of the many by the few. But – as one may read in Hume’s essay or in la Boetie’s *The Politics of Obedience. The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*⁹² – power is always ultimately on the side of the governed, and the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. If public opinion is ultimately – continues this tacitly contractual argument – responsible for the structure of government, it is also the agency that determines whether there is freedom or bondage. Therefore, the struggle for freedom or for meaning is not resistance to tyrants or oligarchs but resistance to the public opinion. A little bit later, Tocqueville and J.S. Mill taught us that the fight for freedom and against tyranny is not the struggle of the many against the few, but of minorities against the majority. At least, since la Boetie and Hume knowledge of common people has gained political significance.

Instead of physical force, are able to manipulate by centralizing and homogenizing social life – therefore, modern domination based on hegemony over the allegedly open minded mass, emerged after the destruction of independent institutions and moral. Because the present governments based on popular consent, one of their main activities is opinion management. That is why mass communication has become so widely discussed. Mass communication is not simply politically relevant but a constituent part of power network. In our systematized and bureaucratically managed world revolution seems to be impossible, but the revolts here are typically directed against mass media headquarters, as the symbols and agents of power.

Instead wisdom, public is dominated by the arbitrariness of post-modern multi-culti (bloody, pathological identities, tribalism) and fundamentalist rationalism and the rhetoric of economic over-determinism. But, despite of utopical hopes, modernity much better characterized by mutual mistrust and the lack of loyalty to any authority in case of conflict. „It seems we trust our leaders, our neighbours, our visitors, and even our own future behaviour, less and less.”⁹³

Global politics and economics, just like modern nation state, are managed by abstract manipulation of social engineering. Responsibility is fading away: no space for it in the thinking dominated by economical, political, technological or whatever *necessities*.

By emerging huge organizations the democratic promise of representative self-control is also fading away. These organizations manage consent by mass scale manipulation via the mass media and the medium of money and power.

5.

Men are quarrelsome as well as cooperative/consensual by nature. But, even in the case of rational benevolent and enlightened masters, and even in case of a world without nations, conflicts may emerge among individuals. The tragic sense is that evil or sin cannot be eliminated from this world, therefore decision has to be made. In our present world, however, we can see that no one trust decision makers; their reason, the ground of their judgment is usually not evident and not consensual. Even if there is universal rationality and our managers would be able to implement their rational knowledge, they couldn’t bring about loyalty.

The weakest point of our present political existence is that it promises the end of conflicts, but in case of the emerging conflicts decisions do not seem to be reasonably from the point of view of people involved in conflicts, therefore decisions are hardly accepted. The idealized neutral politics would be separated from the moral consciousness of people. Therefore, there is a continuous disloyalty towards state or global organizations, because the knowledge used in them are so far from common people's intersubjective knowledge. And without emerging consent, only force or the presence of sanctions and mass scale manipulation may compel people to be obedient.

Both the bureaucratic rationalism and whimsical mass individualism are meaningless in the everyday life, both are far away from intersubjectivity. Even the rationality of bureaucracy is seen whimsical from the shared wisdom of common people, because it, like a god, giveth and taketh away. On the other hand, globalization in everyday life practices means a sense of irrelevance and dis-functionality of our knowledge created by our shared trial and error efforts in interpersonal relations and by free discussion of ideas.

Whilst the common argument against globalization refers to locality, as a place of identity, I don't follow this line of argument. The contemporary fashion of identity would smuggle pre-modern values into our present post-modern context, resulting relativism and anomie. Talking about locality means particulars (little platoons), first of all institutions like parishes, schools, families, etc., but instead of identities connected to them, I focus on the intersubjective life contained in them.

Men are not good or bad, they can be improved or debased. Men are able to keep the permanent threat of evil at bay by constructing shared moral rules, institutions and traditions. Reasonableness, that is, wisdom of institutions came from the free trial and error learning process. This kind of knowledge is cooperatively and interpersonally constructed moral and practical rules, and not impersonal, administratively created and/or applied, manipulating techniques. More these constrains - *via* the medium of money and power – are impersonal (“administration of things” by Engels, Lenin and their modernist followers), and further away from everyday life, the more these are harsher. Living in communities and institutions people not only creates indirectly practical and moral rules, but, also indirectly, the sense of obedience and loyalty emerge in them. Loyalty formation, participation, responsible decision-making, reasonableness, collective self-regulation and education of the next generations – the very problem why people in mass democracy complains - happened in our institutions in the past. Institutions are the objects of our loyalty and affection, and the repositories of much human wisdom – formed by the collective experience of previous generations.

Shared wisdom capital leads to trust, respect, and commitment to work together. Wisdom, emerging and learnt intersubjectively in institutions, contains skills like conflict negotiation, listening, cooperation. Wisdom is proper or, at least, probable understanding of ordinary experiences and skill in judging in borderline cases in face of this uncertainty. It tends to increase with experience. This kind of knowledge refers to the long term consequences of present actions, considers probable side-effects, makes people be able to make reasonable plans and strategies for the future, to monitor them and to detect early warning sign of difficulties, and to assess their significance.

Anti-globalist, by criticising neo-liberalism, may refer to dominance and over-control of market as well as its chaotic and whimsical influences to (local) life. But the age before globalization was dominated by Keynesian redistributive and

productivist state, its disciplinary apparatus and surveillance in the name of progress or guaranteed life – even if this surveillance was allegedly democratic, that is, self-imposed. And the redistributive and productivist state may be slightly better from my epistemological point of view, it corrodes bureaucratically institutional wisdom just like the phenomena called globalisation.

Modern society has no time for wisdom: it emerges during long period of time, and to acquire it is also along process. However, any form of mass individualism claims instant gratification and sees institutional wisdom only as barriers. Moderns, whether supported the idea of nation state or supra national organizations and the idea of one nation, were apt to remove institutions and communities containing wisdom as the barriers to progress – whatever progress means.

Uninformed by the wisdom tradition, data, information, knowledge, intellect, expertise, strategies, open society can be organized by manipulating techniques to be exploited, degraded. Open society, apart from Popper's utopia, doesn't contain individuals searching for truth or falsehood, but mass individuals easily manipulated. We live in age in need of wisdom. Technical and organizational achievements of science and technology have made the Moderns ignore wisdom or practical knowledge, traditions contained in institutions. Moderns tend to ignore that A wise group – containing diverse and decentralised members – makes better judgements or solve problem better than experts with kind of certifications or credentials.

The problem of political knowledge and action in the criticism of Modernity

Since the first reaction to the political and moral Modernism in the 18th century there have been continuous efforts to criticize the Moderns' concepts and hopes referring to political knowledge and action. This concern with political epistemology and action became much stronger during the 20th century.

Many years before Churchill said his *bon mot* on democracy, democratic constitution had achieved a position similar to those of monarchy during the Middle Ages. As monarchy was seen as the best regime by people during the Middle Age, democracy could reach this status in the political thinking at the beginning of the 20th century. Democracy and the sovereignty of the people became inevitable, the regimes, later labeled totalitarian, referred to people, too. Since then the issue of good regime became a taboo and political thinkers left it. Political thinking shifted into the area of political epistemology and action theory. The issues of the nature of political knowledge and political action allow people to think about good life and human condition apart from the actual constitutional or power structure of state.

The criticism of Modern politics referred to changes like democratization, massification, revolutions, totalitarianism and the welfare state. These institutional and visible changes in the character a politics seems to be connected to a characteristic notion of the nature of political knowledge and action. As it is well known, Oakeshott connected rationalism to the new prince and the new class in politics, who wouldn't spend too much time with the slow and uncertain learning of tradition and practice. Or, let me mention Popper's paper published on utopia and violence, where he connected the wrong version of rationalism to enforcement and utopia-building efforts, and his *Open Society* – written by one of its enemies – is huge Nuremberg Trial to convict Plato and Hegel because of the Modern totalitarianism. Ironically, the idea, that the interpretations of the nature of political knowledge and action are connected to specific regimes can be read back in Plato's *Republic*. Oakeshott's, Strauss' and Voegelin's work in general combined the criticism of contemporary regime with criticism of Modern political epistemology and action theory.

Those authors who didn't enjoyed the political Modernism perceived two different kinds of dangers coming from the epistemological presuppositions of Moderns. One of them is commonly called rationalism, whilst the other is called relativism. Ironically, the second one commonly explained as a result of the first one. According to critics, in both case, the epistemological and moral (action theoretical) mistake result the loss of good order. Modernity is depicted typically as a kind of Chaotic Prison.

On the one hand, according to rationalist, political knowledge is logical sequences following logical rules, therefore there is no need for personal judgment. These 20th century critics of political Modernism emphasized the need for personal decisions in morality and politics, which cannot be eliminated from a free and responsible man.

Modernist thinking started partly as an epistemological debate in the literature at the end of the 17th century, and leading figures modern politics founded their claims on epistemological arguments called Enlightenment. Moderns emphasized the break between past and present, and the irrelevance of experiences, knowledge coming from the past in the understanding of the present situations, alternatives and dilemmas. Modern originally meant „what is at hand” (from the Latin *modo*).

For the critics of Modernity, not only the nature of the political knowledge and action differed from Moderns' epistemological hopes and promises, but the elements of this knowledge, too. For them, the history of political thought has become a part of the answer to the problem of practical wisdom in Modernity. The emerging role of the history of political thoughts in the political education and thinking seems to have affinity with a non-Modern notion of political knowledge and action. It is not clear how political knowledge may emerge. What we may know is that usually those people's moral imagination is better who had classical education, who studied the Ancients.

It seems to me that the history of ideas is in a kind of discursive coalition with those thinking which criticizes Modern politics. Not simply because of Lovejoy, but history of ideas excavates old and maybe forgotten issues, dilemmas and debates. This coalition may be well interpreted really as the rebel of the Ancients' view of man and the human condition. This criticism of politically Modern was connected implicitly to the Ancient standpoint. It seems that there is a discursive coalition between certain epistemological and political positions. As the social sciences were in coalition with reformism, progressivism and welfare state, there is an elective affinity between the criticism of politically Modern and the history of political ideas.

Scientism and Social Engineering

But not only the break with past, authority and tradition what is important for us, but the very nature and the object of knowledge relevant in political action were at stake. The late 19th and the first half of the 20th century were dominated by the social scientific thinking, imitating the natural science. Social science has been implied society which can be known and mapped with certainty, and can be formed and reformed by using scientific knowledge; and political action was interpreted increasingly as a naturally reformist activity. This view of knowledge combined with social and political reformism during the 18th century, and later with the democratic hope that humans can be self-governing and obedient only laws, institutions and relations created by them.

An important part of scientism was the "hidden hand" explanation originated from the search for causal laws. The notion of order of tradition was succeeded by the notion of the dynamic but stable system of mutual and causal dependences, and the notion of historical-providential formation of the first one was succeeded by the notion of causal, necessary processes and trends: „Order is nothing but necessity... connected chain of causes and effects.“⁹⁴ In this social deism society is a network of impersonal, unchangeable and covert, law-like necessities. None of the motions man underwent was spontaneous, these were dependent on causes, wholly out of the reach of his own powers. D'Holbach: Man „*is continually impelled by causes, which, in spite of himself, influence his frame, modify his existence, despite of his conduct... every movement of his duration, he was nothing more than a passive instrument in the hands of necessity.*“⁹⁵

The original program of 18-19th century scientism was to discover these factual, objective social laws in order to create a new and eternal human order by utilizing them. The emerging social science, as opposed to today's, did not enjoy the sense of chaos, but was terrified by it and tried to cope with chaos rationally. The Modernists can be differentiated from their critics by means of their optimistic view: both of these groups sensed some chaos, the erosion of taken-for-granted traditional

morality, but the modernists had strong hopes for a new and better social world. „Nevertheless, confusion... is nothing but the passage of a being into a new order.”⁹⁶

This scientist version of rationalism emerged from whiggism (see Locke) which combined the progress of science and Enlightenment to that of liberty, the tory Sceptics like Droyden, Swift and Johnson turned attention toward the compulsory and monopolistic nature of rationalism. Since then, the basis of the criticism rationalist political epistemology is individual freedom.

Carlyle was important follower of Burke's image of the Chaotic Prison. In Carlyle's description, the image of chaos in everyday life and that of impersonal necessities, coercing from without, received a rather different colouring. Chaos and the necessary tendencies of despotism were interpreted, as the results of spreading rationalism and the experiment to create a new society rationally. Carlyle was frightened by the factual social laws social thinking had just revealed, because these could take freedom away. „*For it is the 'force of circumstances' that does everything; the force of one man can do nothing... We figure Society as a 'Machine'*”.⁹⁷ In Carlyle's thinking, the instrumental and calculating rationality was connected to the notion of impersonal, factual necessities, the previous used the latter. „*Mechanism, like some glass bell, encircles and imprisons us*”.⁹⁸ But the lack of freedom connected to chaos in Modernity which is „*chaotic, ungoverned, of Devil, not of God.*”⁹⁹ The sense of chaos went hand in hand with the sense of too much control. His age was „*nothing but Mechanism and Chaotic Brute-Gods.*”¹⁰⁰

This project was represented in social sciences mainly by positivists, like Comte, J.S.Mill and Durkheim, etc. They tried to replace existing personal traditional morality - which they thought was arbitrary, contradictory, unintelligible - by a rational and real one based on social laws. Funnily enough, the modernist thinking labelled the taken-for-granted life-world as humanly created, whilst they called the new morality and new kind of control and institutions as natural, although these latter were overtly created, invented and implemented by people in front of the very eyes of their contemporaries. The modernist thinkers preferred the factual social laws to traditional, personal morality; they thought it was possible to organise a society where control was exercised mainly by factual, therefore impersonal social laws, where the necessities of factual social laws would replace obedience and traditional normativity. That is why an elective affinity joined social science to reformist political wings.

Social sciences searched for „objective” social laws which could explain unintended social phenomena and which were thought to offer the most effective methods of control apart from the intentions of the members of society. „Objectivity” became one of the most important characteristics of these social laws, because „objectivity” meant that these laws are out of the scope of human will. These laws, if they were found, can be used by social engineers, and nobody is able to resist their force. These laws are convenient means for reformators, because do not allow alterations, disobedience. Modernists suggested these laws because of their supposed marvellous efficiency in social control.

As Rousseau wrote: „*There are two kinds of independence: dependence on things, which is the work of nature; and dependence on men, which is the work of society. Dependence on things, being non-moral, does no injury to liberty and begets no vices... Keep the child dependent on things only... Let his unreasonable wishes meet with physical obstacles only, or the punishment which results from his own actions, lessons which will be recalled when the same circumstances occur again. It is enough to prevent him from wrong doing without forbidding him to do wrong.*”¹⁰¹

This kind of control would liberate government as well as individuals from moral bounds: the individual may think and live as he wants, and the government may also act as it wants. In this case governmental activity does not claim any moral support from citizens, as it can work effectively without a legitimating consensus. „*The very words obey and command will be excluded from his vocabulary, still more those of duty and obligation; but the words strength, necessity, weakness, and constraint must have a large place in it*”.¹⁰²

Therefore, the control based on factual social laws – when „things”, that is „objective condition” control the actor’s will formation or available means – is recommended for the government in Modernity partly because of its efficiency, and partly because this kind of control is not bound normatively by any existing and non-rational traditional morality and is able to work without taking them into consideration. During the 19th and 20th centuries, social relations have been increasingly interpreted as factual laws and necessities, determinations. Their attitude towards these factual, impersonal and immoral social necessities differentiates modernist thinkers from those who are critical of modernity. Modernists have interpreted these relations as liberating processes which might create a new society that combines freedom and accountability, predictability.

Moderns partly hoped to solve the problem of loyalty and obedience by supposing that rule can be replaced by the administration of things. Saint-Simonian and Comtean, or Marxist-Leninist social engineers have had a vested interest in this version of political activity. According the scientist promise, action wouldn’t be a result of prudential judgment, but the recognition of scientific necessities, whether Marxian or other. If political knowledge is a kind of *techné* and politicians are social engineers, each problem could have a solution, and political education would be only to create, collect and transmits this technical knowledge. Someone could understand a situation according to models, and he would be released from decision making and responsibility connected to it.

“Society”, as the phrase spread in social sciences, is something impersonal, where blind causes, forces and laws works. Successful politician could be those who knows them and can apply them.

Contrarily, anti-scientists implied that humans are moral beings in the sense that they are not mindless billiard balls who are under impersonal forces, but moral beings with moral imagination, capacity to realize good and bad, and deciding somehow. They have ideas, gained from numberless resources by numberless ways, by which they interpret themselves, their situations and perceive alternative actions and make decisions. Making a difference and the capacity to realize distinctions in the world are this idealized actor’s characteristics.

The 50s and early 60s, characterised by the End of Ideology debate, was the period when the political philosophy re-emerged. Scientism waned much earlier than the economic problems of welfare state started. Rationalism was not able to deal with the problem of Cleopatra’s nose. (Pascal: Thoughts 162.) The perception of modern mass democracy as barbars inside the gates, political hedonism and statism was combined a reaction in political and moral epistemology. It is also suggested that rationalism and political Modernism were able to win earlier mainly because of their promises, but in vain. The promises only partly could be fulfilled, the basic characteristics of politics and human condition haven’t changed at all. Therefore, the

failure of the Modern political hopes, like certainty and guaranteed way of life (*vivere sicuro*), has made the anti-Modernist political epistemology and view of action plausible.

This return of the political philosophy was connected to the decline of the optimism of Moderns and social sciences. The anti-rationalism spread as criticism of scientism, and its popularity rose with that of political philosophy and with the growing disappointment from social sciences. The main stream of anti-rationalism and criticism of Modernity came from Central and East Europe where rationalism was perceived as alien: something French or British. Dostoevsky's criticism which opposed emotion against the scientist version of rationalism; Schopenhauer who emphasized the dark motivations in human actions; Nietzsche who explained the difficulties of modernity by the loss pre-Socratic, Dionysian thinking; Tönnies model of *Gemeinschaft* and *Wesenwille*, Burckhardt's on individuality; Kuhn's notion of paradigm; Wittgenstein's language theory; Berlin's pluralism; Popper's notion of incommensurability; Schmitt's decisionism; M. Polányi on implicit and personal knowledge; Husserl and Alfred Schütz on life-world; etc. One may add Voegelin's works on Gnosticism and new political science, and Strauss' criticism of value-fact distinction and the idea of neutrality in social sciences. I must say, in this context Oakeshott was a honorary Easterner, an *ossi*.

Looking for family resemblances, their common themes may be that 1, rational, systematic cognition of human world is limited and fallible; 2, human actions are typically do not rational, and the human world can exist because of non-rational elements like habit, prejudice, custom, piety, etc.; 3, rational action is not necessarily good, it may ruin human world; 4, rational action may work but only in this non-rational human environment.

These reactions did not bother too much how to legitimate political action, decision-making and coercion, instead, they emphasized that decisions and coercion are inherent in political action, and any hope to eliminate them from public life is anti-political utopianism or hypocrisy. Let me turn now to the relation between the Modern democratic self-image of contemporary regimes and this anti-rationalist political epistemology.

Moral Absurdity vs Democracy

Not necessarily all critics of scientism were anti-rationalist or against the Modern project, Rawls and the liberal casuistry in general obviously continued its Kantian version. Beside the scientist version, liberal casuistry is the other dominant wing in the 20th century rationalism: the industrious casuists, terrible busy mathematician *manqués* of the Anglo-Saxon universities' political and moral philosophy departments, hope they are able to found particular political actions and institutions by using logical arguments without presupposing particular political or cultural values. The liberal casuist version of rationalism implied that:

- that human world is rational and can be known rationally, therefore consequences of human actions can be foreseen, responsibilities are clear;
- using rational arguments universal consensus can be created, therefore in the emerging rational community there is less and less need for arbitration and coercion.

The Modernist hope – men's self-government may replace God's or institution's rule – has an utopian-antinomian stance, and it continued the Lockean tradition which hoped that coercion can be domesticated or finally eliminated from

politics. Tory sceptics just like 19th century Germans romantics rebelled against this whiggish optimism and started to emphasize the arbitration as inherent parts of political activity: Dilemmas are dilemmas because they cannot be rationally resolved. (Plato, Euthyphron 110 b-d).

SOCRATES: And what sort of difference creates enmity and anger? Suppose for example that you and I, my good friend, differ about a number; do differences of this sort make us enemies and set us at variance with one another? Do we not go at once to arithmetic, and put an end to them by a sum?

EUTHYPHRO: True.

SOCRATES: Or suppose that we differ about magnitudes, do we not quickly end the differences by measuring?

EUTHYPHRO: Very true.

SOCRATES: And we end a controversy about heavy and light by resorting to a weighing machine?

EUTHYPHRO: To be sure.

SOCRATES: But what differences are there which cannot be thus decided, and which therefore make us angry and set us at enmity with one another? I dare say the answer does not occur to you at the moment, and therefore I will suggest that these enmities arise when the matters of difference are the just and unjust, good and evil, honourable and dishonourable. Are not these the points about which men differ, and about which when we are unable satisfactorily to decide our differences, you and I and all of us quarrel, when we do quarrel?

EUTHYPHRO: Yes, Socrates, the nature of the differences about which we quarrel is such as you describe.

SOCRATES: And the quarrels of the gods, noble Euthyphro, when they occur, are of a like nature?

EUTHYPHRO: Certainly they are.

SOCRATES: They have differences of opinion, as you say, about good and evil, just and unjust, honourable and dishonourable: there would have been no quarrels among them, if there had been no such differences—would there now?

EUTHYPHRO: You are quite right.

SOCRATES: Does not every man love that which he deems noble and just and good, and hate the opposite of them?

EUTHYPHRO: Very true.

SOCRATES: But, as you say, people regard the same things, some as just and others as unjust,—about these they dispute; and so there arise wars and fightings among them.

EUTHYPHRO: Very true.

Coercion seems to be necessary because practically impossible to find good reasons to persuade all member of the political community. Political Modernism was a radical interpretation of contract theory: they hoped and aimed to form social relations. Politically Modern means the hope that people is able to take into their hands their own life, they will be our own masters, human condition can be completely understood and controlled. Consequently, anything resists human understanding and control – because it is opaque and unintelligible – is arbitrary and oppressive. What is worst, enemy of human progress and happiness. Moderns are

rationalist because they are not able to accept piety: the sense that humans must trust something what is out of their control.

The anti-rationalist critics – apart from the Leftist critics of the age – didn't dispute the goodwill of rationalists, instead, they challenged the potentiality of political knowledge. As Aristotle (Politics 1262a), Pascal (Thoughts 358) or the already mentioned Burke, they separated intention of action from results. Because of the unforeseen and often unpleasant consequences, understanding the human condition contains a piety toward the human world: an acceptance of its fuzziness and that our knowledge of human world is rather limited.

The emphasis of the narrowness and necessary imperfection of our knowledge is a pessimistic or tragic view, because man must make decisions on morally and cognitively uncertain epistemological basis. He must act in a fuzzy human world where he is still responsible as Oedipus was. Politicians are responsible for unforeseen consequences. And what is more, often morally wrong action may result some public good, what is the real absurdity for rationalist.

Hobbes' and Machiavelli's Augustinian view of human condition re-emerged with the anti-rationalist backlash. The non-rational and non-knowable nature of human world involves the necessary imperfection of politics. Even a thorough rationalist like Aquinas who represented an optimistic view on human world and epistemological potentiality to know it, taught that emergency situations didn't have laws. As he wrote: *necessitas non subditur legi* (Summa Theologica, Ia IIae, q. 96, a.6), and *necessitas non habet legem*. (Summa Theologica, IIIa, q. 80, a.8) If not always, but in certain situations, called *necessitas*, human condition is morally obscure and absurd. Why it is the nature of politics? Why does our epistemological imperfection involve moral absurdity and need tragic heroism from political actors, as Weber taught in his *Politics as Vocation*?

The Aristotelian–neo-Thomist prudential thinking about political action is optimistic, supposing that virtues and propriety can be achieved at least potentially, even if not actually. But pointing to the imperfect nature of political epistemology involves the tragic view of political action and the morally absurd nature of human condition.

If the human world is not rationally ordered and it seems to resist to its systematization as well as rational understanding, humans must part the certainty and clearness of maths in political and moral life. This anti-rationalist view of political knowledge and action undercuts implicitly democracy based on the notion of self-government and responsibility, and welfare state and bureaucratic ethos based on certainty and responsibility. How could anyone be responsible for his action without certain knowledge about its consequences? How could anyone be responsible for his action in an ethically absurd world full of dilemmas, contingency, dominated by Fortuna and unforeseen situations interpreted as “consequences”. The refusal of optimistic epistemology of rationalism may involve a pessimistic view of human agency and political settings.

The anti-rationalist stream of political philosophy came together with a piety concerning human condition in general, and politics in particular. However, this disillusioned view of politics hasn't turned away from it. Instead of evacuating politics as a dirty activity, these thinkers suggest that political action is incomplete and tragic, sometimes heroic because in spite of the best intention and prudential circumspection

of actors, the consequences may be something wholly different. Still, it is necessary activity, if someone does not want to let the ship fall over.

As Thomas More wrote in his *Utopia*: “*It is even so in a commonwealth and in the councils of princes; if ill opinions cannot be quite rooted out, and you cannot cure some received vice according to your wishes, you must not therefore abandon the commonwealth; for the same reasons you should not forsake the ship in a storm because you cannot command the winds.*”

Anti-rationalist thinkers, as it is often said, are rather anti-theoretical. Someone may say, as JS Mill did, that they are simply stupid people, and he could be right. But inherent in anti-rationalism that at least the human world is too complex to describe and systematize into a logically consistent theory. One couldn't talk about an anti-rationalist school, because there are so many versions. Yet, at least in the field of political thinking, anti-rationalist shows some family resemblances. Although, the anti-rationalist thinkers do not bother too much with existing institutional establishment, but the above mentioned Platonic-Aristotelian connection of political epistemology and institutional settings implies that the criticism of political modernism and anti-rationalism is a covert refusal of mass democracy and bureaucratic welfare state. The issues of dilemma, decision, coercion, unforeseen consequences for which the actors yet responsible, so the tragic elements in politics instead of rational consensus fabrication or scientific administration of things (social engineering) turned away the attention from the Modernist hope concerning humans capacity to reform their world.

Oakeshott's writings are concerned with modern *hubris*. It presupposes the belief in absolute knowledge and the possibility of distinguishing Appearance from Reality. The other presupposition of this hubris is the belief that the political and social order can be reshaped by rational planning in accordance with whatever vision of well-being we may choose.

The central belief of modern western progressive thought since the French Revolution is belief in the power of human will to shape history in accordance with whatever visions of the good life we may entertain, in practice, to escape from the human condition and politics. Rationalism is not only an epistemological mistake about the possibility of guiding practice by abstract rational principles: it is inspired by the false belief that by doing so, human beings can detach themselves from their embeddedness in tradition and thereby prepare the way for them to become self-creators.

Oakeshott was not the only one who criticized this hope and illusion in the 20th century.

Political reality and the failure of democracy

The realism of contemporary political thinking is that it accept liberal democracy – the Anglo-Saxon winner of the competition among regimes during the 20th century – as the best imaginable regimes. In this respect, the mainstream political thinking defends the political status quo, just like as it happened in the often looked down Middle Ages. On the other hand, beside this realism – the winner is always right and just – of political theorist, one may see a certain kind of moralism among them. The liberal political thinking has tried to find moral justification for the institution and praxis of liberal democracy. This moralizing effort took the form of liberal casuistry, a virulent praxis in the present academic life.

The political science in the 20th century focused on the idea and practice of procedural democracy as the evolutionary winner of the competition of regimes. Supposedly, this liberal democracy is the viable and coherent regime of our main values like justice, liberty, etc. Many years before Churchill said his *bon mot* about democracy, democratic constitution had achieved a position similar to those of monarchy during the Middle Ages. As monarchy was seen as the best regime by people during the Middle Age, democracy could reach this status in the political thinking at the beginning of the 20th century. Since then the issue of good regime became a taboo and political thinkers left it.

Political thinking shifted into the area of political epistemology and action theory. The issues of the nature of political knowledge and political action allow people to think about good life and human condition apart from the actual constitutional or power structure of state.

1, *Dirty hand dilemma – action theory and moral epistemology*

The problem today called as the dilemma of dirty hands is not a contemporary one at all, it is inherited from the Greeks. Socrates said in his Apology that „he who will really fight for the right, if he would live even for a little while, must have a private station and not a public one.” (Apology 31d-32a) Politics seems to be morally problematic since it was invented by Greeks.

Plato referred to politics as opposing justice, for him politics and morality seemed to be irreconcilable. (Even his ideal state would be based on a white lie about the gold, silver or bronze nature of several people.) *The problem is that morally right motives are not always results right consequences and sometimes wrong motives or only wrong means results morally acceptable outcome.* Dilemmas are dilemmas because they cannot be rationally resolved. The question whether this perplexities limited to politics (see Plato's *Eutyphron* 110 b-d) or the moral dilemmas are necessary part of human life and are “neither systematically avoidable, nor all soluble without remainder”.¹⁰³

People referring to moral perplexity of political actors usually mention two types of action: Violence, enforcement and fraud, manipulation. Both seem to be necessary because practically impossible to find good reasons to persuade all member of the political community to co-operate.

Since Thucydides through the democrats of French Revolution up to president Obama's tutor, there are disturbing connection between arguments for Dirty actions and democracy. S. Alinsky¹⁰⁴, president Obama's tutor wrote in his *Rules for Radicals, A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*, in chapter titled: Means and Ends:

“The practical revolutionary will understand Goethe’s “conscience is the virtue of observers and not of agents of action”; in action, one does not always enjoy the luxury of a decision that is consistent both with one’s individual conscience and the good of mankind. The choice must always be for the latter. Action is for mass salvation and not for the individual’s personal salvation. He who sacrifices mass good for his personal conscience has a peculiar conception of “personal salvation”; he doesn’t care enough for people to be “corrupted” for them...

2, Political reality – human condition

What are the characteristics of politics or human condition which make acting there morally problematic? Why is it that moral dilemmas are more typical here and in economics than in other fields of human life? How can the human condition be so absurd that right results often can be achieved only by wrong actions?¹⁰⁵ In general, may one suppose that human condition allows morally right life? Or, if there are only extraordinary situations – called emergency – when people is forced to commit morally wrong actions, why there such situations are? Is the human condition, or at least politics, not simply unordered, but morally absurd as well?

One of the main issues for Thucydides beside the defence of Athenians’ power politics was the effective action in politics. He defended their politics by means of a so-called “realist” description of politics. Political actions were characterized as strategic, snake-like rational carrying one’s interest. The honest and successful Athenians think of people as assertive and ruthless without real moral considerations.¹⁰⁶ In this description human beings are without moral concern, they motivated by angry, envy, fear self-interest and the will-to-power. Therefore they can be made to co-operate only by enforcement, violence and fraud.¹⁰⁷ (See Hobbes’ *Leviathan* ch. XIII.) He didn’t wrote that some men some times are motivated by the will-to-power, but he taught that all men always motivated by that. Naked force is simple the necessary means to find our way in the world or to create order.

One may read similar ideas concerning political action in St. Augustine’s, Machiavelli’s and Hobbes’ works, who interpreted human condition as containing sinful or amoral, masterless people. Defenders of the morally problematic actions interpret usually human nature and political reality as inherently amoral, which can be ordered only from without by force. Beside the amorality (i.e. the sinful nature) of political reality, it is game-like. Those involved in politics are not only motivated by self-interest, but they want to get power above each other, therefore it is like other activities as trade or battle. Because politics about the human relations and arrangements, in absence of consensus concerning good order or proper relationships, people have to be forced to accept the arrangements created by winners. But, on the other hand, power needs support and loyalty as well, it cannot be based only on fear. Therefore politics is continuously unstable: enforcement and violence to get power seems to be a part of the game, but power cannot exist without some voluntary support and loyalty, i.e. legitimacy, as well. The Dirty hands dilemma refers to an important characteristic of politics: its actors interested mainly in results, so utility is more significant here than motivation. And finally, people who argue for dirty actions imply or emphasize usually the separation of public and private life. They say, that private moral obligation cannot bind action for sake of public interests.

Plato’s dialogues answered partly to Thucydides who argued for democracy in Athens. He – just like his antagonist, Thucydides – separated just life and morality from politics.¹⁰⁸ Accepting this separation some people have been hoping to eliminate

politics altogether by faith, by institutional reforms (as the elimination of private property), by bureaucratic-scientific expertise or by communicative action and deliberative democracy.

- agnostic argument

Human condition contains the anxiety because of its unknowable character. Although, cave dwellers closed into their perception of shadows without hope to convert, they have to act. The uncertainty and moral absurdity of human condition in general, and politics in particular is that even rightly motivated action may result wrong consequences, and, on the other hand, wrongly motivated actions or wrong means may result right consequences. As St. Augustine put, the human condition is opaque where we may have only probable knowledge about the others intention and our situations. Man may know only partially the consequences of his actions. Therefore, human condition is not chess-like as Goerg Simmel¹⁰⁹ described, it more opaque: it is without clear rules and knowledge concerning the others' approximate intentions.

The problem of Dirty hands shows that mainly in politics, man are faced conditions and tasks which exceed his faculties.¹¹⁰ But this view on politics or human condition in general doesn't have to conclude that dilemmas or conflicts can be solved only by means of violence and fraud.

The notion of non-intended consequences, side effects or hidden hand, called by modern as latent function, refers to this tragic or ironic situation: man have to act and be responsible in unknowable conditions. The unpleasant hazard of failure is always present, but is also makes room for *liberum arbitrium*.

- sin, self-interest, amoral human nature

Plato's description on demos is similar to those how St. Augustine depicted the *civitas terrena*, or Machiavelli the Renaissance citizens and Hobbes the Puritan faith-warriors. Human nature is sinful according St. Augustine, not the love of God, but the love of ourselves (i.e. *amor sui*) motivates most people. In Machiavelli's and Hobbes' works man is depicted as masterless, rebellious and dishonest amoral being with whom is meaningless or useless to argue or make an agreement. As Machiavelli wrote:

"In addition to this, human appetites being insatiable (because by nature they have to be able to and want to desire everything, and to be able to effect little for themselves because of fortune), there arises a continuous discontent in the human mind, and a weariness of the things they possess; which makes them find fault with the present times, praise the past, and desire the future, although in doing this they are not moved by any reasonable cause".¹¹¹

- truth claims

Conflict, antagonism seems to be perennial, ineradicable, but not only because of the biases, interests, limited resources and pathologies. A serious source of these antagonisms is the very idea of justice and liberty and other transcendental knowledge which aims to abolish politics, struggles and enforcement and violence altogether. (See Plato's philosopher turning back into the cave) The rebirth of Platonic issues has problematized the taken for granted relationship between the political order of cave dwellers and truth claims, and turned the attention to the agonistic and authoritative nature of politics emerging from the ambiguity of claims referring to justice or liberty.

Divine madness must be overcome but it can never be completely kept out. The European political – intellectual as well as institutional – tradition cannot cope with this problem, there seems to be a continuous flux of violence, enforcement to secure peace. Historical achievements are fragmentary and broken. Both the institutional and the intellectualist approaches set aside the violence and enforcement used by political authority. However, neither of them can fulfill this hope. Both the truth claims coming from *mania*, and the several imperfections and contingency necessarily result in conflicts and dilemmas. Therefore de-liberation and the concomitant enforcement seem to be smuggled unreflectively into the practice during the process of creating political unity from plurality.

According to this view, human condition is not self-regulating or self-ordering, order can be only political to overcome radical plurality coming from numberless sources. There is no substitute for politics, if by politics we mean the several ways in which authoritative decisions are arrived in a world in which there are different opinions, interests and views about the purposes of government, proper arrangements of human relations.

3, *Argument for strong state power*

The so-called ‘realist’ view of human condition and the acceptance of dirty politics are combined with the claim of strong executive power in St. Augustine’s, Machiavelli’s and Hobbes’ thinking. While they had the above described tragic view on human condition, they accepted wrong actions only in public life and only from politicians, but not in the private life. Why is it so? The moral separation of private and public, that is, in the private life moral integrity can be better valued than public good, presupposes not only that public is more important than personal moral integrity, but also the conflicts between certain public goods (like order, power, welfare, etc.) and morality.

As Machiavelli wrote, again: *„for where the entire safety of the country is to be decided, there ought not to exist any consideration of what is just or unjust, nor what is merciful or cruel, nor what is praiseworthy or ignominious; rather, ahead of every other consideration, that proceeding ought to be followed which will save the life of the country and maintain its liberty”*.¹¹²

And *“a prince, especially a new one, cannot observe all those things for which men are esteemed, being often forced, in order to maintain the state, to act contrary to faith, friendship, humanity, and religion. Therefore it is necessary for him to have a mind ready to turn itself accordingly as the winds and variations of fortune force it, yet, as I have said above, not to diverge from the good if he can avoid doing so, but, if compelled, then to know how to set about it”*.¹¹³

According to the defenders of dirty actions, political situation is not a normal situation, but a rather specific one, because the restoration of order, decent life requires to use means that are forbidden in other fields. The worldly magistrates create order in the above described ambiguous human condition, therefore those who create and keep order can claim the privilege of immoral acts or they are burdened by the duty of committing immoral acts and the concomitant distracted conscience.

If there is no order, rules in human condition, it should be created by violence and fraud. Politics is not a part of human nature, but it completes it. Because men are immoral and apt to use force and fraud, politics and state should create order, a chance for good life. Politics is not the elimination of violence and force, but their

use against themselves. State, based on enforcement, is the visible Dirty Hand itself.¹¹⁴

Even good, moral people commit sinful actions because of the tragic nature of human condition, but politician is obliged to commit them. Policy is necessary in an immoral world: „*how one lives is so far distant from how one ought to live, that he who neglects what is done for what ought to be done, sooner effects his ruin than his preservation; for a man who wishes to act entirely up to his professions of virtue soon meets with what destroys him among so much that is evil.*”¹¹⁵ (See also Machiavelli's *A description of the methods adopted by the Duke Valentino when murdering Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliverotto da Fermo, the Signor Pagolo, and the Duke di Gravina Orsini*)

Apart from the ciceronian tradition, St. Augustine, Machiavelli didn't simply wrote that *utilitas* more important in politics than *honestas*, so wrong action is necessary in politics, but they taught that wrong action may result right political results. Later this absurd view of human world was spread into human affairs in general by Mandeville and A. Smith. „*a wise planner will never reprimand anyone for any extraordinary activity that he should employ either in the establishment of a Kingdom or in constituting a Republic. It is well then, when the deed accuses him, the result should excuse him; and when it is good*”.¹¹⁶

An important argument for the use of violence and enforcement is the Goddess Fortuna or as Aquinas called it contingency. If there is a continuous and unforeseen flux and change in human affairs, how an order can be created in it from without? Goddess Fortuna, referred to the unforeseen consequences of actions, took the role of Providence of God.¹¹⁷ The arguments for dirty, that is morally problematic actions, presupposes that these unpleasant unforeseen consequences can be eliminated by force or fraud,¹¹⁸ but we cannot find clear analysis of these effects of enforcement and fraud. What is more, the more radical is Fortuna's role in the description of political reality, the dirtier actions are claimed to check it. The continuous flux and change of human condition dominated by Fortuna vindicated a regular and powerful state to create order anyhow.¹¹⁹ Because God left the *saeculum*, it is dominated by sin, chance, contingency and Fortuna, state is necessary. And state means the institutionalized use of enforcement to create order, i.e. a right consequence of dirty actions.

In spite of his latent agnosticism, Machiavelli formed rules of actions for politicians. An important part of this dilemma is the fickleness character of human condition. But if it is true, how one can suppose that force or violence will cause fear, and fear will motivate the claimed action from underdogs. But fear may result angry, as well, therefore violence should be prudentially used.¹²⁰

Namely, if one supposes that political situations are opaque, how can he maintain that force, violence, fraud or any dirty action would result the hoped results? This argument for dirty actions supposes what was refused at the beginnings of the argument: the fully knowable character of human situations.

This morally absurd view of human condition used for justifying morally problematic actions, but this agnosticism may be overturned against the argument for dirty actions, as it was did by Montaigne. He taught that prudence and even prince's force is too weak to dominate Fortuna: (See his essay: BY DIVERS MEANES MEN COME UNTO A LIKE END) “*What have our lawmakers gained with chusing a hundred thousand kinds of particular cases, and adde as many lawes unto them? That number hath no proportion with the infinite diversity of humane accidents. The*

multiplying of our inventions shall never come to the variation of examples. Adde a hundred times as many unto them, yet shall it not follow that of events to come there be any one found that in all this infinite number of selected and enregistred events shall meete with one to which be may so exactly joyne and match it, but some circumstance and diversity will remaine that may require a diverse consideration of judgement. There is but little relation betweene our actions that are in perpetuall mutation and the fixed and unmoveable lawes.” (ch. XIII *Of experience*)

Montaigne's criticism radicalized the agnostic view: human condition is so much changeable that one cannot put general rule concerning the necessity of dirty actions like violence and fraud. (see ch. XXXIII *That fortune is oftentimes met withall in pursuit of reason*; XLVII. *Of the uncertaintie of our judgement*) Accepting that human world is radically chaotic and without self-imposed rules, one may ask how politicians can know rules for effective but dirty actions? If it is true that people's actions cannot be predicted, why politicians may hope to act consistently by immoral prudence? (ch. *Of the inconstancie of our Actions*)

„The like I thinke of these politike discourses. What part soever you are put unto, you have as good a game as your fellow: provided you affront not the apparant and plain principles.” (*Of Pretence*) In human affairs, mainly in politics, no one may get certainty about the consequences of an action, nobody can foresee, therefore political actors are without good argument for violent or fraudulent actions. One doesn't have good reason think that dirty action will be more successful than any other.

Not only violence but even laws are unable to solve the problem of political order because the ambiguities of actions and situations can be decided only by enforcement. The more laws are created to make order, the more enforcement is needed. The rational control of human condition or even foresee of the consequences of actions are practically impossible. Neither dirty action, nor amoral rationality is able to liberate people from this absurd and tragic character of human condition and human epistemological.

4, *Undermining the epistemological presuppositions of democracy and rational bureaucracy*

- The Dirty hands dilemma means that someone knows the situation and the means to reach the wished outcomes. If the means perceived as wrong, it is maybe a mistake, because the action is from right motive and it results good consequences, just like medicine contains sometimes poison. But, if man perceive right action as morally problematic, it means that his faculty to orientate himself in moral and political world is limited.¹²¹ Moral claim may cause only irresolvable dilemmas and turbulences in political or individual life. Because of the characteristics of human condition and humans' handicapped faculty to get proper knowledge for actions, moral consideration is tragic *ab ovo*. It creates only irresolvable individual and political perplexities. Moral dilemmas are not resolved but eliminated by tyrants and the Moderns by arguing for the separation of politics from moral claims.

If human condition is full of traps and perplexities, cannot be solved, less by philosophers, the best if one takes them easy without any anxiety as Lucian wrote in his *Menippus*: *'The life of the ordinary man is the best and most prudent choice; cease from the folly of metaphysical speculation and inquiry into origins and ends, utterly reject their clever logic, count all these things idle talk, and pursue one end alone--*

how you may do what your hand finds to do, and go your way with ever a smile and never a passion.'¹²²

The Dirty hands dilemma points to a pious acceptance of Augustinian theology in which the world is morally absurd and opaque, contingent, and to the refusal of the Pelagian or Gnostic hope of redeeming Modernity. According to St. Augustine our knowledge is limited, action always has side-effects and contains some failures, therefore the democratic ideal of self-control, self-domination is impossible. The acceptance of this human condition requires humility, a basic attitude of Christian religion. Otherwise, man will always feel oppressed and servile. And tranquility is fleeting at best, human beings are not rocks. Conflict and instability are perennial possibility. The yearning for a world without politics (dirty actions) is self-destructive.

Because of the unforeseen and often unpleasant consequences, understanding the human condition contains a piety toward the human world: an acceptance of its fuzziness and that our knowledge of human world is rather limited. The emphasis of the narrowness and necessary imperfection of our knowledge is a pessimistic or tragic view, because man must make decisions on morally and cognitively uncertain epistemological basis. He must act in a fuzzy human world where he is still responsible as Oedipus was, still he is responsible for unforeseen consequences. And what is more, often morally wrong action may result some public good, what is the real absurdity for a rationalist.

- Social reformism and the pragmatic hope for the end of political philosophy¹²³ were combined not only with critical description of human world, but with an arrogant pretence of knowledge, too. Politically Modern means the hope that people are able to take into their hands their own life, they will be their own masters, human condition can be completely understood and controlled. Consequently, anything resists human understanding and control – because it is opaque and unintelligible character – is interpreted as arbitrary and oppressive, what is worst, enemy of human progress and happiness. Moderns are rationalist because they are not able to accept piety: the sense that man must trust something what is out of his control. Political relation, just like human condition, contain humility, an arch-enemy for progressives. Top u it blunty, progressive politics has emerged fom the utopicl hope for aworld witot the need for humility.
- The Augustinian view of human condition and political action re-emerged with the anti-rationalist backlash. The non-rational and non-knowable nature of human world involves the necessary imperfection of politics. Even Aquinas who represented an optimistic view on human world and epistemological potentiality to know it, taught that emergency situations didn't have laws. As he wrote: *necessitas non subditur legi* (ST, Ia IIae, q. 96, a.6), and *necessitas non habet legem*. (ST IIIa, q. 80, a.8) If not always, but in certain situations, called *necessitas*, human condition is morally obscure and absurd.

If the human world is not rationally ordered and it seems to resist to its rational understanding as well as systematization, humans must part the certainty and clearness of maths in political and moral life. This anti-rationalist view of political knowledge and action undercuts implicitly democracy based on the notion of self-government and responsibility, and welfare state and bureaucratic ethos based on certainty and responsibility. How could anyone be responsible for his action without certain

knowledge about its consequences? How could anyone be responsible for his action in an ethically absurd world full of dilemmas, contingency, dominated by Fortuna and unforeseen situations interpreted as “consequences”. The refusal of optimistic epistemology of rationalism may involve a pessimistic view of human agency and political settings. According to Dirty hands dilemma, the conflictuous human nature and the absurd human condition cannot be avoided, therefore self-government is hopeless and simply a present fraud.

If one would accept Thucydides view on human nature or the Dirty hands dilemma, how could he found consensual or liberal democracy? The modern hope of intellectuals has been being the moral psychology of Kant, Rawls and Habermas, which is based on the idea that everyone is required morally to take the perspective of everyone else, and thus project herself into the understandings of self and world of all others. (Habermas’ presupposition of communicative action - situation would be inclusive, coercion free, open and symmetrical - would eliminate decision and violence and fraud altogether.) And doing so, rational agreement will emerge somehow. But agreement and rational consensus is illusory. Politics is not an exchange of opinions but a contest for power. Political decision does not announce that the other party was morally wrong, simply, they have lost. There is no rational, no non-authoritative solution for plurality and contingency. Instead of rational agreement there can be coercion, authority, bargaining, manipulation.

The “Dirty hands dilemma” would also mean that moral community impossible apart from its constitutional form, and immoral action didn’t cause too much hard in it. This dilemma refers to an unpleasant question: *Does political morality exist at all?* Or, politics is a tragical activity as one may learn, for example, from Weber’s *Politics as Vocation*, and not only its radical moralization á lá Kant or Rawls, but its modest version of Cicero or Aristotle is impossible altogether.

In Defence of Practice: Oakeshott reads Michael Polányi

In the case of every author the question of thematic unity always arises. If there is any thematic unity in Oakeshott's work, one aspect of it is the defence of practice: the defence of practice from the distorting effects of philosophy, science, history, rationalism, teleological state and the several political and intellectual effects of the rise of the masses. In his thinking, practice was connected to a matrix of ideas like tradition, *Lebenswelt*, all of which refer to reasonable action. Rationalism, teleological state and the *ignoratio elenchi* were seen by him as demolishing practice, i.e. reasonable interpretations of contingent situations and reasoned deliberations. In other words, his aim was the conservation of conversation.¹²⁴

In Oakeshott's epistemology the most important mode was the practice. It is clear that the notion of practice took on different meanings in his different works, but he insisted on it. While in his *Experience and its Modes*¹²⁵ he separated practice from history, science and philosophy, and tried to defend one from the others, in his later works he wrote on science, history and even philosophy (and theorizing) as activities containing their own practice. The result of this shift in Oakeshott's interpretation of practice in his post-war works is a much wider use of the notion of practice, built on tradition and authority.

Without a doubt the influences of several authors can be detected in Oakeshott's thinking. However, in this paper I would like to emphasize the German influence: Dilthey's, Heidegger's, but most of all Michael Polányi's influence. The last name is significant because Oakeshott referred only to a few authors, but his programmatic paper, *Rationalism in politics* (1947) starts with references to two Hungarian emigré scientists' works, George Pólya's *How to Solve* and Michael Polányi's *Science, Faith and Society*.¹²⁶ Both of them pointed out that science is far from representing a definite and different mental operation. Both Oakeshott and Michael Polányi aimed to undermine the epistemological claims of the opposed political thinking and activity. Polányi's description of scientific activity supported the broadening and transformation of Oakeshott's own notion of practice. (Since another important resource, according to his references in *Rationalism in Politics*¹²⁷, for his main theme, the defence of practice, was Confucianism, he may be called a kind of „political taoist”: tao is proper functioning, acting, which follows a pattern inherent in a given activity.)

Oakeshott's life-long effort was to tell something to the hopelessly dry utilitarian Anglo-Saxon audience. His debt to Hegel via the British idealist is well known, but in case of his core theme, the defence of practice, we should keep in our mind Heidegger's famous workshop metaphor in *Being and Time*. This metaphor points to fore-structure, fore-conception presupposed in any activity or theory. Everyday life is basically pre-theoretical, and Heidegger emphasized that practical activity is more fundamental than theory making. According to Heidegger, practical understanding cannot be regarded merely as an inferior grade of theoretical knowing. The practical understanding of a person engaged in an activity is not simply different from theoretical or philosophical understandings, as Aristotle teaches us, but it is prior to the theoretical understanding of a person looking on in a detached manner.

Let us consider the cobbler in his shop as he uses tools to make shoes. How is it possible? Ordinarily, the equipment is so ready-to-hand, so handy that we are not explicitly aware of it as such. For example, in hammering away at the sole of a shoe,

the cobbler does not notice the hammer. Rather the tool is, in effect, transparent. For the tools to work right, they must be „invisible” in the sense that they disappear in favour of the work being done. Tools and meanings are useful because they are reliable. In their reliability they disappear in favour of the work to be done with them. Tools and meanings become visible, paradoxically, when their reliability vanishes: when they are missing, when they don't work, or when they get in the way. When the cobbler reaches for a tool and cannot find it, when a breakdown of some sort occurs in the activity of work, the work world suddenly becomes illuminated in a way that it is not when he is engaged in working. The set of reference relationships that constitutes his world becomes revealed precisely because the smooth functioning of the work that is a constitutive element in those relationships are now upset by the missing tool. The cobbler realizes that he cannot finish the shoe on which he is working without the tool. The questions arise: how, why and who removed the tool or meaning?

As with most conservatives, Oakeshott was not simply interested in conserving the existing society. He did not look upon the whole as wholly rotten, for he saw some pockets of practice worth defending the ruins of tradition: „we have no resources outside the fragments, the vestiges, the relics of its own tradition of behaviour which the crisis has left untouched.” (RiP 59)

Oakeshott on science and practice in Experience and its modes

Oakeshott was only slightly interested in the philosophy of science, the part of the *Experience and its modes* concerning science is the shortest. Science interested him because of its supposed dangerous effects caused by its expansion into practice, because of its *ignoratio elenchi*: „we have now to consider the consequences of an incursion of scientific thought into the world of practical experience. And my view is, of course, that such an incursion causes no less error and confusion in the world of practice than that which follows, in the world of science, from a similar incursion of practical thought.” (E 312) Criticizing the expansionist science – originating from Newton's *Optica* where he generalised the methods of natural science to other fields of understanding - Oakeshott tacitly accepted the positivist self-interpretation of science, mainly J.S. Mill's and Russel's positivist version of science. „there is little in the history of folly to which one may compare the infatuation which the modern mind has conceived for 'science'.” (E 312) (On the other hand, as early as in *Experience and its modes* he tacitly used the criticism of facticity and objectivity of scientific outlook emerged in German idealism such as Dilthey's and Husserl's works, and Heidegger's lecture on *Criticism of Facticity* in 1923.) Oakeshott's tacitly accepted positivist notion of science supposes that science is non-personal and ythe whole of its knowledge – apart from its presuppositions – is communicable. Michael Polányi criticism of this interperation of science attacked these points, underlining the authoritative and traditionalist, that is, the practical nature of scientific understanding.

In *Experience and its modes* practice as a mode exists for the sake of actions, that is will – *sub specie voluntatis*. It means that science and history, just like philosophy are not activities because these differ from practice. „Practical knowledge is nor a conclusion of reason, but of intuition, not of reflection but of instinct.” (E 252) Practical experiences are instinctive, random, irrational and beyond control. Referring to religion as practice *par excellence*, as „merely practical experience at its fullest” (E 292), Oakeshott seems to use the typical 18-19th century opposition of science and religion as two different and mutually exclusive modes of understanding.

Practice or volition (that is, religion and morality) „everywhere implies and depends upon an unrealized idea, a 'to be' which is 'not yet'... practice is activity... practices takes the form of explicit change.” (E 257) Here I would not like to go into a detailed analysis of Oakeshott's well-known notion of practice. For my present purposes it suffices to assert that practice is activity, and as such differs from the other modes and philosophy. Science, history and philosophy are explicitly beyond the scope of practice; talking about the practice of science or history is a categorical error, that is, something demolishing the coherence and meanings of each mode of understanding. In *Experience and its modes* scientists and historians have to put aside their practical interests, as engaging in practice (i.e. activities) they must not use scientific or historic ideas, if they would not like to demolish the coherence (i.e. meaningfulness) of practice. Here Oakeshott seems still to follow Aristotle's differentiation of *praxis* from contemplation, *phronesis* from *eidōs*.

Michael Polányi on science

Michael Polányi started his career in biology and chemistry in Budapest, later he conducted physico-chemical researches in Germany from where he moved to Britain in 1933. He was a scientist far removed from the academic life of philosophy, and his interest in the philosophy of science sprang mainly from political motivation. In particular he was perturbed by the extent to which Western intellectuals succumbed to the influences of Nazism, Socialism, and the ideas of planning. His keenly felt and direct political experience was the collapse of the relatively liberal Habsburg Empire and the failure of liberal democracy in the Weimar Republic. Like many others of his generation he looked for the causes of the collapse of these parliamentary systems as well as of the fashion of planning which phenomenon was the target of Oakeshott's criticism in his post-war works. His answer was that responsibility did not lie with the residues of premodern society and thinking, like tradition, authority and ugly prejudices. But rather that the Enlightenment was somehow responsible for these present problems. His criticism of the epistemological presuppositions of the Enlightenment was not at all unique – this criticism was not only well spread in Romanticism, in German idealism, but it was at hand in the British tradition as well, for example the Moot-circle (T.S. Eliot and Ch. Dawson) gave similar answers. Polányi wanted to defend free society just like free science endangered by false epistemological claims in science, politics and economy.

Both Polányi and Oakeshott found the core of false epistemology in the idea of context-free, self-creating knowing and acting. According to Polányi the idea of context-free knowing and acting tries to explicate and criticize any knowledge in order to be able for absolute self-definition. Because of this perfectionist hope, the follower of this epistemology, consciously or not, demolishes the tacit knowledge needed in the practice in every meaningful activity, even in science itself. Polányi as a practicing scientist – he educated several Nobel Prize winners like Leo Szilárd, Jenő Wiegner and his son, John C. Polányi – proved that the way of getting scientific knowledge did not differ from the way any other knowledge is acquired. In Aquinas's term: science is not *scientia* but *opinio* which is not certain, true understanding but probable based on authority and earlier experiences known from tradition. He emphasized that modern science was based on tradition, authority, presuppositions and faith forming a context. And the scientific activity contains a lot of and decisive non-conscious steps and elements. The empiricism of Bacon, Locke and Newton as well as the Cartesian rationalism supposed certain and perfect knowledge, and opposed tradition and

authority. This epistemological error dominant in science was called „objectivism” by Polányi. Polányi continuously spoke about the tradition and practice of science opposing its „objectivist” interpretation. He shared the criticism of Oakeshott and many other German post-Romanticist idealists regarding science as a not epistemologically but only in its premises differing mode of experience from knowledges used in everyday life. This criticism focused on the idea of fact or facticity. Polányi aimed – as Kuhn did later – to reinterpret scientific activity and its tradition.

Knowledge in science is undefined just as in the case of biking or tea drinking. The pattern of invention, knowing and acting is the same – a non-conscious striving for coherence, an activity pursued without clear rules. People have two different kinds of knowledge: explicit knowledge – word, signs – and tacit knowledge existing in activity. This latter knowledge is not reflective, it is acritical, logically it cannot be controlled or argued against. Tacit knowledge is tacit decision making according to tacit measures. Scientific invention – i.e. finding the hidden coherence of nature – happens the same way as the learning of any activity. Learning an activity is a non-reflective finding of pre-existing coherence.

Polányi based his idea of science on the problem of Plato’s *Mnenon*: how we know that we don’t know something. Or in Oakeshott’s language: why we look for the intimation of tradition. Polányi’s answer is that we look for knowledge because of non-conscious perception of coherence problems. Invention just like learning a practice follows the pattern described in the Gestalt psychology – we integrate clues not consciously and uncontrollably into a new whole. This integration, getting new knowledge presupposes indwelling into theories, presuppositions, knowledge. Getting knowledge and learning practices presuppose a taken-for-granted acceptance of a context. Scientific invention is making or finding coherence, and it originates in the perception of a problem, i.e. from the sense of incoherence. So, scientific activity is the same as any other meaningful activity – if meaningful or reasonable means nothing else than the coherence of elements in a context: it starts from a sense of incoherence and it results in the unconscious finding of coherence. The capacity of scientists to perceive the presence of lasting shapes as tokens of reality in nature differs from the capacity of our ordinary perception only by the fact that it can integrate shapes presented to it in terms which the perception of ordinary people cannot readily handle. Explicit rules of methodology of science can operate only by virtue of a tacit coefficient, the ideal exactitude has to be abandoned. The process of perception is akin to scientific discovery and learning an activity. And science is an activity, a practice akin to everyday practices. „The solution of riddles, the invention of practical devices, the recognition of indistinct shapes, the diagnosis of illness, the identification of rare species, and many other forms of guessing right include seem to conform to the same pattern. Among these I would include also the prayerful search for God.” (SFS 34) Scientific perception, invention as well as verification – the problem of propriety, i.e. *phronesis* – is based on personal and not wholly rule-bound judgements as in case of other practices in everyday life, and here Polányi emphasized personal judgement as opposed to automatic rule-following or syllogism. „The scientist’s task is not to observe any allegedly correct procedure but to get the right results.” (SFS 40) Finding natural laws „is not done and cannot be done, by aplying some explicitly known operation to the given evidence of measurements.” (SFS 22); „our decision... cannot be wholly derived from any explicit rules” (SFS 30) „The rules of research cannot usefully codified at all. Like the rules of all other higher arts,

they are embodied in practice alone.” (SFS 33) And learning how to do scientific researches based on imitation and intuition, is as well – intuitive finding of something hidden, i.e. consistency – controlled by authority. University „also imparts the beginnings of scientific judgement by teaching the practice of experimental proof and giving a first experience of routine research. But a full initiation into the premisses of science can be gained only by the few who possess the gifts for becoming independent scientists, and they usually achieve it only through close personal association with the intimate views and practice of a distinguished master.” (SFS 43) Learning in science is also based on and presupposes the presence of authority.

For Polányi the pattern for understanding scientific discovery is the theory of the burglar, that is, the way we understand a situation in everyday life. The process of apprehension of reality is the same in science as in everyday life. In both cases the key idea is intuition which is per definitionem „always imperfect.” (SFS 36) It seems to be not too far from Oakeshott’s idea of the intimations of tradition as the reasonable way of finding proper actions in several practices. Actually Polányi used „intimation” alternatively to intuition. (SFS 81)

Another similarity between scientific activity and other practices is that actors do not need to be conscious of clues integrated into coherence. Even more, most clues stay hidden, they belong to tacit knowledge. The idea of tacit knowledge opposes rationalism which for Oakeshott meant the idea of a ready made inventory of everything necessary – information, measures, tools, etc. – for an activity. As Polányi pointed out describing scientific activity, both in scientific activity and in everyday practices we know much more than we can formulate. The use of tools, measures, the identification of a situation, etc. requires tacit knowledge and these are the unconscious activity of our mind. Science as any other practice may be conducted only in a misty context. „The premisses underlying a major intellectual process are never formulated and transmitted in the form of definite precepts. When children learn to think naturalistically they do not acquire any explicit knowledge of the principles of causation.” (SFS 42) It happens as premisses of thought are in general transmitted from one generation to the next. They are learnt by intelligent imitation of the adult in context. „This training can be supplemented by precept, but imitative practice must always remain its main principle.” Painting, music, and scientific discovery and verification, etc. can be learned only by practice. (SFS 43)

Science is not simply the same as any other meaningful activity, i.e. practice, but the other point is that problem solving, inventing, i.e. finding a new coherence is not a conscious or reflective activity. So, science has a practice which does not differ basically from any other practice, and therefore scientific knowledge or knowledges pretending to be „scientific” in politics or ethics cannot claim any superiority above knowledges of everyday practices. Deliberating just like understanding or inventing in science is tacit integration of clues, which presupposes indwelling, that is, unproblematic, tacit acceptance of clues, meanings, tools, etc. Understanding in science or understanding of a situation in everyday life presupposes indwelling, therefore problematization of or reflection on the whole context (tools, meanings, etc.) is not simply impossible, but it would demolish any reasonable, meaningful – coherent – action, perception, invention, because tools or meanings may help understanding only if they are taken for granted. As our attention focuses on a detail – a tool or a meaning – it loses its helping function in tacit understanding of a situation or tacit finding proper, meaningful action: for instance Heidegger’s example of the inappropriate hammer. If we listen to the hammer and nail, we are not able to fix

something properly. When people focus their attention to details, they lose their indwelling, the tacit acceptance. And with the loss of indwelling, people lose the chance of meaningful, proper action. Therefore the overstretched claim for reflective knowledge, methodical activity demolishes meanings and meaningful activities.

The basic non-reflective, non-analytical nature of human understanding – in science as well as in everyday practice – means

1, that so-called „objectivist” epistemology is a mistake even in science, and scientific activity does not differ from any other,

2, the totalizing claim for reflective or analytical knowledge is against all meaningful activity in science itself too,

3, tacit knowledge by definition cannot be exported or implanted, indwelling is a slow and tortuous process which cannot be skipped over by new people, and

4, this epistemology is responsible for our political and moral problems. The formalization of the totality of our knowledge referring to an activity and then the trying to act following this precepts demolish the activity itself.

Oakeshott on practice in his post-war works

In his post-war works Oakeshott used practice in a wider and therefore changed meaning. He wrote about the practice of theorizing, science and history without even mentioning the danger or problem of *ignoratio elenchi* or criticizing pragmatism. He may have done this because he used practice in an altered sense which separated practice/tradition from rationalism and not from the different modes of experience. In this new meaning practice referred to skill or being at home in a meaningful activity: the knowing how. While earlier he aimed to defend practice from science by separating them strictly, in his post-war works he refers to science as having its own practice, that is, practical knowledge, so he defended practice, i.e. meaningful, coherent activities (including science), from the claims of a positivist notion of science (rationalism) by pointing out that even science works as our common everyday practice. Therefore science cannot have claims for a more certain or superior kind of knowledge than knowledge used in everyday practice (*phronesis*). Oakeshott’s criticism of scientism attacked mainly the claims in politics and morality supported by supposedly superior epistemology, that is, rationalism. In his post-war works it is not science or history as such, but rather the mistaken epistemological claims (and political and moral claims supported by it) that seem to endanger practice, now connected much more to tradition and authority than the earlier notion of practice used in *Experience and its modes*.

The meanings of practice and tradition – notions used interchangeably¹²⁸ – in *Rationalism in Politics* and in *On Human Conduct* is close to Dilthey’s *geistige Welt* and Husserl’s *Lebenswelt*. „Being at home” in the world (in his *Tower of Babel*) as a characteristic of practice was not mentioned in *Experience and its modes*. The notion of „being at home” refers to the unproblematic nature of practice, that is indwelling which is a precondition of propriety in practices, perception, etc. This non-Aristotelian notion of *praxis* was opposed to the rationalist epistemological ideal, and became dominant in Oakeshott’s post-war works. (To tell the truth, there are references to this notion of practice already in *Experience and its modes* and in *On Human Conduct*, when Oakeshott wrote about the philosopher’s relations to common, cave-dweller people. However, here tacitness and mental mist are not something specially characterising practice or practical knowledge, but these refer to non-philosophical

modes of knowledge.) Total self-transparency turns out to be impossible, because human beings are thrown into a world of deeply imbedded, historical practices that can never be made fully explicit.

In Oakeshott's criticism, rationalism is opposed to practice. Rationalism meant for him a way of thinking which supposed and claimed the possibility of context-free knowing as well as action. This radical epistemology makes radical actions possible. Practice, tradition and *Lebenswelt* are connected notions because of their emphasis on the necessity of taken for granted context in reasonable, proper human thinking, speaking and acting. As Oakeshott emphasized in his post-war writings, meaningful knowing and reasonable action can be imagined only if the actor dwells in a historically pre-formed and inherited context. Oakeshott was not clear whether the rationalist (context-free) knowing and action was simply impossible or dangerous. However, rationalism was seen as corrupting existing practice, that is meaningfulness and reasonableness. Practice-tradition-*Lebenswelt* seems to be not any knowledge or context at hand. It differs from heritage, because it is the sedimentation of the wisdom rooted in our ancestors' experience and its free and responsible conclusions, so the wisdom embedded in practice-tradition may inform the long-term effects and side-effects of actions. The idea of practice-tradition-*Lebenswelt* is inherently normative, critical: if meaningful knowing and action are results of intersubjective, common knowledge rooted in the past, context-free knowing and action are meaningless and harmful for practice.

Oakeshott on *artes liberales* and political agency¹²⁹

Learning achieves fine things through taking pains, but evils one acquires of themselves without any pains. Democritus 47.

Although Oakeshott disdained mass society and the concomitant enterprise association, he accepted the status quo as many others in the political thinking of his age, without any effort to criticize or justify any particular political institution.¹³⁰ He abandoned the issue of political regime, and instead he, as many others, focused on political knowledge. Oakeshott's *Rationalism in Politics*, like many other works since Plato's apocryphal *First Alcibiades*, focused on a classical issue, the problem of political knowledge, what its nature is, where one can get it and how? For Oakeshott, political education is not *ex ducare*, not leading someone into the truth, it has nothing to do with justice and the world outside of cave-dwellers. The cave-dwellers cannot get practical knowledge from political philosophers who escaped from the prison of conditionality. Here Oakeshott wrote against the idea of political action "under the guidance of an independently and premediated ideology" as opposed to tradition.¹³¹ However, at the beginning of the *On Human Conduct* he didn't argued against ideologies in general, but only against the causal explanations of "alleged sciences"¹³² as psychology and sociology, using the vocabulary of "laws" and "process" instead of practice. Here he criticized the "categorical muddle", "confusion" and "rubbish"¹³³ of modernist social sciences where "ignorant armies clash by night".¹³⁴ It is a little bit embarrassing that Oakeshott traced back them to Bacon's anti-rhetorical phrase, "*res, not verba*", but he seems not to reflect to Hobbes anti-rhetorical program of civic science.

The lack of Oakeshott's critical reflection to Hobbes anti-rhetorical and scientific program is rather surprising. Hobbes claimed the restoration of hierarchical order with the construction of civic science in the *De Cive*, the *Elements of Law* and the *Leviathan*.¹³⁵ What is more, Hobbes perceived the plurality and subjectivity of individuals as dangerous for public peace, therefore he aimed to eliminate them from public life. In the "Preface" of *De Cive*, Hobbes wrote about a hypothetical golden age when there was full authority, but it was ruined by the debates of private people.¹³⁶ According to him, the debate can never result consensus and peace, only authority can create and keep them. The roots of debates and rebel are the nature of language and the man rebellious nature, so these seem to be parts of human condition. Opposing the optimism of Milton's *Aeropagitica*, Hobbes lamented: "what bloodshed hath not this erroneous doctrine caused, that kings are not superiors to, but administrators for the multitude! Lastly, how many rebellions hath this opinion been the cause of, which teacheth that the knowledge whether the commands of kings be just or unjust, belongs to private men; and that before they yield obedience, they not only may, but ought to dispute them!.. They kept empire entire, not by arguments, but by punishing the wicked and protecting the good... [people] nor were they kept in peace by disputations, but by power and authority... private men being called to councils of state, desired to prostitute justice, the only sister and wife of the supreme, to their own judgments and apprehensions; but embracing a false and empty shadow instead of it; they have begotten those hermaphrodite opinions of moral philosophers, partly right and comely, partly brutal and wild; the causes of all contentions and bloodsheds".¹³⁷

Hobbes saw civic science as weapon against human proudness, rebelliousness and fights in the “The Epistle Dedicatory” of *De Corpore*.¹³⁸ “The tongue of man is a trumpet of war and sedition”.¹³⁹ Political chaos connected to the disorder of language.¹⁴⁰ Rhetoric can be effective from the same causes which question its efficiency, i.e. the limited capacity and opaque character of human mind. Speaker and *Fortuna* can exist only in a contingent world, where deliberations are needed and may happen. Rhetoric and practice can exist only in the opaque human condition, therefore the civic science (*scientia civilis*) aimed by Hobbes not only opposed rhetoric, but it had a different view on human condition, too.

It is a part of the nature of language that its meanings, mainly the metaphors¹⁴¹, are ambiguous, debatable, therefore language needs deliberation. Because language lacks natural standards, it may not exist in practice without authority deciding the ambiguities. Language needs authority, therefore it cannot found it.

“But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth good; and the object of his hate and aversion, evil; and of his contempt, vile and inconsiderable. For these words of good, evil, and contemptible are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves; but from the person of the man, where there is no Commonwealth; or, in a Commonwealth, from the person that representeth it; or from an arbitrator or judge, whom men disagreeing shall by consent set up and make his sentence the rule thereof”.¹⁴²

On the other hand, not only language need authority, but authority works by words.¹⁴³ That was the reason why, mainly in his *Behemoth*, Hobbes refused the Protestant practice of Bible interpretation and Luther's teaching of *sola Scriptura*. In the chapter X. of *De Cive*, Hobbes refused the basic element of rhetoric, the ethos and invention. According to the chapter ch. XII of *De Cive*, rhetoric and the *studia humanitatis* are the root of political evil in general. In the chapter V. of the *Elements of Law* one may find the refusal of *prudential*, and in the next chapter the enthronement of maths as a perfect and universal demonstrative method.

Hobbes needed civic science as not linguistic, therefore preceding debates and fights. Thus, not the practice of civic science, but its conclusions can found order and support authority. It presupposes a different world than rhetoric: civic science's world is transparent for human mind, containing clear causal relations which can be known and by them eliminating the uncertainties of human condition. *De Cive* hopes that the science created on the pattern on geometry can save people from ambiguity and fights.¹⁴⁴ So, the epistemological uncertainty, plurality and debates are the sources of civil wars.¹⁴⁵ Hobbes taught that ethics and politics can be sciences, and the civic science can be useful to achieve the wished aims, i.e. public peace. Therefore, he proposed civic science where “everything is best understood by its constitutive causes”, like “in a watch, or some such small engine”.¹⁴⁶ Civic science describes the human word as a contest of “blind forces” instead of the “twilight of obscure ideas”.¹⁴⁷

In the *Experience and its Modes* Oakeshott understood science as a quantitative discipline, but later he emphasized the impersonal, mechanical character of social sciences in which “a society is understood as a process, or structure, or an ecology; that is, it is an unintelligent „going-on”, like a genetic process, a chemical structure, or a mechanical system. The components of this system are not agents performing actions; they are birth-rates, age groups, income brackets, intelligence

quotients, life-styles, evolving 'states of societies', environmental pressures, average mental ages, distributions in space and time, 'numbers of graduates', patterns of child-bearing or of expenditure, systems of education, statistics concerning disease, poverty, unemployment, etc. And the enterprise is to make these identities more intelligible in terms of theorems displaying their functional interdependencies or causal relationships... It is not an impossible undertaking. But it has little to do with human and nothing at all to do with the performances of assignable agents. Whatever an environmental pressure, a behavior-style, or the distribution of gas-cookers may be said to be correlated with or to cause (a rise in the suicide rate? a fall in the use of detergents?) these are not terms in which the choice of an agent to do or say this rather than that in response to a contingent situation and in an adventure to procure an imagined and wished for satisfaction may be understood. It is only in a categorical confusion that this enterprise could be made to appear to yield an understanding of the substantive actions and utterances of an agent".¹⁴⁸

It was clear for Oakeshott that theorems concerning human agency alter from those of mechanics or watches because of the interpretative character of human life.¹⁴⁹ Even the expression, "social science", aiming to reduce human actions to causal relations, is a "ruinous categorical confusion" because it supposed to investigate human conducts "as if they were nonintelligent components of a 'process', or the functional constituents of a 'system', which do not have to learn their parts in order to play them. The design here is to remove human action and utterance from the category of intelligent going-on".¹⁵⁰

2,

In the past, political education was for the prince or the political class, let's say gentlemen as the ambitious Alcibiades. The *artes liberales* and rhetorical education declined with the genre of the mirror for prince (*specula principum*). The education and character of the prince and the political class were seen important because of the good governance. It was not a question that someone should rule, therefore it was important that the ruler should be virtuous man and not a tyrant. Erasmus wrote in the *Education of a Christian Prince*: "In navigation the wheel is not given to him who surpasses his fellows in birth, wealth, or appearance, but rather to him who excels in his skill as a navigator, in his alertness, and in his dependability. Just so with the rule of a state: most naturally the power should be entrusted to him who excels all in the requisite kingly qualities of wisdom, justice, moderation, foresight, and zeal for the public welfare".¹⁵¹ So politics is personal.

In the pre-modern world, people lived in hierarchical institutions, therefore the practical question was for them: "How we should educate the good decision makers?"; "What kind of character may help them in practical decision making?" The only alternative for hierarchy was thought anarchy, the horrible chaos. But during and after the Reformation the idea of horizontal, that is, non-hierarchical and egalitarian relations spread, which could be based on faith or love, later on rational consensus or mutuality. In the 16-18th century the contractualist approach to good order replaced the monarchism of the Middle Age and the Renaissance. Contractualism asserted that government can exist only by the rational consent of the governed, men can live together as brothers, with minimal enforcement, "according to Reason" and "united in one Body". This contractual hope to eliminate enforcement was followed by scientism after the failure of the contractual remaking of political and social relationships during French Revolution.

After the failure of contractual reconstruction of human world, the new hope was scientism. Firstly, it supposed a basically egalitarian, still non-chaotic human world. Its main question was, if not the authority of hierarchical institutions, like state or church, what can arrange people in peaceful cooperation. As Tocqueville noted: "In the ages of equality all men are independent of each other, isolated and weak. The movements of the multitude are not permanently guided by the will of any individuals; at such times humanity seems always to adherence of itself. In order, therefore, to explain what is passing in the world, man is driven to seek for some greater causes, which, acting in the same manner on all our fellow creatures, thus induce them all voluntarily to pursue the same track. This again naturally leads the human mind to conceive general ideas and superinduces a taste for them".¹⁵² The character of citizens as well as political class was undervalued by the egalitarian and scientist interpretation of politics.

Secondly, this social scientific approach to the understanding of human condition was, rather ironically, based on the idea of Providence. This understanding of human cooperation presupposes that morality or motivation of actions are out of question, because an invisible hands or some hidden causes, forces, or mechanisms,¹⁵³ systems¹⁵⁴ explain the on-goings. The modernist social sciences have claimed to find these hidden and non-moral causes and forces, and they offered "regularities which do not have to be learned",¹⁵⁵ but can be used by politicians to manage rationally the political society for better future.

In the pre-scientific view, the human condition, just like the motivation of each person in it, is opaque. Man is an unity of opposing and endless diversity of inclinations, and the invincible difficulty of agency is that we understand backward, but we must act and deliberate forward on the sandy basis of guesses and past experiences. Modern scientists have abandoned the problem of moral motivation of actions coming from plurality and uncertainty of human condition, and started to create an amoral language of social and political sciences. As Yaron Ezrahi wrote: "sociology, political science, economics, psychology, and other modern social sciences was amoral discourse on human behaviour".¹⁵⁶ Because of "the difficulties of knowing other persons, of inferring their "reality," their true motives and intentions, from their outward behaviour", modern social scientists implemented the machine metaphor and the notion of impersonal causes.

Oakeshott reacted against this scientist view of human affairs mainly in the *On Human Conduct*, but he seems not to note Hobbes anti-rhetorical project. The "fraudulent claims of the so-called social sciences"¹⁵⁷ call the self-interested or calculating action as the *only reality*, and according to them every moral consideration are only hypocritical appearances and useless for understanding and controlling on-goings. Referring to Thucydides' and Mandeville's heritage, the basic and debunking experience of social scientists is that people only hypocritically refer to moral values. Science as such, in this view, is a version of realism or Epicureanism: humans are motivated by calculable self-interests, material-sensual joys. Therefore, social sciences presuppose a human being different from that of *artes liberales*. In social sciences neither individual action is moral, nor it should be, because social and political arrangements are unintended consequences of actions, created by hidden forces.

The motivation and the consequences of action are separated since St. Augustine in our culture, and politics has been centered increasingly around consequences. From this point, the importance of the moral considerations or moral judgments of actors have been undervalued. The amoralizing social sciences offered a

vocabulary of “machine metaphor and concomitant notions such as equilibrium, balance, and self-regulation” and alleged techniques to manipulate human relations for peace, harmony and progress, without claiming moral actions of individuals or their moral re-education. In the 20th century, in the dominant view of market or democracy the ideal situation is a balanced one – see the phrase of “checks and balances” – apart from the equal actors’ moral considerations or characters.

This view on political leadership as social-engineering needs technical knowledge of social relations to manipulate them with an emancipatory ethos: there is no need for moral education or moral control of citizens, because of the irrelevance the morality of individuals. Therefore, social-engineers could take the robe of emancipator from moral constraints as in the case of Karl Popper’s open society. The point is not whether someone is virtuous, but whether he has to bother himself with it or not. Modern political thinking have de-emphasized the importance of the character of political actors because of the alleged rationally engineered political arrangement which excludes enforcement.

Not only the sort of knowledge contained in *artes liberales*, the education of *phronimoi* long ago, differs from that of the modern social science, but their basic presuppositions concerning human being and human condition are antithetical. Both contractualist and scientist view of human agency turned the attention to non-personal elements in politics, like institutional settings and rational knowledge used for continuous re-reform.

If political actors’ moral considerations don’t matter, political agency – reinterpreted as engineering or reforming expertise - may be liberated from the moral dilemmas, uncertainty, risky decisions, responsibilities and conflicts coming from moral pluralism and uncertainties of human condition. Tradition, authority, faith and uncertainty have been thought as non-scientific and non-progressive, whilst scientific knowledge has been increasingly seen as solution for political debates, dilemmas and perplexes.

According to the self-image of mainstream social sciences, these are interested in a disinterested comprehension of the play of interests. Whether politics is seen as a battlefield or a self-regulating machine containing checks and balances, political science itself amoralizes the very activity, it supposed to understand. According to the mainstream, political results are not connected to the actors morality, basically they motivated only or mainly by their interest. Successful understanding of political situations and actions can be based only on this so-called realist anthropology. The normative element of this view emphasis proper and exportable institutional setting, instead of the moral character of the political class.

3,

Oakeshott opposed practical knowledge to the rationalism of bookish action. At this point, he followed Hobbes in refuting those actors who “trusting only to the authority of books, follow the blind blindly”.¹⁵⁸ In this dichotomy of practice and rationalism, is there any place for *artes liberales*? *Artes liberales* connected strongly to books, even if criticizing wise follies as the *Praise of Folly*.

If morality is a language which can be “learned only in being used”,¹⁵⁹ where is a place for *artes liberales*? In the *On Human Conduct*, Oakeshott connected human agency to the *Geistesgeschichte*,¹⁶⁰ because reading juts like acting needs some hermeneutical practice: “The starting-place of a doing is a state of reflective consciousness, namely, the agent’s own understanding of his situation, what it means

to him”.¹⁶¹ In the world everything is known to man “in terms of what it means to him. A human being is condemned to be a learner because meanings have to be learned”.¹⁶² Writing about the liberal education he wrote: “Learning to read or to listen is a slow and exacting engagement... It is learning to follow, to understand and to rethink deliberate expressions of rational consciousness; it is learning to recognize fine shades of meaning without overbalancing into the lunacy of “decoding”; it is allowing another’s thoughts to reenact themselves on one’s own mind...and one may learn to read only by reading with care, and only from writing which stand well off from our immediate concerns: it is almost impossible to learn to read from contemporary writing”.¹⁶³

It’s no wonder that Oakeshott trusted the educational capacity of reading, because in our tradition reading is connected to moral education: *lectio transit in mores*.¹⁶⁴ This tradition didn’t want to eliminate arbitration from human agency, he wanted only to educate and discipline it.

The aim of liberal arts as an educational activity is character formation, and not the import and fabrication of institutional settings and manipulating techniques. It would educate people, because it presupposes the importance and the cultivation of the character of political class, ideally the *phronimoi*, and it understands political agency as *prudent particularism*. So it seems that not only in practice, but by means of reading as well one may get some practical skills. By means of liberal education, person may become “being able to see connections that allow one to make sense of the world and act within it in creative ways”.¹⁶⁵ Meanings, partly explicit and partly implicit, interpret situations and keep relations, practices and selfs. Joseph says in Thomas Mann’s *Joseph and his brothers* that leadership is not in hand, but in mind, it means the ability for overview, i.e. to see meanings, coherence and incoherence in situations and in actions. Agency often means answering to empirical desire or difficulties, but political agency is typically needs Joseph’s ability. According to the fans of liberal education, one may get this sensitivity for meaning, coherence and incoherence in this education, but – and that’s important – nobody knows exactly how. This education is about morality in sense of self-discipline, about reflection but not about technical skill or representation of interest; it’s overtly a slow and time consuming process, admittedly opaque and the result is also confessedly uncertain. So, it is an aristocratic practice, proper for those who apply for political agency for its own sake, and won’t be in despair in case of unsuccessful public career.

There are three different arguments about the connection between liberal education and political agency.

a, Presupposing that life is a “continuous intellectual adventure”¹⁶⁶ one willy-nilly deals with human intelligence. According to his approach meaning is the common element in reading and acting: both contain the “intelligent procedure”¹⁶⁷ of understanding. The two characteristic elements of rhetoric, separating it from civic sciences, are metaphor and invention. “The metaphor is, therefore, the original form of the interpretive act itself, which raises itself from the particular to the general through representation in an image”.¹⁶⁸ Invention is a “capacity to perceive the analogies existing between matters lying far apart and, apparently, most dissimilar”.¹⁶⁹ The vocabulary of understanding and rhetoric is rather close to that of practice and morality: contingency, alternatives, deliberation, uncertainties, perplexes, propriety¹⁷⁰ and in practice like in understanding the judicial faculty of mind should be used. In aesthetic education or in games one may learn to see differences and to practice judgment¹⁷¹ without real responsibility.

Politics is an art without rules and aiming to find decorum in the midst of opposite and irreconcilable expectations, and artistic education is basically the same in every arts because of the cultivation of intuitive judgment.

The knowledge contained in agency is not scientific but artistic, so it is never completed. From Classics, just like from practice, one may learn that no-one can control his life. And that's fine. Culture, opposed to science, is an unfinished emotional and intellectual journey connected to liberal education.¹⁷²

b, Beside the similarities between in the intellectual activity of practice and reading, reading may make reader reflect to himself, and may help forming humility and self-criticism. For example, von Kleist's *The Prince of Homburg* and *Michael Kohlhaas* are about moral luck, dilemmas, justice and responsibility "Being human is a historic adventure... Know Thyself meant learn to know thyself. It was not an exhortation to buy a book on psychology and study it, it meant, contemplate and learn from what men, from time to time, have made of this engagement of learning to be a man".¹⁷³

This moral stance of reflection is experienced as a restrain from within, traditionally called as the "inner man". Not sainthood, but the normative self-reflection is human, that is, knowing that one has acted or are acting against his notion of proper or good behavior. Liberal education turns our attention to dilemmas or perplexes, to the tragic sense of agency, and by reflecting to them one may realize his limits. Prudence may start by this elimination of *hybris*.

c, The voice of poetry was important for Oakeshott, because it may liberate one from the constrain of his time, situation and "currant engagements, from the muddle, the crudity, the sentimentality, the intellectual poverty and the emotional morass of ordinary life".¹⁷⁴ "Becoming educated is itself an emancipation".¹⁷⁵ Liberal education takes individual into another world, it can liberate mind from hegemonic intellectual fashions and from the professionally narrow expertise. On the other hand, the poetical character of liberal arts refers to the search for intuition. Logic, arithmetic or syllogism cannot lead to new insight, but somehow, in the play of free association of ideas new insights may emerge.¹⁷⁶

4,

The relation between liberal education and modern social sciences seems to be not too friendly. Oakeshott wrote that "social sciences... damaged liberal learning" because of using the mask of science.¹⁷⁷ The decline of liberal education has been connected to an attack from social science arguing by their alleged relevance and usefulness and to the massification of society. He wrote about the "cruder subversion of liberal learning" associated with an apocalyptic view of "collapse which now threaten us" and the "abolition of man".¹⁷⁸

The liberal education was associated with the gentleman. In the contemporary academic life liberal arts are pushed back into the humanities. Oakeshott didn't perceived only social sciences and the fashion of technics as dangers for liberal education and civility, but "culture philistines", too.¹⁷⁹ Liberal education could survive only in a closet far from any practical relevance. The contemporary liberal education can be found mainly in departments following the philosophical ideal, searching speculative truth and beauty. The ideal of gentleman declined, and the philosophical ideal of open rational discussion aiming truth, called deliberative democracy is strong today. Political and moral thinking has been being dominated

partly by the liberal casuistry, i.e. analytic philosophy, and partly by several emancipating versions of post-moderns.

Liberal education was connected originally to the Ciceronian republicanism, to the philosopher in action, who takes part actively in political-moral community and tries to find the propriety. Cicero's phrase *artes qua libero sunt dignae* has been and it is still aristocratic, claiming freedom and leisure¹⁸⁰, and aiming public leading roles. So *otium* may effect somehow *negotium*. Emphasis is on both "effect" and "somehow". One of the scandal concerning liberal education is the lack of its methodology and the highly probable results arrived by it.

Political agency described above does not only differ from social engineering, but overtly opposes the dominant political ideal of morally free and consensual, only technically and impersonally dominated people. Liberal education as education for political agency is about decision making. But the notion of decision contains enforcement, because making decision among competing claims means to overshadow some, therefore a decision always means enforcing some people and their claims. No decision can be perfectly founded, there may be always some criticism concerning it, thus the ideas of decision and liberal education oppose a wall-to-wall consensus and implying enforcement.

Conservatives' Paradox

The Master said "Men all say, 'We are wise'; but being driven forward and taken in a net, a trap, or a pitfall, they know not how to escape."

The Doctrine of the Mean, Confucius

'Conservative' is a rather ambivalent label in Hungary, as maybe in other post-Communist countries today. It was used, around 1990, to refer to hardliner or dogmatic Communists, who insisted uncritically on some radical dogma. More recently it has been used for those who opposed post-Communists and the post-Communist world. Because of our recent past, some people say that there is only a Socialist (or Communist) tradition, therefore conservatives must be Socialist, and the non-socialist political tradition was demolished during the last 40 years. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same can be said about Western mass democracies, as well.

The ambivalent meaning of the term 'Conservative' refers to the problematic relation of Conservatives to the existing world around them. And from this point of view, no difference can be seen between the Conservatives of the West and those of the post-Communist world. In both cases, the problem is their relation to the present and to the recent past that has resulted in the present.

Conservatives are not always or necessarily for the *status quo*. For them the main difficulty is in finding institutions worthy of preservation, institutions that have not been distorted to the point of being no longer worth preserving. Whilst in post-Communist countries totalitarianism made this problem clear, in Western liberal democracies the welfare state, mass society, and mass culture have raised the same question: What do Conservatives want to conserve? Many Conservatives look around the world and do not like what they find. Their complaints about the loss of tradition and authority — to mention only some favorites of Conservatives — expresses this distaste. But it is not really new; the very founders of Conservative thinking, like Edmund Burke, were not satisfied by their world. One may find the same phenomenon among the German Conservative revolutionaries at the beginning of the twentieth century, or among the Anglo-Saxon Conservatives during the seventies and eighties. These examples show that the critical attitude toward the world is not only common among Conservatives but, with it, they often fall into the sin of rationalism, of seeing the dissatisfying present as a *problem* to be solved.

The double problem of sorting out a tradition's relation to the present while taking either an accepting or a critical stance toward the contemporary world is not a Hungarian post-Communist peculiarity. Nor is conservatism easily confined to merely historical horizons. An idealized past easily throws up abstract ideals. Karl Mannheim, for example, at one time interpreted Conservative thinking as traditionalism, but later mentioned it as a form of utopian mentality.¹⁸¹ It is simply not true despite Oakeshott's noting the conservative's capacity for delight that Conservatives are generally delighted at what they find.

The concern of this essay is whether Conservatives can be critical of the world around them and not rationalistic or ideological at the same time. Can the criticism of the present and recent past be combined coherently with reverence towards tradition and authority; that is to say, can that criticism resist being transformed into an appeal to abstract principles standing over and against the actual, inherited world in which we live?

Conservatives' criticism of the present is not carried out in a modern Enlightenment style, negating the existing world in the name of a better future. Their criticism is based on tradition, which is not an antiquarian notion in the Conservative mind, but one that refers to ideas of proper and reasonable action, and good order.

I would suggest that we should resuscitate the original normative meaning of tradition: it is not anything at hand, but only what was tried and proved to be good.¹⁸² Tradition answers indirectly to the Aristotelian questions: What should we do? And, what can we do?

No doubt, tradition is selective. As Nietzsche wrote¹⁸³, man cannot live without both memory, and oblivion, but both of them are selective. The notion of tradition implies that this selection is not whimsical, but it refers to experience and judgments of the past. It is worth differentiating tradition from heritage. Heritage is what is at hand; it refers to inertia and usage. Heritage might even include some ruins. However, the notion of tradition is normative because it refers to practices that have been probed and tested, explored, and found to be adequate. The authority of tradition arises from this experiential finding of satisfactoriness, and confers a presumption of goodness in what is. The original notion of tradition is normative, because God reveals himself in history; therefore what could survive a long period of time and many tests and trials is probably from God.

The oft-mentioned trial and error learning process of tradition or practical experience presupposes the freedom to make conclusions, decisions, and to form interpersonal relations. Lucky countries may learn from their successes, but in the case of a not really lucky country, like Hungary, people may learn from failures as well. But even in this case, tradition needs freedom. The modern form of tyranny, totalitarianism, cannot create political tradition, only meaninglessness. In the past under tyrannical politics some tradition might emerge because pre-modern tyranny did not interfere in everyday life practices. Pre-modern tyranny only creamed off the harvest and took the nicest girls. Only the Enlightened absolutism of the eighteenth century started directly to refashion people's characters and practices in order to construct a new world.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, not simply tyranny as such may demolish tradition, but mainly the modern social tyrannies, because these tend to interfere with the free trial and error learning process in almost every practice.

The more tyrannical politics interfere with everyday practice, the less space is open for meaningful activities in economics, family life, housing, and other areas. Of course, tradition may be initiated by force, chance, speculation, or imagination, but only the free deliberation of several generations can give authority to institutions or to knowledge. The failure of Socialism shows the meaninglessness of forced actions. It collapsed by itself. Today, there is no Socialist tradition, only a dusty heritage.

Beside the threat from totalitarianism, we can learn from Tocqueville's description of democracy that egalitarianism opposes tradition, too. Epistemological egalitarianism (a refusal of intellectual authority and of any kind of epistemological asymmetry) brings about epistemological chaos with political consequences. Tocqueville tells us that democracy coheres with a mental homelessness where everything is opened up to a borderless discussion. Tradition, like authority, is "aristocratic," in at least this negative sense — it allows and even welcomes distinction, and to learn its intricacies takes a lot of time and effort. And contrary to egalitarianism, this learning process is based on the recognition of definite significances. Tradition is based on differences: first of all, the difference of master and disciple; secondly, the difference of importance. Tradition teaches us to dare to

enhance or highlight something, it teaches us to make a difference between good and bad, important or less important, noble and ignoble, etc. Making a difference is not democratic. Making a difference means pointing to *an* author, to *a* text. In Tocquevillian terms, it means an historiographic principle of explanation in terms of individual deeds, not impersonal social movements or ‘forces’.

A World Without Tradition?

It must be asked whether the conservative ideal of non reflectiveness — whether depicted by Burke,¹⁸⁵ or by Oakeshott in his *On Being Conservative*,¹⁸⁶ reminding us of Bagehot’s famous remark on the joy and delight of the present state of things — is or is not incoherent with the critical attitude toward contemporary culture and politics. In Burke’s case criticism was directed against French and English radicals, while in Oakeshott’s case, it was directed against the welfare state and mass society.

‘Rationalism’ is what Oakeshott called the morality of reflection, and the politics of the book. Perhaps Burke’s *Reflection* was itself a step towards rationalism and this or any paper reflecting on tradition simply carries on this original sin — the fall into ‘traditionalism’. Talk about tradition is not the same as living in and being embedded in tradition. Talking about tradition is a job dear to a Catholic or an Oakeshottian, but C. S. Lewis’ warning should be always kept in mind that “analytical understanding must always be a basilisk which kills what it sees and only sees by killing.”¹⁸⁷ Although Conservatives are eager to refuse ideologies and, because of that, most of them prefer the term ‘Conservative’ to the label ‘Conservatism’,¹⁸⁸ the pursuit of political identity, self-definition, and mobilization after World War II tends to create canons, dogmas. Are the contemporary Conservatives modern ideologues who accept some Conservative principles, but would like to refashion them in terms of rationalistic ideals to pursue “perfection as the crow flies”? Or is the rationalization of Conservative thinking more or less necessary in a world without tradition and authority?

Rationalism, that is, ideology and dogma-making is not rare among today’s Conservatives, maybe, partly, because of the intellectual origin and education of many of them. But, on the other hand, it seems to me that they have to face up to rationalization as a more or less necessary result of the intellectualization of and reflection on tradition. The modernists and the heirs of French Enlightenment forced them consciously to argue for tradition. As Burke wrote: “It has been the misfortune . . . of this age that everything is to be discussed.”¹⁸⁹ In order to defend tradition people had to reflect on it, which resulted in some dogmatization of tradition. Moderns forced tradition-bound people to give reasons for their prejudices and institutions, to argue for them. This was a victory not over Conservatives, but over conservative habits.¹⁹⁰ And it seems to me that there is no return to Adam’s prelapsarian, innocent world. Any effort toward a reflective return to the unconscious and non-reflective way of thinking and acting seems to be ‘writing on water’.

Because tradition is a key idea for Conservatives, the assumption of the evaporation of tradition undermines Conservative thinking itself. But besides the inevitable creep of rationalism, can one see other answers among Conservatives concerning tradition and existing world?

One common answer is that tradition is any knowledge and institutions at hand. While this notion of tradition is far from radicalism, it may not bring about conflict or debates, because it is not critical of the contemporary world. If one accepts

that tradition is simply 'what is,' he will accommodate himself to the status quo,¹⁹¹ whatever it is, as Voltaire's Pangloss did in his *Candide*.¹⁹² This domesticated, uncritical interpretation of the tradition is not rare and is welcomed by moderns. The engines of progress will eventually transform the better future into the worse past; Pangloss will be reincarnated as Hegel.

At this point, the question can be raised: are tradition and authority substantial categories or do these refer to a certain mode of knowledge and action? Do the notions of tradition and authority refer to some substance, commonly called good life or good order? Or may anyone have authority; may tradition emerge anywhere and with any content?

What I am suggesting is that the content of tradition is not a chance occurrence, even if it has emerged by chances. What was handed over has some worth because it has survived. On the other hand, if any knowledge and institution may be tradition, what differentiates tradition from fashion? This interpretation would wash away the cultural and political differentiations between the Conservatives and moderns or post-moderns.

A second, rather common answer to the question of Conservatives' relationship to the contemporary world in light of their appreciation of the past is a nostalgia or melancholy because of the disappearance of the old good world of tradition. As Burke wrote characteristically:

The age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists; and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defense of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone.¹⁹³

While this habit is not alien to us, we have to see clearly, that it assumes that the tradition is already gone and is irrelevant in contemporary life. It is defeatist: So, finally, we lost. With this assumption, Conservatives' task is only to slow down inevitable changes, but the future does not belong to them.

A third answer is the so-called Conservative revolution (Nietzsche, Spengler, Hans Freyer, Ernst Jünger, Arthur Moeller van der Bruck). They were optimistic about the capacities of human will and action, but presupposed the total loss of tradition. They opposed modernity and hoped to create a new man, new institutions, and a new order worth conserving. But is there any other option than to bury thinking and action based on tradition? Must today's Conservatives wily-nily follow the German "Conservative revolutionaries"? Or is the politics of slowing down the only alternative? If Pangloss and Burke seem too acquiescent and too nostalgic, respectively, it hardly seems more sober to take up the standard of remaking the world in the pseudo-classicists image.

So What?

Once upon a time, the Hungarian born John Kekes asked Michael Oakeshott what could be done in a country where the existence of tradition, mainly a political one, was problematic. Oakeshott's semi-joking answer was, "That's your problem." Actually, that is our problem. But as I can see, and as I have mentioned, it is a rather common problem of the West, as well. As Oakeshott himself wrote, entertaining the thought of a crisis-point in a tradition at which everything seems lost:

If, in order to meet this crisis, there were some steady, unchanging, independent guide to which a society might resort, it would be no doubt be well advised to do so. But no such guide exists; we have no resources outside the fragments, the vestiges, the relics of its own tradition of behaviour which the crisis has left untouched. (*RIP*, 50)

To turn to one of, if not the major crisis to which Oakeshott directed his attention, we should look at his well-known criticisms of the modern productivist state, and of mass society. Faced with what Ortega had labelled the ‘revolt of the masses’, emphasizing the revolutionary intent of the unconscious crowd and the civilizational stakes, and what others called, a little less uncalmly, the ‘crisis of modernity’, Oakeshott undertook to ‘shore the fragments against our ruin’, to gather the relics and dry bones of tradition, and to restate for contemporary ears the best of ancient and modern political wisdom. He faced ‘our problem’.

May a nonreflective *quiet common sense* or the *plain man’s practices* help guide human agents toward proper action? From Burke up to Oakeshott we may read many complaints about the evaporation of *Sittlichkeit* and the homeless mind, as Peter Berger¹⁹⁴ called it many years ago. Some explain the spread of rationalism in terms of the loss of certainty and the rise of an intellectual proletariat who may have only his chains to lose. But as Burke was forced by the French revolution, so the welfare state and New Left of the sixties forced the Conservatives to reflect on the world around them and on their presuppositions and prejudices. But one may stop here. It is not necessary to go further and to make a catalogue of tradition or Conservatism, which seems to be a widespread tendency. The philosophical question is whether one is able to found and demonstrate universally a way of life and prejudices. But these efforts are against the old habits of Conservatives who valued prejudices *because they do not know their raison d’etre*.¹⁹⁵

Is there any viable traditional knowledge at hand in the contemporary West or in the post-Communist countries that could steer a ship of state? Or is it necessary to become rationalist and ideological? In the latter case, it would not be a different epistemology, or a different mode of thinking and acting, but only different dogmas that would differentiate Conservatives from their opponents. Obviously, there must be some tradition at hand, and not only in museums and traditionalist communities. Of course, there are routines in everyday practices. But the real issue is the existence of moral and political traditions that may help us in making judgments in borderline cases.

In spite of centuries of critical destruction and reformulation of traditions, there are traditions in some islands of the lifeworld such as churches, libraries, vineyards, and families. These islands help us in everyday life where we do not stand alone, homelessly, in a barbaric, meaningless plurality not moderated by tradition. But it is not the answer I am looking for. The real issue is the existence of moral and political traditions, not simply vestigial traces of a past mode of life quaintly preserved, propped up by sentiment, tariffs, and sunk costs. How could the warmth of family life, the cool of the cellar, or the quiet of a library help actors in political situations? Before the spread of the rationalist ideal of political action as technical expertise using systematized knowledge, political education followed Polybius’ ancient ideal, which used past events as a stock of experiences and examples out of which political actors might develop a tacit knowledge of situations and actors.

While contemporary situations and problems do not correspond in detail with the past, the practical skills for proper and reasonable action, and the keys for

understanding current, non-routine situations, can be derived from learning about past situations. Of course, such derivation does not happen *via* explicit, conscious inference. Skillful apprehension of the past, like other skills, involves learning how to judge and not merely the assimilation of information. Because these skills exist only in practice, they can be learned only by personal participation. This ‘participation’ is an engagement to learn from the past, a question-and-response procedure as opposed to a merely personal reflection on first principles; but it is always *someone* reflecting and engaging *something* — in that sense, personal and direct.

The European, Greco-Christian tradition of authors is still at hand. We rely upon the same authors that past generations relied upon. Of course, just as we do not redesign the fire station during a fire, no one would be so crazy as to rush into a library and initiate his diligent study of the classics when he is facing a non-routine situation, a ‘crisis’ or ‘emergency’. In borderline cases our tacit knowledge springs to the fore; of course, this presupposes an already-acquired moral and political education. We must face the new already armed with the appropriations of the old.

This interpretive situation, broadly conceived, is becoming widely recognized as the starting point for grappling with the problem of prudence or practical wisdom today. While the meaning of tradition remains in dispute, tradition’s importance does not. One might assert, (melo-)dramatically, “we are all traditionalists.” During the recent decades historians of ideas have contributed – not only in Hungary – to public debates by their archaeological excavations of authors and texts. In the fields of political and social thought, scientism seems to me to be defeated, and the dominant mode of thinking is rather reflection on, or interpretation of, one author or tightly grouped subtraditions of several authors.

History is the history of situations, and the description of situations is always “thick description,” to use Ryle and Geertz’s phrase.¹⁹⁶ The description of situations or of experiences are thick, because they contain much more in a “many-layered sandwich” than can be expressed openly, or discussed analytically: In another idiom, “There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written” (John 21:25).

The great authors are great, partly, because of their rich and ineffable contents, of which some may be put into predicative statements, whilst many other elements will be reflected only in the studies, commentaries, and appropriations of later generations. But even the not yet reflected meanings are involved in the great authors’ texts. Because of this “thick” character of great authors’ texts no one can argue for or against all the meanings imbedded in them. The subject of political or social learning is its own history.

To say that knowledge and experience come from tradition means that knowing and acting properly are never wholly a matter of present ideas; they are situated in a context of meanings originated from the past. Because of that, what is radically new cannot be reasonable, and what is reasonable cannot be wholly new. The boundlessly free man and his action cannot be understood by others; thus, what is presented as freed from all linguistic, social, or historic moorings must be heard as senseless babble.

Because the notion of tradition is usually connected to Conservatives, it may be important to point out, that the rediscovery of some past authors is not tradition yet. Leo Strauss and his method of “close reading” supposes that the original meaning of texts can be found and reconstructed apart from both the time gap between us and the

texts, and the commentaries concerning the authors. Strauss' methodology promises to jump over the tradition of commentaries. But this stretching back does not differ too much from the hope of radical enthusiasts and enlightened *philosophes*, who hoped to jump back to the original meaning of the Gospels, or to understand directly what a Founding Father really intended. Thus, while Strauss himself was aware of traditions of thought, of commentary and interpretation, his approach tries to work back beyond these, to what seems alone sufficiently authoritative to meet present crises: the original. However, this risks lapsing into a rigidly technical way of handling texts.

Traditional understanding is a cultivated mental habit, not the application of a technique. Traditional knowledge is fused with a mode of life, with a kind of practice; therefore, traditional knowledge is personal. Thus initiation into a tradition is always character formation, too, implying the acceptance of authority as such. That is, the traditional learner apprentices with the great authors, submitting to them while being unsure where they will lead him. As MacIntyre wrote:

The reader was assigned the task of interpreting the text, but also had to discover, in and through his or her reading of those texts, that they in turn interpret the reader. What the reader, as thus interpreted by the texts, has to learn about him or herself is that it is only the self as transformed through and by the reading of the texts which will be capable of reading the texts aright. . . . The person in this predicament requires two things: a teacher and an obedient trust that what the teacher, interpreting the text, declares to be good reasons for transforming oneself into a different kind of person — and a different kind of reader — will turn out to be genuinely good reasons in the light afforded by that understanding of the texts which becomes available only to the transformed self. The intending reader has to have inculcated into him or herself certain attitudes and dispositions, certain virtues, before he or she can know why these are to be accounted virtues. So a prerational reordering of the self has to occur before the reader can have an adequate standard by which to judge what is good reason and what is not. And this reordering requires obedient trust, not only in the authority of this particular teacher, but in that of the whole tradition of interpretative commentary into which that teacher had had earlier to him or herself to be initiated through his or her reordering and conversion.”¹⁹⁷

Conservatives are apt to think that the proper and reasonable moral and political action is the result of individual character and virtues rather than a pretended philosophical truth or scientific facts and laws. It is never certain that someone will act according to the models found in classic texts, but his understanding of situations presented in them, and of judgments and decisions made in them, will probably influence his practical knowledge, as well as his character. Therefore, as Oakeshott and our tradition say, education in the sense of character formation may be the answer for the dilemmas of tradition presented in this essay.

What distinguishes a human being, indeed what constitutes a human being, is not merely his having to think, but his thoughts, his beliefs, doubts, understandings, his awareness of his own ignorance, his wants, preferences, choices, sentiments, emotions, purposes and his expression of them in utterances or actions which have meanings; and the necessary condition of all or any of this is that he must have learned it. The price of the intelligent activity which constitutes being human is learning. When the human condition is said to be burdensome, what is being pointed to is not the mere necessity or having to think, to speak and to act (instead of merely being like

a stone, or growing like a tree) but the impossibility of thinking or feeling without having slowly and often painfully learned to think something.”¹⁹⁸

Today, to extol tradition is to swim against the tide. Although having to learn “slowly and painfully” may eventually be a human predicament as widely recognized as our interpretive one, authors like McIntyre and Oakeshott are, at least for now, quite rare in being willing to tell us the price of becoming human in a world dominated by the flashy promises of fundamentalist rationalism on the one side, and on the other, a casual cynicism that calls itself ‘post-modernism’. Traditional knowledge deals with forgotten, lost political and moral dilemmas, problems, and experiences. It is thanks to the continual resuscitation of authors out of textual entombment in dark and dusty archives, and their return to life’s playing fields that we have notions — time-tested, if not eternally vouchsafed ideas — of good order, proper action, justice, freedom, and law. Although totalitarians, modern Enlightenment *philosophes*, and post-moderns have all promised our emancipation from the tormenting compulsions of the past, it is always the authors mediated to us in a tradition of thinking and acting who can liberate us from the simplifying limitations of contemporary intellectual and political fashions.

The limits of knowledge: violence and good order *or the arrogant pretense of knowledge*

The 20th political science focused on the idea and practice of procedural democracy as the evolutionary winner of the competition of regimes. Supposedly, this liberal democracy is the viable and coherent regime of our main values like justice, liberty, etc. Many years before Churchill said his *bon mot* on democracy, democratic constitution had achieved a position similar to those of monarchy during the Middle Ages. As monarchy was seen as the best regime by people during the Middle Age, democracy could reach this status in the political thinking at the beginning of the 20th century. Since then the issue of good regime became a taboo and political thinkers left it. Political thinking shifted into the area of political epistemology and action theory. The issues of the nature of political knowledge and political action allow people to think about good life and human condition apart from the actual constitutional or power structure of state.

This institutional framework was complemented by the revival of political philosophy of the Platonic paradigm in the second part of the 20th century, mainly focused on political knowledge.

This revival happened without real debates or fights, although after the World War II. Karl Popper set Plato in an intellectual Nuremberg trial because of his alleged totalitarian, that is, closed society hints: the accused Platonist *tradition* would base political authority on superior knowledge of justice. Still, the present dominant thinking in political philosophy goes against poor Sir Karl, at least in the emphasis of the Platonic issues. The revival of political philosophy was a criticism of the dominant (social) scientist and rationalist thinking about politics, disorders and derailment of modern ideologies but, still, it continued willy-nilly some presupposition of Enlightenment. Namely, that the politics is a question of knowledge, and only the origin and characteristics of this knowledge are arguable. So, political epistemology became a focus of political debates. The issue in this paradigm is the nature and the origin of proper political knowledge: Whether it is endlessly perfectable, that is, it can be wholly coherent and certain in its consequences, or it is opaque, fragmented and uncertain. Although this revival took the problem of justice into the centre of political thinking, again. But Rawls' project is not interesting if one would like to understand politics. *His question was: What would institutions look like if they were designed by people who were already agreed on a set of principles of justice?*

Against Popper's interpretation, it seems to me that today the mainstream sees Totalitarianism as the culmination of modernity of which distinctiveness of modernity consists of the rejection of pre-modern political philosophy: for example the discourse on democracy refuses implicitly the Platonic-Aristotelian thinking.¹⁹⁹ The emergence of political philosophy correlated with the moderns' loss of confidence. Leo Strauss interpreted crisis of modernity as a result of moderns' nihilism: modern man no longer believes that he can know what is good and bad, right and wrong. Strauss kicked in door with the ancient question: How can we separate acceptable and unacceptable regimes? He connected the problem of missing idea of justice to the theologico-political problem. According to Strauss this theologico-political problem is whether "men can acquire that knowledge of the good without which they cannot guide their lives individually or collectively by the unaided efforts of their natural powers, or whether they are dependent for that knowledge on Divine Revelation". The Moderns, and typically the modern social sciences decided this dilemma on behalf of

immanency, so they imprisoned people in their empirical world where the question of liberty or good order cannot even be asked. The Moderns sought and allegedly found the final resolution of the theologico-political problem, which resolution would be based on Reason or immanency (named as empirical science) against transcendence (named as metaphysic). This modernist hope was connected to a wholesale re-conception of the human condition. Moderns rejected any tension toward the divine ground, they denied transcendence or took it for irrelevant for public affairs.

1, The Platonic position is that “*the just... is advantageous.*” (Alcibiades 116d) and *ignorance is a cause of evils* (Alcibiades 118a). According to the *Euthyphro*, the source of problems in politics is the struggle among opinions concerning justice, so the lack of proper knowledge.

They have differences of opinion, as you say, about good and evil, just and unjust, honourable and dishonourable: there would have been no quarrels among them, if there had been no such differences-would there now? (Euthyphro 110)

Therefore, the basic problems in politics seem to be conflict and knowledge, and by learning justice, one may overcome conflicts. Actually, the successful politician would be that person who could abolish politics.

2,

Let me turn now to the issue of being otherworldly in the world. In the other often quoted texts of Plato – the *Republic* and the *Apology* - on the relationship of justice and philosophers and political community, we may find a much more ambiguous interpretation. As it is well known, Socrates was accused by disturbing the youth’s mind, because he justified his actions by referring to his *daimonion*, a source of knowledge and action outside of the terrain of his political community. From Socrates’ story it seems to us that truth claim may be perceived as dangerous for political community, as well as it may be harmful for the agent representing it. So, referring to justice may be a source of conflict, and it may cause political damage instead of advantage.

The whole dialogue of *Republic* on justice is situated outside of the city, like Plato’s school the *Academia*. Later on, in the cave metaphor, it can be read that the philosopher turning back into the cave may be laughed, beaten or even killed. The knowledge of justice or, at least, the talking about justice in public seems to be disadvantageous in the existing political community.

From the *Republic*, we may conclude that the knowledge from without, that is, not intersubjective shared knowledge of cave dwellers may be a source of conflict, therefore it is dangerous. Therefore the wise will stay away from it. Politics is a dangerous place for the friend of justice. According to Plato the problem is the cave dwellers’ character. And because the city cannot be overcome, the best if philosophers stay away from public life, they earn *eudaimonia* in private life. (*Apology* 32a) It may point to a strange direction: Plato was a realist who thought that politics cannot be just, referring to good order in public stirs up peace.

Theoria, transcendental knowledge in its original sense, as such seems to be problematic to cave dwellers, theory seems to be irrelevant in politics. As we may read in the *Doctor Faustus*, a criticism of modern intellectuals, *Thales* had fallen into a ditch while walking round scanning the skies. The cave metaphor turns our attention to the epistemological *hybris* and conflicts may emerge from it.

While the knowledge of justice is connected to *nous* in the *Republic*, what is dominantly interpreted by moderns as rationality, in the *Phaedros* philosopher is connected to *mania*, the gift of gods.²⁰⁰ In the *Symposium* Plato also connected the philosopher to mania (*Symposium* 218b). In the *Phaedros* Plato enumerated the different types of *mania*, what is often called insanity because of its effects in human life.²⁰¹ (249e)

It might be so if madness were simply an evil; but there is also a madness which is a divine gift, and the source of the chiefest blessings granted to men. (Phaedros 244a)

Madness means irresponsibility and breaking social norms and customs, breaking with *aidos* (shame) in which Plato trusted in his *Protagoras*. (332c) Divine madness (*theia mania*) channeled through poets, prophets and philosophers is a kind of possession (*Ion* 534b-e). It is outside of discursive reason, outside of intersubjectivity and social and empirical life, it transcends reason. Divine inspiration is coming from without, later called by Christians as Grace or conscience. Divine inspiration may joined to an act of chaos or ecstatic frenzy, therefore in the *Republic* Plato turned against poetry because it would demolish order and peace, stirring irrational emotions of the appetitive part of the soul.

So, mania results transgressive behavior: transgression of socially established rules and transgression of border of our world. Maniac is not only vehement, but he is violent, too. The activity of people referring to justice not only creates turmoil, but it is violent in itself.

Before the class based analysis of political fights and conflicts done by Guizot and later continued by the Marxist thinking, enthusiasm and inspiration were the commonly thought as the sources of political calamities. Enthusiasm, the main issue of the 18th century moral and political thinking after the Civil War launched by the Puritans, and inspiration were seen as coming from the otherworld and take people beyond the norms and established social patterns. The non-rational, non-discursive and intuitive disposition demands the abandonment of reason, and it may be defective or even evil. Since then, enthusiasm caused continuous problems in our thinking. People are seen mad because they do not take into consideration the consequences of their actions.

Maniac is an ambiguous figure because it is asocial, on the one hand, but only this type of man – a philosopher, prophet or poet – can step out only from the common world of cave dwellers and import some knowledge from without. Therefore, maniac is a sign of the transcendental world independent from us but influencing us. Intrusion of transcendental may deform human mind and may cause numberless personal or social calamities, and at the beginning no one can certainly tell the authentic truth claim from madness.

3,

Talking about liberty and justice is talking about good order, proper arrangements of people. Thus, this talk is political, because by talking about them we reflect on human relations, and their change by human will. But on the other hand, people perceive order, justice and liberty, or miss them by implicitly referring to transcendental knowledge. The *sensorium* of transcendence, as Voegelin interpreted it, means that the *psyche* realizes itself as „in this world” but not only „of this world”.²⁰²

Learning and experiences may teach man a lot of knowledge, but not everything. The knowledge cannot be derived from immanent world is called transcendence. Man is transcendental being simply because he is able to perceive something else than himself and impressions from his five senses. He perceives something which may limit him and, at the same time, may liberate him in immanent, empirical world. Man is transcendental because he is able to step out from his empirical experiences and to get a context in which the experience is meaningful. Transcendence, apart from its content, seems to be liberating, but liberation (transgressing and *violentia*) goes hand in hand with conflict. Knowledge of justice and liberty, whether it is connected to *nous* or to *mania*, has an oblique relationship to practice – this obscurity refuses the possibility of ideological or dogmatic practice.

The idea of good order is interpreted by many as utopian or perfectionist²⁰³. Later on, in the Modernity the idea of good order took after the mechanism and it was connected to scientism. Generally, the idea of good order is connected to Christian Platonism' peace and harmony, to the lack of enforcement and conflicts, to a kind of anomic freedom, to geometrical clarity, often to rationality, and more and more to hedonism. Although, the Modern *Republican, liberal, communitarians converge in their assumption that success lies in the elimination from a regime of dissonance, resistance, conflict and struggle. They would confine politics to the juridical, administrative or regulative tasks of stabilizing moral and political subjects, building consensus, maintaining agreement... free modern subjects from political conflicts and instability.*²⁰⁴

While the ideal of just and free human world is usually peaceful, without conflicts, violence and enforcement, the truth claims, referring to justice or liberty and other transcendental ideas potentially undermines any political order. These claim are *violentia*, that is, transgressing which provoke enforcement in order to create some order and peace. While Plato theoretically recognized the conflictual potentiality of truth claim, this dilemma came into practice by Christianity. The dilemmas and ongoing conflict between force and morality, immanence and transcendence, peace and justice are the backbone of Christian thinking. Politics is interpreted paradoxically both as an activity using force and as an activity eliminating force by just laws. From Plato onward, our tradition is full of complain about the allegedly divine inspiration which stirs up emotions, morality, human order. Talking about transcendental or the so-called prophetic knowledge is partly the problem of order and non-technical, non-rationally calculable innovation. Crossing boundary can be interpreted both as the liberation from the yoke of conventional order and as the danger of chaos.

Ambiguity of crossing the boundaries is a characteristic dilemma of our tradition. Keeping some order is a basic aim of politics, therefore the transcendence is often perceived as a potential danger which should be domesticated somehow, at least linguistically by the secular „public use of reason”.²⁰⁵ Because of the obvious potential danger of the transcendence, political thinkers and actors tended to keep it somehow at bay.

The practice of political control of transcendence as old as the tension between politics and religion, but its probably first theoretical formulation emerged only as a side effect of Investiture Wars by Marsilius of Padua who argued against Rome, ordering truth claim behind the claim for this-worldly peace. He formulated theoretically what had been the practice, that is, the divorce of peace from justice, order from transcendental truth claims.

The attitudes of political thinkers towards transcendence can be well characterized by the famous front page of Hobbes' *Leviathan*, where the two types of weapon that the state uses are symbolized. On the one side, there are the instruments of force (swords, guns, battle flags etc); on the other the symbols of ideas and religion. In sake of peace or security of guaranteed life style, state must use and control both. As one may see in case of Marsilius and Hobbes, their main arguments were peace against truth claim of religion.

The invasion of transcendence – whether it is called sacred / charisma / sublime / religion / conscience, etc. – into human life can carry different consequences. The power of resistance and transformation coming from religion is a continuous dilemma of the Christian tradition. How can false prophets or the second becoming be detected? Is a sectarian group mad because its activities lead to violence, or else it is sane because its purpose is liberation from an evil power? Do the existing laws and order, and the power of government represent the prevention of chaos and the preservation of peace and security, or else they are oppressive and evil?

Or, because of this epistemological problem, is it worth keeping transcendence at bay? Or, can the attempt to achieve the total fusion of truth claim and political society be dangerous? This dilemma points to a pious acceptance of Augustinian theology in which the world is morally absurd and opaque, contingent, and the refusal of the Pelagian or Gnostic hope of redeeming modernity. According to St. Augustine our knowledge is limited, action has always side-effects and contains some failures, therefore the democratic ideal of self-control, self-domination is impossible. The acceptance of this human condition requires humility, a basic attitude of religion. Otherwise, man will always feel oppressed and servile. And tranquility is fleeting at best, human beings are not rocks. Conflict and instability are perennial possibility. The yearning for a world beyond politics is self-destructive.

4,

Political order needs some overcome of radical plurality coming from numberless sources. There is no substitute for politics, if by politics we mean the various ways in which arrive at authoritative decisions in a world in which people legitimately hold different views about the purposes of government and the manner by which it should be carried on. Political situation is not normal situation, but a rather unique one, because the restoration of order, decent life requires to use means that are forbidden in other fields.

Conflict, antagonism seems to be perennial, ineradicable, but not only because of the biases, interests, limited resources and pathologies. A serious source of these antagonisms and need of enforcement is the very idea of justice and liberty and other transcendental knowledge which aims to abolish rather often politics, struggles and enforcement and violence altogether.

The modern hope of intellectuals has been being the moral psychology of Kant, Rawls and Habermas, which is based on the idea that everyone is required morally to take the perspective of everyone else, and thus project herself into the understandings of self and world of all others. (Habermas' three presuppositions - this situation would be inclusive, coercion free, open and symmetrical - would eliminate decision and violence altogether.) And doing so, rational agreement will emerge somehow. But agreement and rational consensus is illusory. Politics is not an exchange of opinions but a contest for power. Political decision does not announce that the other party was morally wrong, simply, they have lost.

There is no rational, no non-authoritative solution for plurality and contingency. Instead of rational agreement there can be coercion, authority, bargaining, manipulation, procedural or institutional arrangements.

The rebirth of Platonic issues has problematized the taken for granted relationship between the political order of cave dwellers and the intellectuals truth claim, and turned the attention to the agonistic and authoritative nature of politics emerging from the ambiguity of truth claims.

Divine madness must be overcome but it never be completely lacking. The European political – intellectual as well as institutional – tradition cannot cope with this problem, there seems to be a continuous flux of violence, enforcement to secure peace. Historical achievements are fragmentary and broken. Both the institutional and the intellectualist approaches set aside the violence and enforcement used by political authority. However, neither of them can fulfill this hope. Both the truth claims coming from *mania*, and the several imperfections and contingency necessarily result conflicts and dilemmas. Therefore de-liberation and the concomitant enforcement seems to be smuggled unreflectively into the practice during the process of creating political unity from plurality.

Divine madness and violence (truth claims) opposes the ideal of civility as an absence of force.²⁰⁶ Violence is barbarism, it is against civilization. Civilization is a creation of mind, an intellectual process. Although, today the dominant discourse connects truth to peace, the violent potential of any truth claim should be clear. Peace and harmony, if at all, may be after the victory of truth, before that, truth claims will create just the opposite. Like the mythical law givers (Moses or Romulus for example) who created felicitous order, but they started it with violence.

The potential delegitimation of political order by referring transcendental truth claim was started in philosophy by the Plato who was aware of the potential conflict between immanent order (the cave dwellers) and transcendence (the philosopher), and he reflected to the dilemma of philosopher: *what should he do with his transcendental knowledge* after he has returned into the cave? While it was a theoretical recognition of the dilemma of the short term conflictual potentiality of truth claim, this dilemma came into practice by Christianity.

Before it, religious community coincided with a political one, religions were connected to an ethnic group or a *polis*. But, by Christianity the specific religious community appeared, in which anyone could be member apart from his origin, political loyalties or legal status. The only criterium for the membership in this specific religious community was to accept that Jesus was the *Cristos*. At the same time, however, Christians refused the cult of Roman gods and the Emperors, that is, they were disloyal to the political order. The appearance of specific religious community meant that the border, marker, symbols and loyalty of political and religious communities ceased to overlap each other. And even more, these two different communities might have got into conflict. Since the early Christianity the loyalty claims of religious or political authorities are continuous source of conflicts and debates in our culture. Since that time in the Christian world the transcendental truth claim could have caused conflicts in the immanent political order. Christianity broke apart the two aspects of communities – *sacerdotium* and *regnum* –, and separated them. In spite of the Erastinians, the Byzantine practice and the alliance of throne and altar, one should see the uniqueness of this duality in Christian tradition

and the well-known devaluation of political order: “No man can serve two masters” (Matthew 6, 24); and “We ought to obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5, 29)

The history of typically Christian dilemma and conflict between political and religious communities can be followed since St. Augustine. The worldly and amoral order – the *civitas terrena* – can exist only by means of the naked force and power of worldly magistrate, because the sinful men are not able to create order and peace by themselves.²⁰⁷ On the other hand, he claims the presence of justice in human affairs: “remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gang of criminals on a large scale?”²⁰⁸

The dilemmas and ongoing conflict between force and morality, immanence and transcendence, peace and justice are the backbone of Christian thinking. Politics is interpreted paradoxically both as an activity using force and as an activity eliminating force by just laws (and the same paradox may be told concerning state or political society).²⁰⁹

Talking about transcendental (or the so-called prophetic aspect of religion) is partly the problem of order and non-technical, non-rational innovation. (However, in the Greek thinking one may also find the mad Gorgon, transgressing the accepted norms, an unspeakable, unthinkable and the chaos itself.) Crossing boundary can be interpreted both as the liberation from the yoke of conventional order and as the danger of chaos.

Ambiguity of crossing the boundaries is a characteristic dilemma of our tradition. It may have liberating as well as chaotic effects at the same time. Keeping some order is a basic aim of politics, therefore the transcendence is often perceived as a potential danger which should be domesticated somehow, at least linguistically by the secular „public use of reason”.²¹⁰ Because of the obvious potential danger of the transcendence, political thinkers and actors tended to keep it somehow at bay. It seems to me that Moderns have preferred keeping away transcendence from public affairs, which project has been called commonly as the secularized politics.

The practice of political control of transcendence as old as the tension between politics and religion, but its probably first theoretical formulation emerged only as a side effect of Investiture Wars by Marsilius of Padua who argued against Rome, *ordering truth claim behind the claim for this-worldly peace*. He formulated theoretically what had been the practice, that is, the divorce of peace from justice, order from transcendental truth claims.

The attitudes of political thinkers towards religion and transcendence can be well characterized by the famous front page of Hobbes’ *Leviathan*, where the two types of weapon that the state uses are symbolised. On the one side, there are the instruments of force (swords, guns, battle flags etc); on the other the symbols of ideas and religion. In sake of peace or security of guaranteed life style, *state must use and control both*. As one may see in case of Marsilius and Hobbes, their main arguments was peace against truth claim of religion. But *in their case peace meant only the lack of conflict, but not internal, psychic and mental satisfaction, too*. The peace – today security – argument of later political theorists, up to our recent defenders of neutral state, interprets peace without any transcendental relevance, only *as the lack of conflicts and fights*.

The dilemma is that very political, this-worldly dangers may come from both the loss of transcendental measures of humans and human relations, and also from the

penetration of transcendental truth claims into this-worldly affairs. Without transcendental measures – like the idea of truth, justice, liberty, etc. -, how would people be able to realize whether their order is good, just and free or not? While transcendental truth claims mean obvious danger for existing immanent order, it may sink into tyranny without these measures.

The strength of the contemporary neutral or secular state is not in its forced liberal ideal, but rather in its renunciation of all ideals, apart from empirical individual well being. Democracy created a consumer culture as Tocqueville foreseen some generations ago. From Roman historians to de la Boetie²¹¹ and Montesquieu²¹² tyranny was connected to the well-being.²¹³ Therefore, well-being is not necessarily a sign of good order. This republican tradition warns us that not only coercion, physical force and censorship may be used by tyranny. There are angel faced evils, too. (See Huxley's *Brave New World*)

- 1, man is a transcendental as well as immanent being, his transcendental knowledge may undervalues the immanency (naming it unjust, servile and the like) which is connected to imperfection, enforcement, lying and politics;

- 2, commonly there is conflict between these two²¹⁴ (see the returning philosopher's problem with cave dwellers);

- 3, there no certain measure or method can be seen to solve this ambiguity, to separate pure chaos from perfect order or eternal peace.

The dream of transparency and shared knowledge

The Modernist and today democratic hope – men's self-government may replace God or institutional enforcement – has an utopian stance, and it continued the Lockean tradition which hoped that coercion can be domesticated or finally eliminated from politics. Tory sceptics just like 19th century Germans romantics rebelled against this whiggish optimism and started to emphasize the arbitration as inherent parts of political activity: Dilemmas are dilemmas because they cannot be rationally resolved. (Plalto, *Eutyphron* 110 b-d).

Coercion seems to be necessary because practically impossible to find good reasons to persuade all member of the political community. Political Modernism was a radical interpretation of contract theory: they hoped and aimed to form social relations. Politically Modern means the hope that people is able to take into their hands their own life, they will be our own masters, human condition can be completely understood and controlled. Consequently, anything resists human understanding and control – because it is opaque and unintelligible – is arbitrary and oppressive. What is worst, enemy of human progress and happiness. Moderns are rationalist because they are not able to accept piety: the sense that humans must trust something what is out of their control.

Because of the unforeseen and often unpleasant consequences, understanding the human condition contains a piety toward the human world: an acceptance of its fuzziness and that our knowledge of human world is rather limited.

The emphasis of the narrowness and necessary imperfection of our knowledge is a pessimistic or tragic view, because man must make decisions on morally and cognitively uncertain epistemological basis. He must act in a fuzzy human world where he is still responsible as Oedipus was. Politicians are responsible for unforeseen

consequences. And what is more, often morally wrong action may result some public good, what is the real absurdity for rationalist.

Hobbes' and Machiavelli's Augustinian view of human condition re-emerged with the anti-rationalist backlash. The non-rational and non-knowable nature of human world involves the necessary imperfection of politics. Even a thorough rationalist like Aquinas who represented an optimistic view on human world and epistemological potentiality to know it, taught that emergency situations didn't have laws. As he wrote: *necessitas non subditur legi* (Summa Theologica, Ia IIae, q. 96, a.6), and *necessitas non habet legem*. (Summa Theologica, IIIa, q. 80, a.8) If not always, but in certain situations, called *necessitas*, human condition is morally obscure and absurd. Why it is the nature of politics? Why does our epistemological imperfection involve moral absurdity and need tragic heroism from political actors, as Weber taught in his *Politics as Vocation*?

The Aristotelian–neo-Thomist prudential thinking about political action is optimistic, supposing that virtues and propriety can be achieved at least potentially, even if not actually. But pointing to the imperfect nature of political epistemology involves the tragic view of political action and the morally absurd nature of human condition.

If the human world is not rationally ordered and it seems to resist to its systematization as well as rational understanding, humans must part the certainty and clearness of maths in political and moral life. This anti-rationalist view of political knowledge and action undercuts implicitly democracy based on the notion of self-government and responsibility, and welfare state and bureaucratic ethos based on certainty and responsibility. How could anyone be responsible for his action without certain knowledge about its consequences? How could anyone be responsible for his action in an ethically absurd world full of dilemmas, contingency, dominated by Fortuna and unforeseen situations interpreted as “consequences”. The refusal of optimistic epistemology of rationalism may involve a pessimistic view of human agency and political settings.

But inherent in anti-rationalism that at least the human world is too complex to describe and systematize into a logically consistent theory.

Both the institutional and the intellectualist approaches set aside the violence, enforcement used by political authority. However, neither of them can fulfill this hope. Both the truth claims in rationalism coming from *mania*, and the imperfection of practical knowledge in the skeptic approach necessarily presuppose freedom, and result conflicts and dilemmas. Therefore de-liberation and the concomitant enforcement seems to be smuggled unreflectively into the practice – irrespectively of whether it is based on the idea of institutional procedures or any version of intellectualism – during the process of creating political unity from plurality.

Mania: The Dilemma of Truth Claims: being otherworldly in the world.

The 20th political science focused on the idea and practice of procedural democracy as the evolutionary winner of the competition of regimes. Supposedly, this liberal democracy is the viable and coherent regime of our main values like justice, freedom, etc. This institutional framework was complemented by the revival of political philosophy of the Platonic paradigm in the second part of the 20th century, mainly focused on political knowledge.

Intellectuals as a social group emerged in political fights in the 19th century. Although, this label was used for a social group, it should be clear that intellectuals emerged in politics, and they identified themselves with a special political stance supported by an allegedly special knowledge – something like the clerics' role in the religion. Since then the identity of intellectuals was closely connected to justice (whether it is liberation or emancipation from economical, racial or gender inequalities) and critical self-reflection of political society. Intellectuals from the beginnings presupposed that some standard of politics existed outside of politics; and also, they identified themselves gladly with these standards, and their political activity with the implementation of them.

The revival of political philosophy in the second part of the 20th century was the revival of the Platonic paradigm, focusing on political knowledge. This revival happened without real debates or fights, although after the World War II. Karl Popper set Plato in an intellectual Nuremberg trial because of its alleged totalitarian, that is, closed society hints: Platonist tradition would base political authority on superior knowledge referring to justice. Still, the present dominant thinking in political philosophy goes against poor Sir Karl, at least in the emphasis of the Platonic issues. The revival of political philosophy in the second part of the 20th century by focusing on political knowledge was a criticism of the dominant (social) scientist and rationalist thinking about politics, disorders and derailment of modern ideologies

but, still, it continued willy-nilly some presupposition of Enlightenment. Namely, that the politics is a question of knowledge, and only the origin and characteristics of this knowledge are arguable. So, political epistemology became a focus of political debates. The issue in this paradigm is the nature and the origin of proper political knowledge: Whether it is endlessly perfectable, that is, it can be wholly coherent and certain in its consequences, or it is opaque, fragmented and uncertain. This revival took the problem of justice into the centre of political thinking, again. But Rawls' project is not interesting if one would like to understand politics. His question is: What would institutions look like if they were designed by people who were already agreed on a set of principles of justice?

Against Popper's interpretation, it seems to me that the mainstream sees Totalitarianism as the culmination of modernity. The distinctiveness of modernity consists of the rejection of pre-modern political philosophy., or example the discourse on democracy refuses implicitly the Platonic-Aristotelian thinking.²¹⁵ The emergence of political philosophy correlated with the moderns' loss of confidence. Leo Strauss interpreted crisis of modernity as a result of moderns' nihilism: modern man no longer believes that he can know what is good and bad, right and wrong. He kicked in door with the ancient question: How can we separate acceptable and unacceptable regimes? He connected the problem of missing idea of justice to the theologico-political problem. According to Strauss this theologico-political problem is whether "men can acquire that knowledge of the good without which they cannot guide their lives

individually or collectively by the unaided efforts of their natural powers, or whether they are dependent for that knowledge on Divine Revelation". The Moderns, and typically the modern social sciences decided this dilemma on behalf of immanency, so they imprisoned people in their empirical world from where the question of liberty or good order cannot even be asked. The Moderns sought and allegedly found the final resolution of the theologico-political problem, which resolution would be based on Reason or immanency (named as empirical science) against transcendence (named as metaphysics). This modernist hope was connected to a wholesale re-conception of the human condition. Moderns rejected any tension toward the divine ground, they denied transcendence or took it for irrelevant for public affairs.

Intellectuals have been using the taken for granted Christian idea of conscience as a model for the creation of their own social-political role, namely they claimed specific attention because the precondition of any betterment and reform is a critical self-reflection and self-scrutiny, the realization of sins is the first step in the *ordo salutis*; this rebirth of Platonic issues has problematized the taken for granted relationship between the political order of cave dwellers and the intellectuals' truth claim, and turned the attention to the agonistic and authoritative nature of politics emerging from the ambiguity of truth claims.

1,

In the apocryphal *Alcibiades* dialogue one may read that Socrates teaches his pupil, Alcibiades in order to reach political success, and by doing so he implies the importance of knowledge in successful political action. But not any kind of knowledge is important for the political success: it needs the knowledge of justice. At the beginning Alcibiades seems to be rather "realist", that is, he argues for the separation of justice and successful political action.

I think, Socrates, rarely are Athenians advised and the other Greeks, which is more just or more unjust; for such things they believe are obvious; so passing over these they consider which will be advantageous in practice.

For these, I think, are not the same, the just and the advantageous, but many really profited by committing great wrongs, and others, I think, doing just actions gained no advantage. (Alcibiades 113d)

And Socrates' answer to this position:

SO. And what if you should be sailing on a ship, then would you think whether it is useful to hold the tiller inward or outward, and in not knowing you would go astray, or turning it over to the pilot would you keep silent?

Alcibiades Turn it over to the pilot.

SO. Then you do not go astray about what you don't know, as long as you know that you don't know?

Alcibiades . It is not likely.

SO. So are you aware that mistakes in practice are because of this ignorance, thinking one knows when one does not know?

(Alcibiades 117d)

Finally, Alcibiades accepts Socrates' position, that "*the just... is advantageous.*" (Alcibiades 116d) Intellectuals seem to continue one of the basic ideas of this text: *ignorance is a cause of evils and the shameful kind of stupidity* (Alcibiades 118a). According to the *Euthyphro*, the source of problems in politics is the struggle among opinions concerning justice, so the lack of proper knowledge.

They have differences of opinion, as you say, about good and evil, just and unjust, honourable and dishonourable: there would have been no quarrels among them, if there had been no such differences-would there now? (Euthyphro 110)

Therefore, the basic problems in politics in the Plato's works are conflict and knowledge, and by learning justice, one may overcome conflicts. Actually, the successful politician would be that person who could abolish politics.

2,

Let me turn now to the issue of being otherworldly in the world. In other often quoted political texts of Plato – the *Republic* and the *Apology* - on the relationship of justice and philosophers and political community, we may find a much more ambiguous interpretation. As it is well known, Socrates was accused by disturbing the youth's mind, because he justified his actions by referring to his *daimonion*, a source of knowledge and action outside of the terrain of his political community. From Socrates' story it seems to us that truth claim may be perceived as dangerous for political community, as well as it may be harmful for the agent representing it. So, referring to justice may be a source of conflict, and it may cause political damage instead of advantage.

The *Republic* is rather disturbing from this point of view. The whole dialogue on justice is situated outside of the city, like Plato's school the *Academia*. Later on, in the cave metaphor, it can be read that the philosopher turning back into the cave may be laughed, beaten or even killed. The knowledge of justice or, at least, the talking about justice in public seems to be disadvantageous in the existing political community. So, a "*small remnant: perchance some noble and well-educated person*" contemns and neglects politics. (Republic 496b)

Those who belong to this small class have tasted how sweet and blessed a possession philosophy is, and have also seen enough of the madness of the multitude; and they know that no politician is honest, nor is there any champion of justice at whose side they may fight and be saved. Such an one may be compared to a man who has fallen among wild beasts --he will not join in the wickedness of his fellows, but neither is he able singly to resist all their fierce natures, and therefore seeing that he would be of no use to the State or to his friends, and reflecting that he would have to throw away his life without doing any good either to himself or others, he holds his peace, and goes his own way. He is like one who, in the storm of dust and sleet which the driving wind hurries along, retires under the shelter of a wall; and seeing the rest of mankind full of wickedness, he is content, if only he can live his own life and be pure from evil or unrighteousness, and depart in peace and good-will, with bright hopes. (Republic 496c-e)

From the *Republic*, we may conclude that the knowledge of justice is a source of conflict, therefore it is dangerous, therefore the wise will stay away from it. Politics is a dangerous place for the friend of justice. According to Plato the problem is the cave dwellers' character. And because the city cannot be overcome, the best if philosophers stay away from public life, they earn *eudaimonia* in private life. (Apology 32a) It may point to a strange direction: Plato was a realist who think that politics cannot be just, referring to justice in public stirs up peace.

Not only the understanding of the relation between politics and the knowledge of justice is different in the *Alcibiades* and in the *Republic*, but the understanding of the knowledge, too. In the first one, knowledge of justice is resembled to the knowledge of helmsmen's practical knowledge referring to the ability of making

proper judgment, proper understanding of situations and conditions, knowledge of limits and characterized by flexibility. However, in the *Republic* the dilemma of the knowledge of justice does not refer to practical knowledge, but to theoretical one. Here, because of the confrontative character of theory (the knowledge of justice) and action, public life may be dangerous for philosophers who therefore should be forced to take any political role. Theory as such seems to be problematic to cave dwellers, theory seems to be irrelevant in politics. As we may read in the Doctor Faustus, a criticism of modern intellectuals, *Thales* had fallen into a ditch while walking round scanning the skies. The cave metaphor turns our attention to the epistemological *hybris* and conflicts may emerge from it.

While the knowledge of justice is connected to *nous* in the *Republic*, what is dominantly interpreted by moderns as rationality, in the *Phaedros* philosopher is connected to *mania*, the gift of gods.²¹⁶ In the *Symposium* Plato also connected the philosopher to *mania* (*Symposium* 218b). In the *Phaedros* Plato enumerated the different types of *mania*, what is often called insanity because of its effects in human life.²¹⁷

Thus far I have been speaking of the fourth and last kind of madness, which is imputed to him who, when he sees the beauty of earth, is transported with the recollection of the true beauty; he would like to fly away, but he cannot; he is like a bird fluttering and looking upward and careless of the world below; and he is therefore thought to be mad. And I have shown this of all inspirations to be the noblest and highest and the offspring of the highest to him who has or shares in it, and that he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it. (249e)

Mania is not simply the source of the knowledge, but it is the largest blessing and is coming from gods.

I told a lie when I said" that the beloved ought to accept the non-lover when he might have the lover, because the one is sane, and the other mad. It might be so if madness were simply an evil; but there is also a madness which is a divine gift, and the source of the chiefest blessings granted to men. (Phaedros 244a)

Madness means irresponsibility and breaking social norms and customs, breaking with *aidos* (shame) in which Plato trusted in his Protagoras (332c) Divine madness (*theia mania*) channeled through poets, prophets and philosophers is a kind of possession (*Ion* 534b-e). Mania is outside of discursive reason, outside of intersubjectivity and social and empirical life, it transcends reason. Divine inspiration is coming from without, later called by Christians as Grace or conscience. Divine inspiration may come from an act of chaos or ecstatic frenzy, therefore in the *Republic* Plato turned against poetry because it would demolish order and peace, stirring irrational emotions of the appetitive part of the soul.

So, mania results transgressive behavior: transgression of socially established rules and transgression of border of our world. Maniac is not only vehement, but he is violent, too. The activity of people referring to justice not only creates turmoil, but it is violent in itself.

Before the class based analysis of political fights and conflicts done by Guizot and later continued by the Marxist thinking, enthusiasm and inspiration were the commonly thought as the sources of political calamities. Enthusiasm, the main issue of the 18th century moral and political thinking after the Civil War launched by the Puritans, and inspiration were seen as coming from the otherworld and take people beyond the norms and established social patterns. The non-rational, non-discursive and intuitive disposition demands the abandonment of reason, and it may be defective

or even evil. Since then, enthusiasm caused continuous problems in our thinking. People are seen mad because they do not take into consideration the consequences of their actions, and they hurt the existing common norms. A maniac stands out from the taken-for-granted world and refusing the shame just like any modesty, therefore he is outside of conventional social control.

Maniac is an ambiguous figure because it is asocial, on the one hand, but only this type of man – a philosopher, seer or poet – can step out only from the common world of cave dwellers and import some knowledge from without. Therefore, maniac is a sign of the transcendental world independent from us but influencing us. Intrusion of transcendental may deform human mind and may cause numberless personal or social calamities, and at the beginning no one can certainly tell the authentic truth claim from madness.

3,

Talking about liberty is talking about good order, proper arrangements of people. Thus, this talk is political, because we reflect on human relations, and their change by human will. But on the other hand, people perceive order, justice and liberty, or miss them by implicitly referring to transcendental knowledge. The *sensorium* of transcendence, as Voegelin interpreted it, is the *psyche* realizes itself as „in this world” but not only „of this world”.²¹⁸ Learning and experiences may teach man a lot of knowledge, but not everything. The knowledge cannot be derived from immanent world is called transcendence. Man is transcendental being simply because he is able to perceive something else than himself and impressions from his five senses. He perceives something which may limit him and, at the same time, may liberate him in immanent, empirical world. Man is transcendental because he is able to step out from his empirical experiences and to get a context in which the experience is meaningful.

Transcendence, apart from its content, seems to be liberating, but liberation (transgressing and violence) goes hand in hand with conflict. Knowledge of justice, whether it is connected to *nous* or to *mania*, has an oblique relationship to practice – this obscurity refuses the possibility of ideological or dogmatic practice. (see Oakehott, Strauss, Voegelin).

The idea of good order is interpreted by many as utopian or perfectionist²¹⁹. Later on, in the Modernity the idea of good order took after the mechanism and it was connected to scientism. Generally, the idea of good order is connected to peace and harmony, the lack of enforcement and conflicts, a kind of anomic freedom, geometrical clarity, often to rationality, and more and more to hedonism. Although, the Modern *Republican, liberal, communitarians converge in their assumption that success lies in the elimination from a regime of dissonance, resistance, conflict and struggle. They would confine politics to the juridical, administrative or regulative tasks of stabilizing moral and political subjects, building consensus, maintaining agreement... free modern subjects from political conflicts and instability.*²²⁰

But truth claims, referring to justice potentially undermine any political order. While Plato theoretically recognized the conflictual potentiality of truth claim, this dilemma came into practice by Christianity. The dilemmas and ongoing conflict between force and morality, immanence and transcendence, peace and justice are the backbone of Christian thinking. Politics is interpreted paradoxically both as an activity using force and as an activity eliminating force by just laws. From Plato onward, our

tradition is full of complain about the allegedly divine inspiration which stirs up emotions, morality, human order. Talking about transcendental or the so-called prophetic knowledge is partly the problem of order and non-technical, non-rationally calculable innovation. Crossing boundary can be interpreted both as the liberation from the yoke of conventional order and as the danger of chaos.

Ambiguity of crossing the boundaries is a characteristic dilemma of our tradition. It may have liberating as well as chaotic effects at the same time. Keeping some order is a basic aim of politics, therefore the transcendence is often perceived as a potential danger which should be domesticated somehow, at least linguistically by the secular „public use of reason”.²²¹. Because of the obvious potential danger of the transcendence, political thinkers and actors tended to keep it somehow at bay. It seems to me that Moderns have preferred keeping away transcendence from public affairs, which project has been called commonly as the secularized politics.

The practice of political control of transcendence as old as the tension between politics and religion, but its probably first theoretical formulation emerged only as a side effect of Investiture Wars by Marsilius of Padua who argued against Rome, ordering truth claim behind the claim for this-worldly peace. He formulated theoretically what had been the practice, that is, the divorce of peace from justice, order from transcendental truth claims.

The attitudes of political thinkers towards religion and transcendence can be well characterized by the famous front page of Hobbes' Leviathan, where the two types of weapon that the state uses are symbolized. On the one side, there are the instruments of force (swords, guns, battle flags etc); on the other the symbols of ideas and religion. In sake of peace or security of guaranteed life style, state must use and control both. As one may see in case of Marsilius and Hobbes, their main arguments were peace against truth claim of religion.

The invasion of transcendence – whether it is called sacred / charisma / sublime / religion / conscience, etc. – into human life can carry different consequences. The power of resistance and transformation coming from religion is a continuous dilemma of the Christian tradition. How can false prophets or the second becoming be detected? Is a suicide-bomber a mad terrorist; or is he a martyr? Is a sectarian group mad because its activities lead to violence, or else it is sane because its purpose is liberation from an evil power? Do the existing laws and order, and the power of government represent the prevention of chaos and the preservation of peace and security, or else they are oppressive and evil?

Or, because of this epistemological problem, is it worth keeping transcendence at bay? Or, can the attempt to achieve the total fusion of truth claim and political society be dangerous? It points to a pious acceptance of Augustinian theology in which the world is morally absurd and opaque, contingent, and the refusal of the Pelagian or Gnostic hope of redeeming modernity.

4,

Mania, and its results, intuition and enthusiasm were revalued by contemporaries as a check on rationalism. (see Oakeshott on poetry). All human experience (interpretation of situations, that is, meaning and decision) owns some poetic elements: they are contingent, fragmented and uncertain. Action is always a failure, because the is cannot fulfill the ought to. Knowledge is limited, action has always side-effects and contains some failures, therefore the democratic ideal of self-control, self-domination is impossible. The acceptance of the human condition

requires is humility, a basic attitude of religion. Otherwise, man will always feel oppressed and servile. Tranquility is fleeting at best, human beings are not rocks. Conflict and instability are perennial possibility. The yearning for a world beyond politics is self-destructive.

Political order needs some overcome of radical plurality coming from numberless sources. There is no substitute for politics, if by politics we mean the various ways in which arrive at authoritative decisions in a world in which people legitimately hold different views about the purposes of government and the manner by which it should be carried on. Political situation is not normal situation, but a rather unique one, because the restoration of order, decent life requires to use means that are forbidden in other fields.

Conflict, antagonism seems to be perennial, ineradicable, but not only because of the biases, interests, limited resources and pathologies. A serious source of these antagonism and the need of enforcement the very idea of justice and liberty and other transcendental knowledge which aims to abolish rather often politics, enforcement and violence altogether.

The modern hope of intellectuals has been being the moral psychology of Kant, Rawls and Habermas, which is based on the idea that everyone is required morally to take the perspective of everyone else, and thus project herself into the understandings of self and world of all others. And doing so, rational agreement will emerge somehow. But agreement and rational consensus is illusory. Politics is not an exchange of opinions but a contest for power. Political decision does not announce that the other party was morally wrong, simply, they have lost. Instead of rational agreement there can be coercion, authority, bargaining, manipulation, procedural or institutional arrangements.

Transcendence and political hedonism

Contemporary mass democracy means a rather unique epistemic situation. I suppose that the institutional framework, that is, the arrangements of immanent order can affect the intrusion of transcendental knowledge.

The present mass individualism acknowledges only empirical desires and power to efficiently satisfy them. The source of present statism is the claim of mass individuals for guaranteed life style. The secularized state, without any transcendental truth claim, can get loyalty only by the promise of universal association supporting anyone's rights to satisfy whimsical desires. Besides this task, the only serious task of present political order to keep those views and beliefs far from people, which may challenge the existing order. The leading art of politics in our age is opinion and attitude fabrication on mass scale and to keep the potentially dangerous view at bay by criminalizing them as hate speech, radical, trouble-maker or something like these. Only those views are seen as serious and considerable, which stay in the context of presuppositions of this secular order and refer only to technical details how to improve it. Order based on political hedonism seems to be tolerant, because it accepts any human empirical desires. But it is intolerant concerning beliefs referring some transcendental meaning.

Today's democracy seems to be far from force or any kind of "hard" politics. Present democracy, people believe, can satisfy diverse needs, and, really, it renders easily all contending beliefs inoffensive or ridiculous. The dominant political

hedonism claims productivist or welfare state, and makes all ideas unattractive and unpopular, unless they appeal to economic interests.

The strength of the contemporary secular state is not in its forced liberal ideal, but rather in its renunciation of all ideals, apart from empirical individual well being. Democracy created a consumer culture as Tocqueville foreseen some generations ago. From Roman historians to de la Boetie and Montesquieu tyranny was connected to the well-being. Therefore, well-being is not necessarily a sign of good order. This republican tradition warns us that not only coercion, physical force and censorship may be used by tyranny. There are angel faced evils, too. The quest for perfect society, providing well being and missing conflicts, has resulted apathetic citizens who are seems to be intolerant of any belief which could disturb or limit their empirical satisfactions.

Any order perceived as perfect and waterproof is inimical to transcendence. In Huxley's *Brave New World* people are blind to Shakespeare's tragedy, but they are free in terms of sexual promiscuity. In the immanence of paradise – in pigs' republic as Plato called it – now there is a recent anxiety about the loss of meaning, i.e. the loss of truth claim in a world where sensations and animal pleasures alone are worth living for; and anything transcendental – as justice, beauty, meaning, etc. – is put aside because of its potential conflictual and empirically or rationally non verifiable character. Any infusion of transcendence into politics is interpreted as dangerous because it may hurt neutrality, that is, it may potentially provoke fights, and it would limit humble hedonism, the very legitimation of present political order.

The conflict between political hedonism and transcendence is that the first measures everything only by human empirical senses and argues that anything is worthless or non-existing, which cannot be traced back to them. This conflict may appear as the problem of relativism, because both the hedonism of democracy and relativism presupposes Protagoras' humanism: "Man is the measure of all things". Therefore, the intrusion of transcendental into order is experienced by many as an absolutist danger for democracy and welfare security.

Political hedonism and contemporary idea of secular or neutral state involves the danger of a world without transcendence, i.e. a world which is closed into the limits of secular reason and which is without divine insight, a world where the perennial questions of meaning, liberty and truth may not even emerge. The case of László Tőkés, the Reformed priest who started the protest against Ceausescu's tyranny in Romania in 1989, shows that even the most secular people of the world may learn from the religious people's epistemological dissonance, that is, truth claims. His strength and self-confidence came from without, he referred to his conscience. Von Trier's famous movie, the *Dogville*, shows that a democratic community may become amoral and tyrannical, using moral discursive reasons, and in this case justice may arrive only from outside.

Divine madness must be overcome but it never be completely lacking. The European political – intellectual as well as institutional – tradition cannot cope with this problem, there seems to be a continuous flux of violence, enforcement to secure peace, and truth claims. Historical achievements are fragmentary and broken. Both the institutional and the intellectualist approaches set aside the violence and enforcement used by political authority. However, neither of them can fulfill this hope. Both the truth claims coming from *mania*, and the several imperfection and contingency necessarily result conflicts and dilemmas. Therefore de-liberation and the concomitant enforcement seems to be smuggled unreflectively into the practice – irrespectively of

whether it is based on the idea of institutional procedures or any version of intellectualism – during the process of creating political unity from plurality.

On good order: peace and conflict, immanency and transcendence

The separation of religion and politics, church and state is typically discussed in terms of freedom. People argue for separation to secure the liberty of conscience, or recently the religious liberty, in general. Talking about liberty is talking about good order, proper arrangements of people. Thus, this talk is political, because by talking about liberty we reflect on human relations, patterns and their change by human will. But on the other hand, people perceive order and liberty or miss them by implicitly referring to transcendental knowledge. Therefore, good order or liberty is not simply a political matter, but in a sense religious, too. Important political issues are religious and *vica versa*. Of course, there are historically many answers to the problem of liberty and many of them are anti-political in the sense that they hope the end of conflicts and enforcement. These anti-political answers decided the theologico-political problem of human wickedness by hoping or presupposing the sinless man and a coming antinomian world without enforcement (as Kant's Kingdom of Goals or Rousseau's Democracy).

The ongoing conflict between politics and (transcendental) morality based on the idea that evil in man is ineffaceable, therefore "as long as there will be men, there will be malice, envy and hatred, and hence there cannot be a society which does not have to employ coercive restraint".²²²

History

Starting with history of a problem is already a theoretical decision. This historical approach of problems presupposes not only a reaction of the Ancients against the Moderns, but a certain view of the human condition in which both the notions of the boundlessly autonomous and the plastic man are unacceptable. According to the first one, man may be whatever he wants; while the plastic man would be a kind of billiard ball impacted on by impersonal ("social" or "historical") "forces" – whatever these means. Whilst the first explain everything by empirical and whimsical needs, the second has an elective affinity with materialism – typical in Darwinism and sociology –, because it explains man's actions by his environment; and both notion of man refuse the *liberum arbitrium* and the transcendence. Focusing on the history of ideas and debates supposes *liberum arbitrium* and man who thinks about what he does or what he wishes. This interpretative mode of thinking is sensitive for the immense variety of elements and keys taken into consideration in the interpretation of situations and decision making, so it has an elective affinity with the emphasis of the complex web of culture and tradition. Therefore, this approach is a continuous introduction into our culture and it has a discursive coalition with Hermeneutics.²²³ Intelligent understanding, following the idea of *Gestalt* psychology, means ordering a lot of keys. What we may hope for is to be acquainted with as many keys, point of views, as possible and some capacity of ordering them. The view of human condition I've referred is based on the very idea of contingency (the consciousness of differences of contexts). It turns our attention to the epistemological finitude of human mind, the opaqueness of human life, the futility of the search for certainty and the burdens of reasoned judgement. The anti-modernism of historical approach originates from the excavation of ideas, not resolved but forgotten problems and dilemmas of our culture (*Argumentationgeschichte*), without a teleological approach to history.

The Moderns sought and allegedly found a final resolution of the theologico-political problem, which resolution would be based on Reason against Revelation, or immanency against transcendence. According to Leo Strauss this theologico-political problem is whether “men can acquire that knowledge of the good without which they cannot guide their lives individually or collectively by the unaided efforts of their natural powers, or whether they are dependent for that knowledge on Divine Revelation”.²²⁴ This hope was connected to a wholesale re-conception of the human condition. The Moderns, and typically the Modern social sciences decided this dilemma on behalf of immanency, so they imprisoned people in their empirical world from where the question of liberty or good order cannot even asked.

The reflection to the politically problematic potential of transcendence was started about Plato who was aware of the potential conflict between immanent order (the cave dwellers) and transcendence (the philosophy). He reflected to the philosophers’ dilemma: what should they do with their transcendental knowledge? But it was only a theoretical recognition of this dilemma, while in practice this dilemma came into being by Christianity. Before the Christianity, religious community coincided with a political one, religions were connected to an ethnic group or a *polis*. But, by Christianity the specific religious community appeared, of which anyone could be member apart from his origin, political loyalties or legal status. The only criterium for the membership in this community was to accept that Jesus was the *Cristos*. At the same time, however, Christians refused the cult of Roman gods and the Emperors, that is, they were disloyal to the political order. The appearance of specific religious community meant that the border, marker, symbols and loyalty of political and religious communities ceased to overlap each other. And even more, these two different communities might have got into conflict, since the early Christianity the diverging loyalty claims of religious and political authorities are continuous source of conflict in our culture.

In spite of the Erastinians, the Byzantine practice and the alliance of throne and altar, one should see the uniqueness of this duality in Christian tradition.²²⁵ Christianity broke apart the two aspects of community – *sacerdotium* and *regnum* –, and separated them. As Panikkar wrote “In Western story the relationship between politics and religion has been beset by the following dilemma: either religion and politics are considered to be identical (Caesaro-papism, theocracy, *sacrum imperium*, and all types of totalitarianism), or else one is pitted against the other as if religion and politics were mutually incompatible and antagonistic forces (Church and State, sacred and secular, God and Caesar, and all types of liberalism)”.²²⁶

The dilemmas and ongoing conflict between force and morality, immanence and transcendence, peace and justice are the backbone of Christian thinking. This paper is interested mainly in the epistemic relation between religion and politics rather than the institutional separation of church and state, and the regained relevance of religion²²⁷, mainly from the point of view of liberty and good order.

Types of religiosity

In recent works one may find at least three different modes of religiosity, apart from denominational or geographical differentiations. As even casual review of the books and articles written about the relationship between religion and politics, or

state, will make clear that religion described in these three different modes from the point of view of politics.

Civil religion. One of the common subjects in sociology of religion is the question of the religious or quasi-religious integration of society. Since Bellah's studies²²⁸ on civil religion, the integrating religion has been called „civil” religion. Civil religion is the religion of the members of a political community when the political and the religious community are the same. Civil religion is a mixture of both religious and political meanings and symbols. In the case of civil religion, religion can preserve its community characteristics and relevancies in public life, but its price is the adaptation to politics or sometimes its instrumentalization by politics. This religion expresses and saves community and public identities, community border, motivates common actions and integrates communities. Civil religion is political religion because it mobilizes - overtly or covertly - for common political aims and it directly legitimizes the order of political community and authority. Therefore civil religion is connected more strongly to political institutions, attitudes, laws, responsibilities, duties and rights than to personal love. While civil religion means a kind of homogeneity, it provides a rather wide range of freedom in private matters because it emphasizes public expectations rather than strict personal religiousness. Thus, this kind of religion adapts itself to modern differentiated society. The cross is taken together with the flag, a nation can be the chosen people of God, the political community, authority, and institutions can be sacralized.

The very expression of civil religion was created by Rousseau consciously to resolve the duality of religious and political communities and loyalties, and the disturbances coming from the infusion of transcendence into immanent order.²²⁹ The notion of civil religion, although it can be traced back to the classical philosophy and the Church Fathers, was hammered by humanist searching for minimal, common religion apart from denominational differences (see the utopias of the 16-17th century), and by *politiques* of the same age, who were also interested in peace and stability of state. The spread and formation of this idea of „religion” can be seen as an intellectual effect of conflicts of Reformation.

The Renaissance of Cicero and the stoic thinking took the word „religion” into the pre-modern political thinking. In „*De Natura Deorum*” Cicero used this word in a worldly context, without any reference, of course, to true faith or salvation: „with piety, reverence and religion must likewise disappear. And when these are gone, life soon becomes a welter of disorder and confusion; and in all probability the disappearance of piety towards the gods will entail the disappearance of loyalty and social union among men as well, and of justice itself, the question of all virtues”.²³⁰ It seems to be significant that the word „religion” entered into and was introduced by republican political thinking, alongside the emergence of the idea of „politics”; and this import originated from a highly sceptical author, Cicero, whose arguments against dogmas and certainty spread in the 16th century. Thus, the idea of „religion” was joined to a scepticist view on the possibility of certainty about truth. In the Ciceronian context, it was not salvation that gave divinity and piety an importance, but their peaceful consequences to the Roman *res publica*. In a fragment of *De Natura Deorum* we can find a decisive meaning of religion: „Cicero was aware that the objects of men’s worship were false. For after saying a number of things tending to subvert religion, he adds nevertheless that these matters ought not to be discussed in public, lest such discussion destroy the established religion of the nation”.²³¹

Machiavelli in his *Discourses on Livy* introduced republicanism with the notion of „religion” to European thinking. Here, Machiavelli wrote three chapters „on Roman’s religion” (Chapter XI-XIII in Book I.). In this text, he used the word „religion” in a Ciceronian meaning, wholly from the point of view of political society: „religion as a thing altogether necessary if he wished to maintain a civilization [*civilitá*]”.²³² ; „the religion... was among the first causes of the happiness of that *city* (Rome). For it caused good order, and good order makes good fortune, and from good fortune arose the happy success of enterprises. And the observance of the divine cult is the cause of the greatness of republics, so the disdain for it is the cause of their ruin. *For where the fear of God fails, it must be either that the kingdom comes to ruin or that it is sustained by the fear of a prince, which supplies the defects of religion*”.²³³ (emphasis added)

From its early use, the notion of „religion” had a sceptical meaning, this notion, significantly, was indifferent to doctrinal differences, arguments about truth. „Thus”, wrote Machiavelli, “the prince of a republic or a kingdom should maintain the foundation of the religion they hold... All things that arise in favour of that religion they should favour and magnify, *even though they judge them false*”.²³⁴ (emphasis added)

The dogmatic conflicts and religious civil wars of the 16-17th centuries cast doubt on dogmas because of their social-political consequences. A need for peaceful co-existence between people of different faiths emerged. Thus, the image of *universitas fidelium* based on *conscientia* and dogmatic tenets slowly became worn out, and „religion” took its role. The meaning of „religion” from its early day in the 16th century meant control, and it did not refer to dogmas, but first of all to a set of shared, common moral rules.

The meaning of „religion” was indifferent to the truth, because it did not refer to salvation. It lacked a defined content: it was simply a form of opinion, of thinking. „Religion” meant immanent moral rules with this-worldly consequences, and it bracketed the afterlife future of man. „Religion” was seen as useful from the point of view of the peace of political society. Besides Montaigne’s essays, this republican and highly sceptic meaning can be found in Bodin’s writings, who was the godfather of the modern notion of „state”. Indeed, Bodin’s *Colloquium* was not published until the 19th century, but his other work, the *Six Books of the Commonwealth* was widely read. And it had a decisive role in the creation of our ideas about sovereignty, state, politics - and we can find the same use of „religion” in the *Six Books* as in the *Colloquium*. „Even atheists agree that nothing so tends to the preservation of commonwealth as religion, since it is the force that at once secures the authority of kings and governors, the execution of the laws, the obedience of subjects, reverence for the magistrates, fear of ill-doing, and knits each and all in the bonds of friendship. Great care must be taken that so sacred a thing should not be brought into doubt or contempt by dispute, for such entails ruin of the commonwealth”.²³⁵ The point of view of worldly, „political” peace - and its experts, the politicians - triumphed over the questions of truth and otherworldly salvation - and its experts, the clerics.²³⁶ „*However great superstition may be, it is more tolerable than atheism*. For the one who is bound by some superstition is kept by this awe of the divine in a certain way within the bounds of duty and of the law of nature”.²³⁷

It is important for us that the notion of „religion” was created by worldly people, politicians by profession, whose main interests were the peace of political society, control from within and without, obedience, rather than eternal truth and

salvation. „Religion” referred to the inner-worldly consequences of *fides* as such - whatever its content might be. Machiavelli and Bodin were characteristically non-believers.

The notion of civil religion focuses on the integrative and legitimating functions of religion in the political order. However, this notion of religion is always goes together with the interpretation of state or political community as a kind of church, that is, *universiatis fidelium*, where all members have the same more or less communal beliefs. „Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things.” (I. Tim. 2.8.)

The notion of civil religion was transported into our present thinking by Gallican Catholicism.²³⁸ As it is well known, the notion of civil religion originated from Rousseau’s *On Social Contract* where he stated that the in idealized pagan times „each State, having its own cult as well as its own government, made no distinction between its gods and its laws”²³⁹.

Rousseau followed Marsilius of Padua’s²⁴⁰ argument, who wrote that the highest value was the peace, and the church and its truth claim was worthless in worldly affairs, if it would have break the peace of political society.²⁴¹ In all cases of civil religion thinking, the conflict of truth-claim and peace-claim was decided on behalf of the last.²⁴²

*Private religion*²⁴³

Private religion solves the conflict between religion and politics by adapting to politics, as well, but its adaptation is different from that of civil religion. In this case religion evacuates any practices, institutions, fields of thinking claimed politics or economics. Both fields have been dominated increasingly by the idea that morally wrong and self-interested actions can result good in long run, and expertise in these fields means how to manipulate non-ethical desires, passions and actions. Privatized religion accepts the de-ethicization of politics and economics. “Religion has been privatized in modern societies, it is claimed, as a result of the progressive weakening or disappearance of the public framework of religious belief and apprehension... Belief has become a matter of private choice”.²⁴⁴ But the public – private separation are hardly meaningful practically and theoretically as J.S. Mill’s separation of self-regarding actions from the other regarding ones.²⁴⁵

This mode of religion emerged at least from two strings in Christian thinking: partly from the Christian notion of conscience as a direct and personal relation to God, and partly from the practical need for religious toleration of each conscience, apart from its content.

1, The intellectualist tradition (Plato, Aristotle, Stoics) supposed that man always strives for good. If he does wrong, it is because of the lack of the knowledge of good. But already in Euripides’ plays²⁴⁶ the problem was formed that humans often know what is good, still they do not act according to their knowledge. This age formed the idea of conscience – *syneidesis* – which referred to our common experience: sometimes people know what is good, but their actions don’t follow it, therefore they shame themselves. So, against the Platonist view, the Hellenistic *syneidesis* (*conscientia*) supposed the duality of human soul and moral life.²⁴⁷ *Syneidesis* was a human feeling of shame and fear produced by the knowledge that one’s personal action in past had been wrong. It meant the capacity to experience this reaction as well as to possess the knowledge that might cause it. St. Paul imported²⁴⁸

the idea of *syneidesis* into Christianity and connected *syneidesis* to Christian faith. In the Patristic thinking conscience became the highest position of authority in moral questions. It is always sin to act against conscience (*contra conscientiam agere peccatum*).²⁴⁹

Already in the Patristic thinking the problem of the universal existence of conscience was problematized: if each of us has conscience, how can some people be sinful, criminal, atheist, etc.? If each of us has conscience, how the wrong, sinful action is possible? The Patristic answer was that man was created with conscience, but in many cases it “sleeps”. Good emotion was seen as the sign of healthy, good conscience, whilst bad emotion as the penalty of wrong conscience. Conscience can direct man’s action with a deontic force via feelings: it punishes the sinful action or thought by bad feelings, sorrow and fear, while it rewards good action and thought by pleasant feelings, joy and hope. Still, the erroneous or sleeping conscience may go with good emotion as well. So, good emotion was seen as a sign, but not as an evidence of good conscience.

The intellectualization of the meaning of conscience started by Philip de Chancellor who differentiated *conscientia* from *synderesis* as two distinct powers of human soul regarding moral problems.²⁵⁰ His problem was again: if each of us has conscience, how sin is possible? He answered to this problem by differentiating *conscientia* from *synderesis* and by the idea that *synderesis* was from God, therefore naturally universal and always infallible²⁵¹, but *conscientia* was individual, and it might make mistakes or it might sleep. According to Aquinas’ *Summa* everyone has *synderesis* by nature. It was not even lost by the damned. *Synderesis* contains the eternal moral laws, so humans are born with moral knowledge which, however, was distorted by original sin. But original sin didn’t destroy this inborn, innate moral knowledge of each man.

In this model, *conscientia* can be bad or make mistakes, but the *synderesis* never, because it is from God, it is humans’ inborn moral knowledge. Errors of *conscientia* may originate from the not proper order of human powers, that is, the not proper *sylogism*; and errors may originate from the defective, fallible practical reason (the *propositio minor*), which is not inborn but learnt in human life, and damaged by the Fall. Thus, *conscientia* was not interpreted as always trustworthy: because of the original sin human individuals cannot trust unreservedly their own *conscientia*. Self-righteousness was balanced by suspicion regarding individual *conscientia*, by the reflection to the possibility of erroneous conscience.²⁵²

Conscience’s direct relation with God was the origin of sense of individual dignity and confidence. As Luther said in Worms: “I cannot so otherwise, here I stand, may God help me. Amen.” Failing to follow the dictates of one’s own conscience was considered to be sinful. And this conscience was seen as the basis of Christian antinomian freedom: a true Christian doesn’t need laws, government, or any other human inventions, (that is, *forum externum*) because he is directed by his infallible *forum internum* connected directly to God.

The age of casuistry, the 16-17th century popularized the idea of conscience. This conscience was an inner discourse reflection: “Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.” (Cor. 13.5.) The casuistry turned the attention to the intrinsic nature of action: motivation and situation were the important element in judging an action. The good conscience meant that the man had to know not only God and the Law, but his own motivations and situations, as well. Individual was not only responsible for not

violating his conscience, but he was also responsible for the formation and functioning his conscience.

The casuistry, willy-nilly, had important part in individualisation of mind. Namely, the casuistry reflected to the problem that every situation differed from any others, so every situation needed a new decision and new interpretation. This idea from the legalistic thinking was taken into the religious thinking.²⁵³ The real question was then: Who might make the judgement (individual, or church, or parish community)? The Puritan argument for the non-churchly interpretation and judgement was that situations were so varying that it was everyone's own responsibility to make the proper judgement.

The plurality of conscience became value only in the English Civil War Puritanism.²⁵⁴ Earlier it was explained even by Puritans as the result of human fallibility and episcopacy (that is, the bad institutional context). Milton in his *On Divorce* implied that good conscience – a sign of good Christian – can be detected by psychological well being, by good emotions. He argued for divorce by emphasizing that any one who disturbed man's emotions and made him angry, sad or confused, hurt his conscience. Any molestation – from a wife or an authority, *forum externum* – was interpreted as troubling the good conscience. Because Christian ought to follow the order of his conscience, he also committed to defend his own good conscience. But only individual can decide what or who molestates his emotional well being and endangers his good conscience, so only he can judge others' (i.e. a wife or a magistrate) claim concerning him.²⁵⁵

If this „black box” kind of conscience may be the sovereign in moral questions, that is, its moral judgment cannot be asked from without, practically everyone may judge in moral questions according to his momentary desires, interests or passing whims. This conscience will always say what the actor wants to hear, so this interpretation of conscience lost its original controlling function. This modern conscience fused with will, it become arbitrary, that is, the very opposite of its original meaning. The idea of conscience was turned from a shield into a sword during the modernization.

2,

The story of the religious toleration, an important element in the identity of present Western political order, is rather well known and immense academic industry is built around it.²⁵⁶ The contemporary political and social theory prefers explaining private religion as a result of compartmentalization of society, that is, allegedly autonomous spheres, mainly politics and economy, have emerged during the evolutionary history of modernization, which spheres would be the clear reign of power and technical rationality. These two spheres and practices in them have been seen as par excellence secular and free from any intrusion of transcendence. But this argument for privatization of religion put aside the totalizing character of religion.

The old conflict of *sacerdotium* and *regnum* was redefined as the private and free sphere of faith and the public sphere of pure force (politics).²⁵⁷ The idea of toleration emerged side by side the notion of politics as a sphere might exist without consensus and ancient virtues, most in evidently in Machiavelli's *The Prince* and Hobbes' *Leviathan*. In case of Bodin or Hobbes one may see clearly that the main argument for tolerance is the reason of state: intolerance may induce revolts: „disjunction of temporal and spiritual domains was already being advocated as a technique for strengthening the sway of secular rulers over nonreligious matters.

Privatization of religious disputes or the withdrawal of public officials from theological controversies was acclaimed a sovereignty-enhancing... the cause of religious toleration succeeded chiefly because it proved advantageous to power-wielders, humane respect for rights of conscience providing little more than a figleaf of morality for an otherwise self-interested policy".²⁵⁸ Until the liberalism, tolerance was not seen as moral value, but as functional for the reason of state. The emergence of politics as a secular sphere and the de-politicization of religion, that is, the limitation of transcendence was the result of several fights. Tolerance and the sovereignty emerged as the alternative of endless civil wars originating from endless and undecided truth claims.

In the *Colloquium heptaploromes*, that is, *Colloquium of the Seven about the Secrets of the Sublime*, Bodin's main interest was how the harmony of the state could exist together with a variety of different opinions about human and divine affairs. „Nothing is more destructive in a state than for citizens to be split into two factions, whether the conflict is about laws, honours, or religion".²⁵⁹ In Bodin's France almost everyone was at odds and angry with one another, and one of his basic axioms was that a pest more dangerous than civil discord could not arise. „A change in religion has more dangerous consequences, namely upheaval in public affairs, destructive wars, even more calamities from plagues and torments of demons".²⁶⁰ We can read practically the same sentences in the *Six Books*, where they refer to the political wisdom of pagan antique „states" and also to the practice of the Turks.²⁶¹ Because we cannot decide which religion is true, „it is safer to admit all religions than to choose one from many".²⁶² It is clear that, in a sceptical way, „religion" meant a form without any reference to its substance: „I am not concerned here with what form of religion is the best".²⁶³

Bodin's conclusion was that ambiguity in matters of faith cannot be removed, and as these debates cannot be decided by reasoning or argument, it is laudable to abstain from discussions of divine matters. From these two premises he concluded that the state should be tolerant, indifferent in the affairs of divinity. „Since", Bodin writes, „the leaders of religions and the priests... have had so many conflicts among themselves that no one could decide which is true among all the religion, is it not better to admit publicly all religions of all peoples in the state, as in the kingdom of the Turks and Persians, rather than to exclude one? For if we seek the reason why the Greeks, Latins, and barbarians formerly had no controversy about religion, we will find no other cause, I think, than a concord and harmony of all in all religions".²⁶⁴

Hobbes regarded politics of conscience, that is, the reference to transcendence as deadly seditious to political order.²⁶⁵ Politicians, the experts of this worldly order, transcendence was ambiguous, something that may be useful as well as dangerous. Sovereignty didn't interfere into conscience only if it abstains from interfering into matters of order. It also means that politics, that is, order doesn't represent the citizens' thinking, who live in it, and this order can and should hold free from transcendence. The limitation of conscience to "private" matters was the price what it should pay for its unmolested freedom from authorities.²⁶⁶

Prophetic religion.

If privatized religion is characterized as irrelevant in public life, civil religion can be described as corrupt, because the search for relevance resulted adaptation to the worldly affairs. Prophetic religion is a third mode, it is relevant but not adapted to this world. Instead, it aims to change it, it has some deontic force coming from the

transcendental. This mode of religion can easily be detected because of the conflicts follows from it. "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?" (Luke 12, 49) Any normative criticism of amoral politics – recent neutral states – refuses those ordering of values, which would exclude values from public life.²⁶⁷

The invasion of transcendence – whether it is called sacred / charisma / sublime / religion / conscience – into human life can carry different consequences. In the civil religion thinking people tended to reflect to the legitimating and integrating effects of religion, but it should be clear that it may have revolutionary effects, too. The power of resistance and transformation coming from religion or transcendence connected to meaning and truth claims is a continuous dilemma of the European-Christian tradition. How can false prophets or the second becoming be detected? Or, because of this epistemeological problem, is it worth keeping transcendence at bay? Or, can the attempt to achieve the total fusion of faith (truth claim) and a certain society be dangerous?

Probably, politics tended to limit the public relevance of religion because of its unforeseen consequences. In the case of its limited relevance, its subversive effects can also be restricted. And as the politics tends to control more and more its environment to reduce any disturbing or unforeseen influences, and this situation is called as social security, transcendence is pushed back from public life. Still, I have to emphasize that prophetic religion is not simply public²⁶⁸, it refers to individual morality, too, because political order is also a way of life, and anything questioning the dominant way of life has public relevancies.

Defender of political or immanent order may refuse this kind of religiosity, let it be neutral state or tolerant democracy. One may easily find many people today refusing prophetic religion in the name of freedom of conscience, or peace and harmony, and tolerance or economic progress.²⁶⁹

Prophetic religion, a critical infusion of transcendence into empirical order is not rare in religious literature, the Bible is only an example for it. Still, modern social and political thinking is rarely reflected to it. Probably Max Weber's works one of the best examples for the interpretation of prophetic religion. In his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*²⁷⁰ he described the ethic of vocation and this-worldly ascetism which deeply and radically changed the believers' everyday life. His – probably – most important question was: how can it be? In general, Weber was interested in the changing effects of religion – writing about charisma and sacred he focused on it, not to its integrative or order maintaining effects –, but it was clear for him that the first condition, what religion has to meet in order to change the world around it, is to differ from the existing way of life and order. My point here is that in Weber's thinking it is clear that not adapted religion can change its environment. Search for relevance doesn't need necessarily accommodation, but criticizing or prophetic religion can be relevant as well. And this mode of religion, transcendental knowledge may change the empirical world. The Protestant ethic prescribed a life style and attitude wholly different from the late-Renaissance or Mediaeval traditional ones. The same interpretation of the critical, therefore potentially changing, nature of religion is the backbone of his historical sketch of the rationalization process in the West. As one may read in his *Economy and Society*²⁷¹, the rationalization process originated from religious needs, like resentment, theodicy and search for religious experience.

As the history of the notion of the other two modes of religion shows, the fundamental purpose of political – at least, discursive – control of religion has been being to prevent sedition or conflicts. If each man can claim – as it happened to the case of rhetoric of conscience – direct relation to transcendent justice and can criticize the order around him, the empirical order and its peace may collapse. Referring to conscience's claims and freedom may justify heroic actions, but everyday life cannot go without boundaries; the transgression by each must result the collapse of any borders and selections. The wisdom concerning this potentiality – *Nemo iudex in causa sua* – can be learnt from Aristotle²⁷² or from Old Testament.²⁷³ Therefore, from very practical reasons of empirical order, people have reflected to the problems might emerge from each man's claim to have direct relations to God or eternal truth. The far from perfect solution was the religious community, the intersubjective character of religion.

The idea of conscience originated from the Hellenistic *syneidesis*, and its Latin version, the *conscientia* received the meaning of an inner secret of an individual in St. Jerome. But, originally *conscientia* meant knowledge shared with others. “*Con*” or “*Syn*” means “with”. The original meaning of *conscientia* was the shared aspect of knowledge. Of course, intersubjectivity, shared practice domesticates prophetic religion, it takes away its edge and tension toward the empirical world. A religious community, church, is intersubjective relations of contemporaries, relation of living to the dead generations, therefore it is not the secular „public use of reason”.²⁷⁴ Practically, there is no epistemical, only this social dike keeping the potential dangers of transcendental truth claims at bay.

Transcendence and political hedonism

The conflict of religious and political community (*sacerdotium – regnum*) after the crisis of Reformation was decided on behalf of the last. “The essential principle claimed by each state was sovereignty, a quality previously attributed to God... The modern sovereign right of kings did justify king's unlimited power. Each state denied that any other institutions were above it. The Reason of State... was not to be challenged by the mystery of the church”.²⁷⁵ The irrelevance of transcendence was forced by political decisions, and the political history of the Christian countries deeply influenced the religiosity in these countries.²⁷⁶ It supposes that the institutional framework, that is, the arrangements of order can affect religious life and knowledge. In the following section I describe the rather unique epistemic situation of transcendence in mass democracy, with special reference to post-socialism.

The modern mass democracy created a strange form of individualism on mass scale: mass individualism combined the radical human rights thinking with market liberalism. Whilst the first emphasizes rights without duties, the last spread the view that anything can be solved by human choices. Basically both thinking flatter to mass individuals: there is no bad choice, one has the rights to do whatever he wants.

Egalitarian democracy is often criticized because of its relativism, and mass individuals are frustrated because they value foremost his difference from the others, but nothing is worth differing, nothing is better than anything else. They may choose, but they may not choose well. Even making a value judgement is seen as moral failure, and neutrality or tolerance are the most preferred virtues. There is no wrong choice or life-style, and anything make them upset what makes them remember for their conscience or the morally good. Today, anti-clericalism cannot be explained by the authoritative activity of churches, from this point of view it is most important that

even the existence of churches makes mass individuals remembering for right and wrong.

The frustrated and angry mass individuals self-confident, still they claim security by the state, in practice, they claim a guaranteed life-style. It means that the main task of the state today is the elimination of the unpleasant results of the wrong choices of mass individuals. The political hedonism would build political order on the satisfaction of human desires, and it can call itself tolerant, because formally it accepts any claim and labels any moral as oppressive, which would limit these desires and wishes. Neutrality is able to get relativism and hedonism dominance by expelling all morals from public life, which would limit desires.

The present situation is usually called tyranny by its critics. Even the notion of tyranny – the traditional name for wrong political regime combined with wrong life-style – presupposes some transcendental idea of good and bad, right and wrong. Without it one hardly state that the present political regime is not the best available.

The mass individualism does not make judgements, does not value actions, it is proud of this alleged neutrality and tolerance. Actually, it thinks amorality the highest level of morality, where there is no good or bad, thus there is no bad decision or way of life. Those bold persons or institutions which warn, even unintentionally, mass individualist people for good, evoke anger and fury from them. This anger one source of the keen reaction against any intrusion of transcendence into the empirical world. (The other source, as I've mentioned above, transcendence may upset this-worldly order, so today this intrusion means the loss of security of well-being.)

The present mass individualism, and mainly its post-communist version, acknowledges only empirical desires and power to efficiently satisfy them. As Pope Benedict XVI wrote²⁷⁷:

“The essential problem of our times, for European and for the world, is that although the fallacy of the Communist economy has been recognized, its moral and religious fallacy has not been addressed.”

The source of present statism is the claim of mass individuals for guaranteed life style. The secularized state, without any transcendental truth claim, can get loyalty only by the promise of an universal association supporting anyone's rights to satisfy whimsical desires. Besides this task, the only serious task of present political order to keep those views and beliefs far from people, which may challenge these rights or the relations of existing order. The leading art of politics in our age is opinion and attitude fabrication on mass scale and to keep the potentially dangerous view at bay by criminalizing them as hate speech, radical, trouble-maker or something like this. Only those views are serious and considerable, which stay in the context of presuppositions of this order and refer only to technical details how to improve it. Order based on political hedonism seems to be tolerant, because it accepts any human empirical desires. But it is intolerant concerning moral beliefs referring some transcendental meaning. Not plurality is new in modernity, but the dominant secular thinking.

Today, mainstream thinking identifies democracy with liberty and good order. The history of the notion of democracy shows us that before Rousseau it had a definitely bad meaning, only Rousseau idealized it in his *On Social Contract*. When someone talks today about the relation of religion and politics he refers implicitly to present democracy. And today's democracy seems to be far from force or any kind of “hard” politics. Present democracy, people believe, can satisfy diverse needs, and, really, it renders easily all contending beliefs inoffensive or ridiculous. In modern democracy, on general, and in post-communism, in particular, the only legitimate

public belief is egoism and the private pursuit of economic well-being. The dominant political hedonism claims productivist or welfare state, and makes all ideas unattractive and unpopular, unless they appeal to economic interests. Its strength is not in its forced liberal ideal, but rather in its renunciation of all ideals, apart from empirical individual well being. By means of an apolitical economical and social policy, democracy created a consumer culture as Tocqueville foreseen some generations ago. Maybe, the “dictatorship of well-being” seems to be overstatement, but from Roman historians to de la Boetie²⁷⁸ and Montesquieu²⁷⁹ tyranny was connected to the well-being.²⁸⁰ Therefore, the present well-being is not necessarily a sign of good order. The republican tradition warns us that not only coercion, physical force and censorship may be used by wrong order. There are angel faced evils, too. The quest for perfect society, providing well being and missing conflicts, has resulted apathetic citizens who are seems to be intolerant of any belief which could disturb or limit their empirical satisfactions.

Democracy overtly worships the limitless in science, arts and economy, and it hopes opening undreamt opportunities by technically rational knowledge which allegedly would liberate men by helping them in controlling their environment and the consequences of their actions. And, although, democracy allows chaos in everyday life, as we can read in Plato, it is rather often seen as closed immanent and meaningless world. Democracy is proudly open to all kinds of technological, economic and sexual „revolutions”, but opposes anything that would question its apolitical status quo.

The intrusion of transcendence is rather often named as madness (*mania*) because of its influences. Plato in his *Phaedrus* gives us a taxonomy²⁸¹ of god-given mania (Phaedrus 244a – 249e), and mania is often opposed to reason. Since Plato the phenomenon of enthusiasts – those who possessed by God – is a continuous subject of reflection. In Plato’s description the man possessed by God is thought mad because he do not concern this-worldly affairs and behaves and thinks unconventionally. The maniac, the enthusiasts steps somehow out from the context of the taken for granted order. Still, in case of Plato, this man is able to escape into the world of ideas. His dialogue on poetic and philosophic inspiration points to claim that people are able and have to go beyond discursive reason, they can transcend it.

But also from Plato onward, our tradition is full of complain about the allegedly divine inspiration which stirs up emotions, morality, human order. Talking about transcendental (prophetic aspect of religion) is partly the problem of order and non-technical, non-rational innovation. However, in the Greek thinking one may also find the mad Gorgon, transgressing the accepted norms, an unspeakable, unthinkable and the chaos itself. Crossing boundary can be interpreted both as the liberation from the yoke of conventional order and as the danger of chaos.

Ambiguity of crossing the boundaries is a characteristic dilemma of our tradition. It may have liberating as well as chaotic effects. Keeping some order is basic aim of politics, therefore the transcendence is often perceived as a potential danger which should be domesticated somehow. Because of the obvious danger of the transcendence, political thinkers and actors tended to keep it somehow at bay. The notions of civil and private religion are two characteristic attempts for it. It seems to me that moderns have preferred the last solution, the keeping away transcendence from public affairs, which project has been called commonly as the secularized politics.

The practice of political control of transcendence as old as the tension between politics and religion, but its probably first theoretical formulation emerged only as a side effect of Investiture Wars by Marsilius of Padua. The attitudes of political thinkers towards religion can be well characterized by the famous front page of Hobbes' *Leviathan*, where the two types of weapon that the state uses are symbolised. On the one side, there are the instruments of force (swords, guns, battle flags etc); on the other the symbols of ideas and religion. In sake of peace, state must use and control both. As one may see in both case of Marsillius and Hobbes, their main arguments was peace, and as it is often quoted from Hobbes, *non veritas facit legem*.

Transcendence intrudes human life by references some eternal meaning called justice since Plato. Of course, in Platonic and Augustinian imagination peace and justice/truth were combined. In their case peace meant not only the lack of conflict, but internal, psychic and mental satisfaction, too. The peace arguments of later political theorists, up to our recent defenders of neutral state,²⁸² interpret peace without this transcendental relevance, only as the lack of conflicts and fights.

One may find references in the Platonic thinking to the very political, this-worldly dangers coming from the loss of transcendental measures of humans and their relations. As I've quoted above, St. Augustine asks from those who insist on the immanency of political order: "remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gang of criminals on a large scale?"²⁸³ Without transcendental measures – like truth, justice, liberty, etc. -, how would people be able to realize whether their order is good or not?

Inglehart and Norris in their recent *Sacred and secular*²⁸⁴ have explained secularization by welfare state's security. The idea, that the order perceived as perfect and waterproof is inimical²⁸⁵ to transcendence, can be read in Huxley's *Brave New World* where people are blind to Shakespeare's tragedy, but people are free in terms of sexual promiscuity. In the immanence of paradise now there is a recent anxiety about the loss of meaning, i.e. the loss of truth claim in a world where sensations and animal pleasures alone are worth living for; and anything transcendental – as justice, beauty, meaning, etc. – is put aside because of its potential conflictual and empirically non verifiable character.²⁸⁶ Any infusion of transcendence into politics is interpreted as dangerous because it may hurt neutrality, that is, it may potentially provoke fights, and it would limit hedonism, the very legitimation of present order.

The conflict between political hedonism and transcendence is that the first, often called secular humanism, measures everything only by human empirical senses and argues that anything is worthless or non-existing, which cannot be traced back to them.²⁸⁷ This conflict may appear as the problem of relativism, because both the hedonism of democracy and relativism presupposes Protagoras' humanism: "Man is the measure of all things". Therefore, intrusion of transcendental into the present order experienced by many as an absolutist danger for democracy and welfare security.

Charels Taylor, referring to experience society (*Erlebnisgesellschaft*) where individuals are for immanent emotive experiences, argues that here a new kind of religiosity has emerged, characteristically spirituality without transcendence.²⁸⁸ That is, this spirituality – without any conflicts with the existing order – focusing on individuals' immediate emotive experiences without deontic force and the transforming potential of transcendence.

The present dissidents are called traditionalists, fundamentalists, people who refuse hedonism and secularism, and who refuse founding order only to empirical desires. These dangerous people refer to justice. Because the legitimation of present

order is based on the satisfaction of empirical desires, those who refer to a higher authority than individuals, are seen as antidemocratic or worse.

I guess, mainly in post-socialist countries like mine, one can more sensitive to the lack of transcendental criticism. Although, the recent dominant theme probably the dangers of „religious fundamentalism” for peace and democracy, I’ve tried to depict the conditions of political hedonism – pigs’ republic, as Plato called it –, the danger of a world without transcendence, i.e. a world which is closed into the limits of secular reason and which is without divine insight, a world where the perennial questions of meaning, liberty and truth may not even emerge.²⁸⁹ The case of László Tótkés, the Reformed priest who started the protest against Ceausescu’s tyranny in Romania in 1989, shows that even the most secular people of the world may learn from the religious people’s epistemological dissonance.

As it is well known the first mention of the wall of separation of church and state can be found in Thomas Jefferson’s letter to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802. In spite of its long history, the separation debates have been typical in the US public life mainly during the second half the 20th century. These debates shows clearly the political nature of this issue. Separation, even if it is desirable for the sake of liberty, cannot be a demonstrative rational act: the terms like church, state, politics and religion need always interpretation involving judgments, and separation in practice needs arbitration. For example, religious education²⁹⁰ can be or not in public schools? Even if someone accepts the idea of separation, why would the prohibition of religious education in public schools hurt the principle of separation? The expansion of state during the 20th century pushed back religion into the so-called private life, and separation meant more and more separation from social life in general. The wall of separation seems to be impermeable only from one direction: religion shouldn’t be public, but state or public issues may invade into the so-called private spheres, like education or thinking.

Present liberal democracy contains two different traditions from the point of view of separation. Firstly, for the *äufklarist* thinking - which is for a secular and neutral state, and would not allow any role for religion in public life - religious arguments are definitely forbidden in politics as a potential source of conflicts and as the archaic relics of pre-modern world. It also means that religion is private matter and no state agency may ask it. Therefore this view can be sold as tolerant, but is for a narrow secular notion of pluralism. The other tradition relevant for our topic interprets politics as a field of several competing interests apart from their origins. Following this thinking religious groups and interests are naturally are parts of politics, just like trade-unions or any other pressure groups, and religious arguments are as legitimate in politics as anything else.

On good order

What we may hope is a quest for an understanding of our fundamental problems, dilemmas without the quest for determinate solutions which may fall into dogmatism. Interpretative human sciences can never hope or promise certainty, only a limited plausibility; it may never hope exhaustive and comprehensive knowledge of situations and human motives. One reason of our uncertainty is that people know always more than they are able to tell.

Against the Marxist or Machiavellian heritage which emphasizes that only force exists, our thinking on good order based on the presupposition that man is moral being: he has moral claims concerning himself and his relations. Therefore, his actions

do not simply come from the feel and satisfaction of his empirical desires. Acting presupposes some sense of good and bad, some notion of good order and good life. However, one may find that the reference to justice makes conflict, because everyone sees justice on his own side.²⁹¹ Because of these conflicts coming from the debates about justice, some people expect us to give up the idea of good order. But in the world of relativism only the force and manipulation, the Leninist or Machiavellian politics may stand. The perception of order is a unique power of human mind, and it cannot be explained empirically.

The tragic sense – I’ve referred above – is that evil or sin cannot be eliminated from this world. But how can we know the good? Not values, but valuing is important – making some order by means of hierarchy and differences.

Learning and experiences may teach man a lot of knowledge, but not everything. The knowledge cannot be derived from immanent world is called transcendence. Man is transcendental simply because he is able to perceive something else than himself and impressions from his senses. He perceives something which may limit him and, at the same time, may liberate him his immanent, empirical world. Man is transcendental because he is able to step out from his experiences and to get a context in which the experience is meaningful. Therefore, he is able to perceive God and to look for meaning. As Heidegger puts, interpretation of situations (or a text) involves fore-conceptions, fore-structure. One may understand the first letters of a sentence by fore-having the meaning of the whole sentence.²⁹²

Let’s imagine a drawing: each line is wholly meaningless, they seem to be whimsically long or short. But if someone is able to look at the drawing from proper distance, he’ll realize the meaning of the drawing, probably a face. At this point, he’ll be able to perceive the meaning and significance of each line of the drawing, he’ll be able to judge each line. What seemed to be earlier whimsical, now gets meaning. Perceiving the meaning one perceives the order.

The moral claim of man can be caught in terms of order and chaos: “for what is most important to meet with among men is not any given ordering, but order.”²⁹³ Perceiving order is the sign of human mind, and making order is a continuous effort of human actions: he is “the only animal that has a feeling for order, for propriety, for moderation in word and deed.”²⁹⁴

Traditionally, meaning and order are connected, just like meaninglessness and disorder. Without order “no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short”.²⁹⁵ The tragic view of the *fin de siècle* contained both the sense of meaninglessness and chaos. (See Nietzsche, Max Weber) Chaos is something bad, and the notions of sin and evil connected to it. The human arts – like practices, languages, laws and political societies – emerged to reduce chaos.

The idea of good order is interpreted by many as a kind of utopianism or perfectionism²⁹⁶ because of the immense influence of Plat’s *Republic* and *Theaetetus*. Later on, in the modernity the good order took after the mechanism and it was connected to scientism. But generally, the idea of good order is connected to peace, harmony, the lack of force and sin, a kind of anomic freedom²⁹⁷, geometrical clarity, often to rationality, and more and more to hedonism.

The notion of good order, I describe here, start with man as we can know him, and not from a possible man of future. Instead of Rousseau’s method²⁹⁸ – who wrote: “Let us begin therefore, by laying aside facts, for they do not affect the question.” – I

would travel with Aristotle who teaches us in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that let's take man as we find him. Because our dilemmas and problems coming from man's epistemical and moral fallibility, and from plurality, contingency and opaque character of situations cannot be resolved – at least up to now –, our expectation concerning good order should be take into consideration this *conditio humana*. For man, the good life or good order is not a waterproof solution for anything.²⁹⁹ The notion of good order is not necessarily related to perfection.

The perception of order is being at home in a situation. Being at home is simply to know the probable conditions and consequences. But in most situations, one may know only some elements of his situation and the reaction of the other may always be astonishing. As Georg Simmel wrote about knowing and not knowing the consequences of our actions: “We are all alike the chess player in this regard. If he did not know, to a certain extent, what the consequences of a certain move would be, the game would be impossible; but it would also be impossible if this foresight extended indefinitely”.³⁰⁰ Human efforts seeks to limit this contingencies by creating practices, institutions, i.e. some order, but in this respect there is no progress – order may always fall back into chaos, civilization into barbarism.

Uncertainty involves irresponsibility: one cannot responsible for the unforeseen consequences of his action. Responsibility, that is, our moral character supposes a more or less ordered world, where there are probable consequences. But in politics, in the world of force and conflicts consequences are far from logical, demonstrated conclusions or certainty. The case of blind Teiresias³⁰¹, the seer or Montesquieu's story³⁰² on the blind who knows much better his world as the others, show us that the meaningful and known world is not equal with a rational-mechanical one which is based on clear and demonstrated principles. The sense of lost order and the search for order, security and certainty, so characteristic during the last centuries, have resulted several efforts to build systems, in theory or in practice, where any consequences can be foreseen. In a system, certain and safe people would be liberated from the pressure of choice and the tragic anxiety, that we are responsible for our actions in a world where results are rather doubtful. Of course, this tragic sense is less characteristic in everyday life, but typical in case of politics.

Good order seems to emerge by chances, “progress is achieved in zigzags, by constant readiness to readjust to reality. A straight line is the longest distance between two points. And the bloodiest”.³⁰³ As one may read in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, people of the age of scepticism during the 16-17th century were still aware of that reason does not walk in a straight line to truth.³⁰⁴ Usually, people realize it only after its disappearance: “the owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering”.³⁰⁵

The notion of good order, I'm for, presupposes the imperfect human condition I've described, the world of conflicts, not resolved dilemmas and demand for decision, that is, liberty. Imperfection comes from immanency as human fallibility, contingency, plurality – resulting the conflicting nature and complexity of evidences, differences about weighting of considerations – the vagueness of concepts, borderline cases, etc.; but also from the tension between transcendental and immanency.

Any hope for a perfect solution for our problems and dilemmas, a hope for the eternal kingdom or the end of history would eliminate *liberum arbitrium*, that is, decision. *Liberum arbitrium* involves change – liberty in a perfect world may lead us only into imperfection, and who on earth would be so crazy changing for the worse.

Liberty presupposes that world still can be improved.³⁰⁶ The price what man has to pay for liberty is conflicts and authority.

The usual perfectionist solution for dilemmas is finding „one very simple principle” – let’s say, for the separation of state and church, politics and religion –, as J.S. Mill called in his *On Liberty*.³⁰⁷ This so-called „geometrical method” supposes that actions are logical deductions from principle without the burden of judgement of practical reason, and that dilemmas can be easily solved by means of separating principles. Lovejoy called these people „esprit simplistes”,³⁰⁸ following Burckhardt.³⁰⁹ famous phrase of "*terribles simplificateurs*". The claim of finding one simple principle for separation is a claim for solving dilemmas once for all, supposing that one is able to achieve perfection and no serious exceptions cannot be in the future. This basically rationalist habit of mind is not only arrogant but seems to me self-revealing. Our culture and the freedom achieved in it contains numberless not resolved dilemmas, like religious community vs. political one, truth and morality vs. force, criticism vs. humility, etc. But, I tend to think that the solutions for these dilemmas are not only out of the capacity of human mind, but these resolutions are undesirable, maybe, because the eternal contradiction is the father of things.³¹⁰ Although, the present public thinking is dominated by fundamentalist rationalists, who hope to find the eternal solution for the dilemma between religion and politics, transcendence and immanency, or post-moderns (Leninists or Machiavellians) who tend to think of world only in terms of power and force, I would propose a different approach. The good order was not a result of principles but of ongoing debates, and it contains debates about truth claims that transcend the play of majorities or power relations. Reaching the limits of normative political theory, instead of the hubristic hope to find waterproof solution for arrangements of religion and politics, I suggest disposing the weight of our arguments so as to find propriety³¹¹ and, mainly in my post-communist context, emphasizing the semantic and motivating potential of religion. My argument does not simply follows the sceptics’ a priori arguments about radical uncertainty, because in any dispute both sides are equally likely and no statement is more true than its denial. Although, I’m tend to enjoy this argument concerning the rationally defined limits of rationality, in this paper I’d refer to a posteriori arguments. Namely, historically one may find several cases where people decided on one side of this dilemma, and later they realized the probability and significance of the other side of this dilemma. In practice, people may not suspend judgement even in hard cases, but as we may see, later on – earlier or later –, they turned on the opposite direction for a while.

What Western civilization has achieved and may hope to achieve is an unsteady balance of transcendental truth claims and normative expectations and immanent order.

Conclusion

Michael Oakeshott's work is a subtle and unformulaic negotiation of freedom and tradition; "skepticism" and confidence in the resources of the Western tradition; conservatism and the celebration of the present. Nor he, neither his actors are always engaged in an "irritable search for order"?³¹² He could accept confusion and he thought that one task of political and moral thinking is to make the people able and enjoy the chaotic world as it is.

One aspect of this issue is Oakeshott's relation to modernism on the one hand, and postmodernism on the other. "Modernism" here refers to the family of views which accord epistemic and often metaphysical supremacy or sovereignty, to the natural sciences, and either absorb or eliminate other voices as well. Post-moderns reject the sovereignty of the sciences on the grounds that every voice, including science, is constructed and therefore arbitrary. This (self-refuting) unmasking is often followed by a call to restructure institutions, including even language, along egalitarian lines. Postmodernism often claims to celebrate pluralism or diversity, while giving voice only to the practical. Whilst one may see common points in the pre-modern and post-modern thinking, there are obvious differences, as well. One of them, at least in case of Oakeshott is rule of law and the role of authority. Modernism in politics means the continuous effort to transform politics from the maintenance of traditional arrangements into a managerial science that conducts an ongoing struggle—often accelerated in wartime, often *called* war--against whatever presents itself as social imperfection,³¹³ and aiming an utopical, harmonious end state by means of re-education or managerial manipulation of people, based on hedonistic calculus.³¹⁴ Rationalism is identified by many as the political and moral epistemology of moderns, and typically, the political conflicts of modernity are connected to epistemological debates, too. They cannot "touch anything, without transforming it into an abstraction; [they] can never get a square meal of experience."³¹⁵

Oakeshott was ambiguous concerning modernity, because he was both in modernity and against it, he realized the ambivalences within modernity, but he also was keen to avoid the modernist seduction of utopical hope ("end of history or Kingdom Come"). Modernity is inwardly divided against itself yet paradoxically united, balanced by means of this polarity. The modernist failing is to surrender to the temptation of the extremes; its challenge is to keep the polarity and not to attempt to resolve it. The core of human condition is a fusion of opposites, as Carl Schmitt described the Roman Catholic Church. A venerable history of political thought has tried to reduce this incongruous complex in modern order to the rationalism of a single principle, a single explanation, a unifying structure or pattern of authority, but there is little evidence or conviction that it has been successful. To the contrary, we are left with the suspicion that not only the modern order rests on a contradiction that the theoreticians will never untangle, but that that is the very secret of its success, as well as the sign of its mortality.

To realize this paradox of order defines the conservative thinker. The dilemmas of politics are ultimately dilemmas in the human condition, eternal in both.

Political rationalism may work only in regimes that are without internal polarity and plurality have become privatized or superficial. Oakeshott refused a theoretical optimism of, for example, progress as a solution for everything. A balance of polarity, or antagonism, is dynamical and is can be seen only in history but rarely in action. As his peer, Hannah Arendt put it: Western political tradition since Plato has attempted not to comprehend the political, but to escape from politics altogether.³¹⁶

“Ambiguity is a mark of the richness of our culture, its dynamism, and the danger is those who would kill it by the muscular enforcement of a single “voice” or a single idiom in a voice. It corresponds, on the practical level, to ambivalence, of the conflict of practices and pursuits, as in the two contrary “styles” of politics (faith and skepticism, or later, enterprise state and civil association).”

Oakeshott did not seek to resolve these contrarities. The completeness of being cannot be achieved in one mode (voice), but it contains practice, religion, poetry and philosophy. The notions of tradition, language, practice, self-enactment, self-disclosure, conversation, voices, idioms, understanding (as opposed to explanation), sensibility, and so forth—characteristic terms of Oakeshott’s thought—all belong to what one might call the aesthetic quality of culture. He followed the linguistic and hermeneutic turn of his age as well as the transcendental turn.

¹ Plato, *Republic*, translated by G.M.A.Grube, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1974 p. 561

² Plato, *Republic*, translated by G.M.A.Grube, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 1974 p. 563

³ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p. 237

⁴ E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett Publishing, 1987 p. 34

⁵ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p. 195

„the monster of a Commonwealth cannot possibly live - that at any rate the ill contrivance of their fabrick will make it fall in pieces of itself” (Burke 1992, 230)

⁶ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p.115

⁷ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p.54

⁸ Burke, *The Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991. p. 265

⁹ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p.83

¹⁰ Burke, *The Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991. p. 87

¹¹ Burke, *The Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991. p.288

¹² E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett Publishing, 1987 p. 34

¹³ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p.119

¹⁴ Burke, *The Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991. p.89-90

¹⁵ E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett Publishing, 1987 p. 68

¹⁶ Burke, Edmund, *Further Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1992. p.92

¹⁷ E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett Publishing, 1987 p. 194

¹⁸ E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Indianapolis/Cambridge, Hackett Publishing, 1987 p. 68

¹⁹ Montaigne, de Michael: On habit: and on never easily changing traditional laws, in: *The Complete Essays*, London, Penguin Books, 1991

²⁰ Burke, *The Writings and Speeches*, vol. IX. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991. p.467

²¹ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman’s Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 370

²² Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman’s Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 287-8.

-
- ²³ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 58.
- ²⁴ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 7.
- ²⁵ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I. p. 328
- ²⁶ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 15
- ²⁷ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 241
- ²⁸ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 11
- ²⁹ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 267.
- ³⁰ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 228.
- ³¹ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 229.
- ³² Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 10
- ³³ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 10
- ³⁴ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 305
- ³⁵ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 307.
- ³⁶ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 327
- ³⁷ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 22
- ³⁸ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 99
- ³⁹ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 109.
- ⁴⁰ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 301.
- ⁴¹ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 108.
- ⁴² Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 318.
- ⁴³ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 330
- ⁴⁴ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. II p. 326
- ⁴⁵ Tocqueville, de Alexis, *Democracy in America*, London, Everyman's Library, Tocqueville 1994, vol. I p. 93
- ⁴⁶ MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p 71.
- ⁴⁷ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York – London. 1984. vol. I. p. 63.
- ⁴⁸ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York – London. 1984. vol. I. p. 81-2.
- ⁴⁹ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York – London. 1984. vol. I. p. 67.
- ⁵⁰ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York – London. 1984. vol. III. p. 91
- ⁵¹ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Émile*, translated by Barbara Foxley, Everyman's Library, London, 1974. p. 49.
- ⁵² Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Émile*, translated by Barbara Foxley, Everyman's Library, London, 1974. p. 453.
- ⁵³ Simmel, Georg, *The Philosophy of Money*, Routledge, London - New York. 1990. p. 336.
- ⁵⁴ Simmel, Georg, *The Philosophy of Money*, Routledge, London - New York. 1990. p. 302.

⁵⁵ Carlyle, *Signs of the Time*, in: 'Critical and Miscellaneous Essays', London, Chapman and Hall, vol. II. 1869. p. 317.

⁵⁶ Carlyle, *Signs of the Time*, in: 'Critical and Miscellaneous Essays', London, Chapman and Hall, vol. II. 1869. p. 326.

⁵⁷ Carlyle, *Signs of the Time*, in: 'Critical and Miscellaneous Essays', London, Chapman and Hall, vol. II. 1869. p. 334.

⁵⁸ Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-worship and the Heroic in History*, London, 1897. p. 172.

⁵⁹ Carlyle, *Signs of the Time*, in: 'Critical and Miscellaneous Essays', London, Chapman and Hall, vol. II. 1869 p. 340.

⁶⁰ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919. p.6

⁶¹ Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-worship and the Heroic in History*, London, 1897. p. 184.

⁶² Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-worship and the Heroic in History*, London, 1897. p. 158.

⁶³ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919. p. 28

⁶⁴ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919. p. 85.

⁶⁵ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919. p. 137.

⁶⁶ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919. p. 231.

⁶⁷ MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p. 2.

⁶⁸ MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p. 8.

⁶⁹ MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p. 31.

⁷⁰ MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p. 33.

⁷¹ MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p. 32.

⁷² MacIntyre, Alasdair: *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, London, Duckworth, 1985. p. 35.

„The bifurcation of the contemporary social world into a realm of the organizational in which ends are taken to be given and are not available for rational scrutiny and a realm of the personal in which no rational social resolution of issues is available.” (MacIntyre 1985, 34)

⁷³ Habermas, Jürgen, *Legitimation Crisis*. London, Heinemann, 1980 p. 27.

Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995

⁷⁴ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995 p. 318

⁷⁵ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995. p. 333

⁷⁶ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995. p. 325.

⁷⁷ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995. p. 327.

⁷⁸ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995. p. 336.

⁷⁹ Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*. vol. I-II. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995. p. 347

⁸⁰ Habermas, Jürgen, *Legitimation Crisis*. London, Heinemann, 1980 p.47

⁸¹ Habermas, Jürgen, *Legitimation Crisis*. London, Heinemann, 1980 p. 41

„a logic of development of world-view on which the imperatives of system integration have no influence”. (Habermas 1980, 8); „administrative planning produces unintended unsettling and publicizing effects. These effects weaken the justification potential of traditions” (Habermas 1980, 72) „We have seen now that the state cannot simply take over the cultural system, and that expansion of the areas of state planning actually makes problematic matters that were formerly culturally taken for granted. „meaning” is a scarce resource and is becoming ever scarcer.” (Habermas 1980, 73); „...steering media... fail to work in domains of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization; they cannot replace the action-coordinating mechanism of mutual understanding in these functions. Unlike the material reproduction of the lifeworld, its symbolic reproduction cannot be transposed onto foundations of system integration without pathological side effects.” (Habermas 1995, 323)

⁸² This duality of power/authority is presented by R. A. Nisbet, and this dual kind of control is a basic idea of Weber's political sociology on legitimation.

Nisbet, Robert, *The Sociological Tradition*, New Brunswick - London, Transaction Publishers, 1994

⁸³ Habermas, Jürgen, *Legitimation Crisis*. London, Heinemann, 1980 p.83

⁸⁴ See Swift, Johnson, Hume, Adam Smith

⁸⁵ See Hooker, Montaigne and the above mentioned sceptics.

⁸⁶ Gilbert Ryle: *The Thinking of Thoughts*, in: *Collected papers*, London, 1971.

⁸⁷ See K. Popper: *The Open Society and its Enemies*, London, Routledge, 2002.

⁸⁸ M. Oakeshott: *Rationalism in Politics*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1991.

⁸⁹ K.Marx: *The Poverty of Philosophy*, ch.2.: *The Metaphysics of Political Economy*, Division of Labor and Machinery

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/poverty-philosophy/ch02b.htm>

- ⁹⁰ Plato: Republic, 372d
- ⁹¹ David Hume: *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1985.
- ⁹² E. la Boetie. *The Politics of Obedience. The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*, The Mises Institute, Auburn.
- ⁹³ Jesse Norman: *Compassionate Conservatism*, Policy Exchange, 2006. p. 2.
- ⁹⁴ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York - London, 1984 Vol I. p. 63.
- ⁹⁵ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York - London, 1984 Vol I. p. 81-2
- ⁹⁶ d'Holbach, *The System of Nature*, New York - London, 1984 Vol I. p. 67
- ⁹⁷ Carlyle, *Signs of the Time*, in: 'Critical and Miscellaneous Essays', London, Chapman and Hall, vol. II. 1869. p. 334.
- ⁹⁸ Carlyle, *Signs of the Time*, in: 'Critical and Miscellaneous Essays', London, Chapman and Hall, vol. II. 1869. p. 340.
- ⁹⁹ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919 p. 85.
- ¹⁰⁰ Carlyle, Thomas, *Past and Present*, London - Toronto, 1919. p. 231.
- ¹⁰¹ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Émile*, translated by Barbara Foxley, Everyman's Library, London, 1974. p. 49.
- ¹⁰² Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Émile*, translated by Barbara Foxley, Everyman's Library, London, 1974. p. 53.
- ¹⁰³ Bernard Williams: Ethical Consistency, in: *Essays on Moral realism*, szerk. G. Sayre-McCord, p. 52.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Rules for Radicals, A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*, 25.p.
- ¹⁰⁵ Michael Walzer: Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 2 Winter, 1973, pp. 160-180
- David Cooper: *Value Pluralism and Ethical Choice*, St. Martin press, 1993.
- C.A. Coady: "Politics and the Problem of Dirty Hands", in: Peter Singer ed. *A Companion to Ethics*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991.
- L. Calhoun: The Problem of "Dirty Hands" and Corrupt Leadership, *The Independent Review*, 2004. Winter. P. 363-385.
- Ruth Grant: *Hypocrisy and Integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau and the Ethics of Politics*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1997
- ¹⁰⁶ Herodotos 3.65.3.
- Thucydides 1.76; 5. 107, 109, 111.
- ¹⁰⁷ Thucydides 4.59-61; 1.77; 1.8
- ¹⁰⁸ Republic 472d,
- ¹⁰⁹ Simmel, 1971. 354.p.
- ¹¹⁰ Winston, Kenneth: Necessity and Choice in Political Ethics: Varieties of Dirty Hands, in: D. Wueste ed. *Professional Ethics and Social Responsibility*, Rowman and Littlefield, 1994, 39.p.
- ¹¹¹ Machiavelli *Discourses* 1. XLII
- ¹¹² N. Machiavelli: *Discourses* bk. 3. ch. XLI.
- ¹¹³ Machivelli: *The Prince*, ch. XVIII.
- ¹¹⁴ See Weber: *Politics as Vocation*,
- ¹¹⁵ Machivelli: *The Prince*, ch. XV
- ¹¹⁶ N. Machiavelli: *Discourses*, I. ch. ix.
- ¹¹⁷ Strauss: *Thought on Machiavelli*,
- ¹¹⁸ H.F. Pitkin: *Fortuna is a Woman*, Chicago, University of Chicago Pres, 1999.
- ¹¹⁹ Daniel Engster: *Divine Sovereignty, The Origins of Modern State Power*, Northern Illinois University Press, Dekalb, 2001.
- Hans Blumenberg: *The Legitimacy of Modern Age*,
- E. Cassirer: *The Myth of the State*,
- Pocock: *Machiavellian Moment*,
- ¹²⁰ Sh. Wolin: *Politics and Vison*,
- ¹²¹ Thomas Nagel: *Mortal Questions*, 1979, Cambridge University Press.
- "Given the limitations on human action, it is naive to suppose that there is a solution to every moral problem with which the world can face us. We have always known that the world is a bad place. It appears that it may be an evil place as well." Thomas Nagel, War and Massacre, *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Winter, 1972) p. 123-144.
- ¹²² Lucianos of Samosata, *Works*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press. 1905. Vol. I p. 167.

- ¹²³ J. Dewey: *Democracy and Education, Reconstruction in Philosophy, The Public and Its Problems, and Freedom and Culture*,
D. Kettler: The Political Theory Question in Political Science, 1956-1967, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 100. No. 4., Nov. 2006.
- ¹²⁴ Thanks to Balázs Mezei for the idea.
- ¹²⁵ Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994 (1933)
- ¹²⁶ University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1964.
- ¹²⁷ Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1991.
- ¹²⁸ See in *On Human Conduct*, Clarendon, Oxford, 1995 (1975), p. 86, „Political education” and „Being Conservative” in his *Rationalism in Politics*.
- ¹²⁹ The paper was written in longer project supported by the Hungarian Research Fund
- ¹³⁰ M. Oakeshott, *Morality and Politics in Modern Europe*, Yaler University Press, New Haven-London, 1993.
M. Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975.
M. Oakeshott, „The masses in the representative democracy”, in *Rationalism in Politics*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1991.
- ¹³¹ M. Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1991. p.56.
- ¹³² M. Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct*, p. 15-20.
- ¹³³ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 22-3
- ¹³⁴ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 23.
- ¹³⁵ Hobbes, *De Cive*, Hackett, Cambridge, 1991. p.95.
- ¹³⁶ Hobbes, *De Cive*, p.95.
- ¹³⁷ Hobbes, *De Cive*, p.97-8.
- ¹³⁸ Hobbes, The Epistle Dedicatory, in: *The Elements of Law*, Oxford, 1994.
- ¹³⁹ Hobbes, *De Cive*, p.168-9.
- ¹⁴⁰ David Johnston, ‘Plato, Hobbes, and the Science of Practical Reasoning’, in Mary Dietz ed. *Thomas Hobbes and Political Theory*, Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1990, pp.37-54.
- ¹⁴¹ Karen S. Feldman, Conscience and the Concealments of Metaphor in Hobbes's "Leviathan", *Philosophy & Rhetoric* Vol. 34, No. 1 (2001), pp. 21-37
- ¹⁴² Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1909. p. 41.
- ¹⁴³ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch 31.
- ¹⁴⁴ Hobbes, *De Cive*, p.91
- ¹⁴⁵ Robert E. Stillman, Hobbes's "Leviathan": Monsters, Metaphors, and Magic, *ELH*, 1995, Winter, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 791-819
David Boonin-Vail, *Thomas Hobbes and the Science of Moral Virtue*. Cambridge University Press
- ¹⁴⁶ Hobbes, *De Cive*, p.98.
- ¹⁴⁷ Fr. Schiller, *Letters Upon The Aesthetic Education Of Man*,
- ¹⁴⁸ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p.97.
- ¹⁴⁹ T. Nardin, “Oakeshott’s Philosophy of the Social Sciences,” in C. Abel and T. Fuller eds. *The Intellectual Legacy of Michael Oakeshott*, Imprint Academic, 2005.
- ¹⁵⁰ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 25.
- ¹⁵¹ Erasmus, *Education of a Christian Prince*, New York, Octagon Books, 1963. p.140.
- ¹⁵² A. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Everyman’s Library, 1994. vol. II. p. 15-6.
- ¹⁵³ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 18.
- ¹⁵⁴ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p.24
- ¹⁵⁵ Oakeshott, *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, 1989. p. 25
- ¹⁵⁶ Y. Ezrahi, The Theatrics and Mechanics of Action: the Theater and the Machine as Political Metaphors. *Social Research*, 1995 Summer95, Vol. 62 No. 2 pp. 299-322.
- ¹⁵⁷ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 97.
- ¹⁵⁸ *Leviathan*, ch. iv
- ¹⁵⁹ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 64
- ¹⁶⁰ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 99.
Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 4., 24.
- ¹⁶¹ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 37.

¹⁶² Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 9-10.

¹⁶³ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 69-70.

¹⁶⁴ V. Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence and Scepticism in the Renaissance*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca-London, 1985. p. 40.

¹⁶⁵ William Cronon, "Only Connect: The Goals of a Liberal Education." *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1998. Volume 67, No. 4, p.79.

¹⁶⁶ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 13.

¹⁶⁷ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 24.

¹⁶⁸ Giambattista Vico, *On the study methods of our time*, Cornell University, 1990. p. 67

¹⁶⁹ Giambattista Vico, p. 24.

¹⁷⁰ Oakeshott, *On Human Conduct* p. 60.

¹⁷¹ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 53.

¹⁷² Oakeshott, *Voice* p.18

¹⁷³ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 16

¹⁷⁴ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 18., 23.

¹⁷⁵ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 2.

¹⁷⁶ Karen LeFevre, *Invention as a Social Act*, SIU Press, 1987

¹⁷⁷ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 26.

¹⁷⁸ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 20.

See: „The process which, if not checked, will abolish Man goes on apace among Communists and Democrats no less than among Fascists. The methods may (at first) differ in brutality. But many a mild-eyed scientist in pince-nez, many a popular dramatist, many an amateur philosopher in our midst, means in the long run just the same as the Nazi rulers of Germany/Traditional values are to be 'debunked' and mankind to be cut out into some fresh shape at the will (which must, by hypothesis, be an arbitrary will) of some few lucky people in one lucky generation which has learned how to do it.”

C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, A free ebook from <http://manybooks.net/> p.20.

¹⁷⁹ Oakeshott, *Voice* p. 21.

¹⁸⁰ Vukan Kuic, “Work, Leisure and Culture” *The Review of Politics* Vol. 43, No. 3 (Jul., 1981), pp. 436-465.

¹⁸¹ Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia, An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* ([1936], trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968).

¹⁸² It seems to me that Norman and Ganesh in their recent work try to reinterpret the notion of tradition in a similar way: “Of course, this is not to say that all tradition is good; that what exists must exist; or that our institutions never require further justification. But it reminds us that change is not reform, and that reform must go with the grain of institutions if it is to have a positive effect.” Jesse Norman and Janan Ganesh, *Compassionate Conservatism: What It Is, Why We Need It* (London: Policy Exchange, 2006) 48.

¹⁸³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, trans. Reginald John Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983).

¹⁸⁴ On this point, which Tocqueville observed contemporaneously, see Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, And Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987).

¹⁸⁵ “Thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent.” Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Hackett, 1987), 75.

¹⁸⁶ “A propensity to use and to enjoy what is available rather than to wish for or to look for something else; to delight in what is present rather than what was or what may be . . . gratefulness for what is available, and consequently the acknowledgment of a gift or an inheritance from the past . . . What is esteemed is the present.” Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and other essays, new and expanded edition*, ed. Timothy Fuller (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1991), 408. Hereafter: *RIP*.

¹⁸⁷ C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1943), ch. 3.

¹⁸⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, “Conservatism As An Ideology,” *American Political Science Review*, 51 (June 1957): 454-73.

¹⁸⁹ Edmund Burke: *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Cambridge: Hackett, 1987), 80.

¹⁹⁰ James Kalb, “The Tyranny of Liberalism,” *Modern Age* 42 (Summer 2000), pp. 239—253.

¹⁹¹ “To recognize reason as the rose in the cross of the present, and to find delight in it, is a rational insight which implies reconciliation with reality.” Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. Samuel Waters Dyde (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 2001), 19.

¹⁹² “Well, my dear Pangloss,” said Candide to him, “when You were hanged, dissected, whipped, and tugging at the oar, did you continue to think that everything in this world happens for the best?” / “I have always abided by my first opinion,” answered Pangloss; “for, after all, I am a philosopher, and it would not become me to retract my sentiments; especially as Leibnitz could not be in the wrong: and that preestablished harmony is the finest thing in the world, as well as a *plenum* and the *materia subtilis*.” [Voltaire](#), *Candide*, In: *The Works of Voltaire*, vol.I., trans. William F. Fleming, (New York, E.R. DuMont, 1901) 199.

¹⁹³ Burke, *Reflections*, 66.

¹⁹⁴ Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger, and Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974).

¹⁹⁵ "They are the product of innumerable human choices, over long stretches of time, but not of human design. And the choices from which they sprang were not responses to abstract beliefs, but to current situations." Oakeshott, *Religion, Politics and the Moral Life*, ed. Timothy Fuller (London: Yale Univ. Press, 1993), 117. Hereafter: *RPML*.

¹⁹⁶ Gilbert Ryle, "The Thinking of Thoughts: What Is 'Le Penseur' Doing?" in *Collected Papers*, in 2 vols., vol. 2, *Collected Essays 1929-1968* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1971), 480; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

¹⁹⁷ Alasdair McIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (London: Duckworth, 1990), 82.

¹⁹⁸ Oakeshott, *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, ed Timothy Fuller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001), 5-6. Hereafter: *VL*.

¹⁹⁹ Strauss: *Introduction to Political Philosophy. Ten Essays by Leo Strauss*, 1989, Detroit

²⁰⁰ Josef Piper: *Divine Madness: Plato's Case against Secular Humanism*,

J. Piper: *Enthusiasm and Divine Madness: On the Platonic Dialogue Phaedrus*,

²⁰¹ In the *Laws* we may read that the god-like state of poets connected to the lower part of the soul

That the poet, according to the tradition which has ever prevailed among us, and is accepted of all men, when he sits down on the tripod of the muse, is not in his right mind; like a fountain, he allows to flow out freely whatever comes in, and his art being imitative, he is often compelled to represent men of opposite dispositions, and thus to contradict himself; neither can he tell whether there is more truth in one thing that he has said than in another. this is not the case in a law; the legislator must give not two rules about the same thing, but one only. (Laws 719c)

²⁰² Voegelin, *Anamnesis*, *Collected Works* vol.6., Columbia-London, 2002, p. 320.

²⁰³ John Passmore: *The Perfectibility of Man*, Duckworth, London, 1970.

²⁰⁴ B. Honig: *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*, Ithaca, Vorbell University pre., 1993, p.2.

²⁰⁵ J. Rawls: *Political Liberalism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993.

J.Rawls: *The Law of Peoples: with, The idea of public reason revisited*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1999.

K. Greenawalt: *Private Conscience and Public Reasons*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995.

²⁰⁶ R. G. Collingwood. *The New Leviathan; Or, Man, Society, Civilization and Barbarism*

²⁰⁷ That's the reason why sociology has to suppose sinless men, i.e. without this supposition the idea of self-creating and self-regulating society would be meaningless.

²⁰⁸ St. Augustine: *City of God*, Penguin Classics, London, p. 139.

²⁰⁹ It seems to me that mainly the German thinking took this basically Augustinian notion of state to modern thinking. Like Schopenhauer who taught on the necessity of the state, and of state violence, to check the destructive tendencies innate to man; or Max Weber, who took this view into the sociological thinking. According to him, all states are founded on political violence. "Sociologically the state cannot be defined in terms of its ends. There is scarcely any task that some political association has not taken in hand, and there is no task that one could say has always been exclusive and peculiar to those associations which are designated as political ones...Ultimately one can define the modern state sociologically only in terms of the specific *means* peculiar to it...namely the use of political force." ([M. Weber: Politics as Vocation, 1919](#)) And he added that the decisive means for politics is violent. "If no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, the concept of "state" would be eliminated, and a condition would emerge that could be designated as "anarchy"." (Weber, *ibid*)

- ²¹⁰ J. Rawls: *Political Liberalism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993.
 J. Rawls: *The Law of Peoples: with, The idea of public reason revisited*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1999.
- K. Greenawalt: *Private Conscience and Public Reasons*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995.
- ²¹¹ Etienne de La Boetie: *The Politics of Obedience, The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*, The Mises Institute, Auburn, p. 64-65.
- ²¹² Montesquieu: *Persian Letters*, Letter 97.
- ²¹³ Roger Boesche: *Theories of Tyranny from Plato to Arendt*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1996.
- ²¹⁴ "Go to the mountain, go, fleet hounds of Madness, where the daughters of Cadmus hold their company, and drive them raving against the mad spy ... Let manifest justice go forth, let it go with sword in hand, slaying through the throat this godless, lawless, unjust, earth-born offspring of Echion." [Euripides, Bacchanals 977]
- ²¹⁵ Strauss: *Introduction to Political Philosophy. Ten Essays by Leo Strauss*, 1989, Detroit
- ²¹⁶ Josef Piper: *Divine Madness: Plato's Case against Secular Humanism*,
 J. Piper: *Enthusiasm and Divine Madness: On the Platonic Dialogue Phaedrus*,
- ²¹⁷ In the *Laws* we may read that the god-like state of poets connected to the lower part of the soul
That the poet, according to the tradition which has ever prevailed among us, and is accepted of all men, when he sits down on the tripod of the muse, is not in his right mind; like a fountain, he allows to flow out freely whatever comes in, and his art being imitative, he is often compelled to represent men of opposite dispositions, and thus to contradict himself; neither can he tell whether there is more truth in one thing that he has said than in another. this is not the case in a law; the legislator must give not two rules about the same thing, but one only. (Laws 719c)
- ²¹⁸ Voegelin, *Anamnesis*, Collected Works vol.6., Columbia-London, 2002, p. 320.
- ²¹⁹ John Passmore: *The Perfectibility of Man*, Duckworth, London, 1970.
- ²²⁰ B. Honig: *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993, p.2.
- ²²¹ J. Rawls: *Political Liberalism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993.
 J. Rawls: *The Law of Peoples: with, The idea of public reason revisited*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1999.
- K. Greenawalt: *Private Conscience and Public Reasons*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995.
- ²²² Leo Strauss: *The City and Man*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1964. p.5.
- It seems to me that mainly the German thinking took this basically Augustinian notion of state to modern thinking. Like Schopenhauer who taught on the necessity of the state, and of state violence, to check the destructive tendencies innate to man; or Max Weber, who took this view into the sociological thinking. According to him, all states are founded on political violence. "Sociologically the state cannot be defined in terms of its ends. There is scarcely any task that some political association has not taken in hand, and there is no task that one could say has always been exclusive and peculiar to those associations which are designated as political ones...Ultimately one can define the modern state sociologically only in terms of the specific means peculiar to it...namely the use of political force." (M. Weber: *Politics as Vocation*, 1919, <http://www2.pfeiffer.edu/~Iridener/DSS/Weber/polvoc.html> p. 77-78) And he added that the decisive means for politics is violent. "If no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, the concept of "state" would be eliminated, and a condition would emerge that could be designated as "anarchy"." (Weber, *ibid*)
- ²²³ G. E. M. Anscombe: *Intention*. Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 1957.
- Zygmunt Bauman: *Hermeneutics and Social Science: Approaches to Understanding*. London, Hutchinson. 1978.
- H.G. Gadamer: *Truth and Method*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1989.
- Hookway, C. – P. Petit eds: *Action and Interpretation*, Cambridge. 1978.
- T. Hoy: *Praxis, Truth and Liberation. Essays on Gadamer, Taylor, Polányi, Habermas, Gutierrez and Ricoeur*, NY-London. 1988.
- M. Oakeshott: *On Human Conduct*. Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1975.
- Ch. Taylor: *Human Agency and Language. Philosophical papers I.*, Cambridge. 1985.
- Truzzi, ed.: *Subjective Understanding in the Social Sciences*, Reading, MA, 1974.
- G.H. von Wright: *Practical Reason*. Philosophical Papers, I, Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 1983.
- ²²⁴ Leo Strauss: *The City and Man*, Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1964. p.5.
- ²²⁵ "No man can serve two masters" (Matthew 6, 24); and "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5, 29)

²²⁶ R. Panikkar „Religion or politics: The Western dilemma”, in PH Merkel – N. Sart eds.

Religion and Politics in the Modern World, London-New York, 1983, p.44.

²²⁷ See P.L. Berger ed: *The Desecularization of the World*, Washington, 1999.

As from the Google Trends shows, even there is more political news, there is much larger interest in religion than in politics. It seems that religion still has a large „marketing value”, at least, it attracts more search on the web.

²²⁸ Bellah, R.N. - Ph.E. Hammond, 1980: *Varieties of Civil Religion*, San Francisco, Harper and Row.

Bellah, R.N., 1970: *Beyond Belief, Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*, New York, Harper and Row.

Bellah, R.N., 1973: 'Introduction' to R.N.Bellah ed. *Emile Durkheim on Morality and Society*, Chicago, p. ix-iv

Bellah, R.N., 1974: 'American Civil Religion in the 1970's', in D.G.Jones - R.E.Richey, *The Civil Religion Debate*, in Jones-Richey eds, 'American Civil Religion', Harper and Row.p. 255-272.

Bellah, R.N., 1986: 'Public Philosophy and Public Theology in America Today', in: L.S.Rouner ed., *Civil Religion and Political Theology*, University of Notre Dame Press. p. 79-97.

Cole, W.A. - Ph.E.Hammond, 1974: 'Religious Pluralism, Legal Development, and Societal Complexity: Rudimentary Forms of Civil Religion', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. Vol. 13, No. 2 (Jun., 1974), pp. 177-189.

Herberg, W. 1974: 'America's Civil Religion: What It Is and Whence It Comes', in: Jones, D.G. - R.E.Richey eds. *American Civil Religion*, Harper and Row. p. 76-88.

Hughey, M.W. 1983: *Civil Religion and Moral Order. Theoretical and Moral Dimensions*, Greenwood Press, London.

Jones, D.G. - R.E.Richey, 1974: 'The Civil Religion Debate', in: Jones, D.G. - R.E.Richey eds. *American Civil Religion*, Harper and Row. p. 3-18.

²²⁹ „It was in these circumstances that Jesus came to set up on earth a spiritual kingdom, which, by separating the theological from the political system, made the State no longer one, and brought about the internal divisions which have never ceased to trouble Christian peoples. As the new idea of a kingdom of the other world could never have occurred to pagans, they always looked on the Christians as really rebels, who, while feigning to submit, were only waiting for the chance to make themselves independent and their masters, and to usurp by guile the authority they pretended in their weakness to respect. This was the cause of the persecutions... However, as there have always been a prince and civil laws, this double power and conflict of jurisdiction have made all good polity impossible in Christian States; and men have never succeeded in finding out whether they were bound to obey the master or the priest.” (J.-J. Rousseau: *On Social Contract*, bk. IV, ch. 8.)

http://www.constitution.org/jjr/socon_04.htm#008

²³⁰ Cicero: *De Natura Deorum*, transl. H. Rackham, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, London, William Heinemen, 1967. p.7.

²³¹ Cicero: *ibid* p. 385.

²³² Machiavelli, Nicolo: *Discourse on Livy*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago – London, 1996. p. 34.

²³³ Machiavelli *ibid* p. 35.

²³⁴ Machiavelli *ibid* p. 37,

²³⁵ Bodin, Jean: *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, p. 141.

²³⁶ „When, therefore, he realized that Jews, pagans, and Christians were divided on religious principles, he choose to embrace all the religions of all groups rather than, by repudiating one, to arouse any one to contempt of divinity. With this reasoning he joined not only individual men but all men in the state to the *greatest harmony* of piety and love.” (Bodin, Jean: *Colloquim of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*. Princeton, Princeton University Press. p 159)

„I believe that *all are convinced it is much better to have a false religion than no religion. Thus there is no superstition so great that it cannot keep wicked men in their duty* through the fear of divine power and somehow preserve the law of nature... Epicurus committed an unpardonable sin because in trying to uproot the fear of divinity he seems to have opened freely all the approaches to sin. Of all the categories of public consideration nothing is more destructive than anarchy in which no one rules, no one obeys, no rewards are granted to good men, no punishment for the wicked... the wicked will be restrained by fear of divinity from a guilty and wicked life.” (Bodin *ibid* p.162, emphasis added);

²³⁷ Bodin *Colloquium* p. 239, The first sentence can also be read in *Six Books* p. 142.

²³⁸ “The covenant, which we have just read, has a double effect: it unites the people to God, and it unites the people in themselves. The people could not unite amongst themselves by an inviolable society, if the covenant had not been originally made in the presence of a superior power, such as that of God, the natural protector of human society.” (J.-B. Bossuet: *Politics drawn from the Very Words of holy Scripture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990. p. 243); “We see here everything that unites citizens amongst themselves and with their country: their altars and sacrifices, glory, goods, repose, and safety of live, in a word, the society of things divine and human.” (*ibid* p. 30.); “These principles of religion, although turned to idolatry and error, sufficed to establish a stable state and government.” (*ibid* p. 193.); “It is thus that religion, true or false, establishes good faith between man”. (*ibid* p. 194.)

²³⁹ J.-J. Rousseau: *On Social Contract*, bk. IV, ch. 8.

http://www.constitution.org/jjr/socon_04.htm#008

²⁴⁰ Marsilius of Padua: *Defensor pacis*, Toronto - Buffalo, University of Toronto Press, 1980.

²⁴¹ “All that destroys social unity is worthless; all institutions that set man in contradiction to himself are worthless.

The second is good in that it unites the divine cult with love of the laws, and, making country the object of the citizens' adoration, teaches them that service done to the State is service done to its tutelary god. It is a form of theocracy, in which there can be no pontiff save the prince, and no priests save the magistrates. To die for one's country then becomes martyrdom; violation of its laws, impiety; and to subject one who is guilty to public execration is to condemn him to the anger of the gods: Sacer estod.

That will make him love his duty; but the dogmas of that religion concern the State and its members only so far as they have reference to morality and to the duties which he who professes them is bound to do to others.” (J.-J. Rousseau: *On Social Contract*, bk. IV, ch. 8.)

²⁴² Hermann Lübbe: *Säkularisierung. Geschichte eines ideenpolitischen Begriffs*. Freiburg, München, 1965.

²⁴³ Th. Luckmann: *The invisible religion: the problem of religion in modern society*, New York – London, Collier-Macmillan, 1970.

²⁴⁴ J. Habgood: *Church and Nation in a Secular Age*, London, 1983.

²⁴⁵ J.S.Mill: *On Liberty*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1982.

²⁴⁶ See Euripides' *Medea*, *Hyppias*.

²⁴⁷ C.S. Lewis: *Studies in Words*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1960.

K.E. Kirk: *Conscience and its Problems*, Longmans, London, 1927

J. Stelzenberger: *Syneidesis, Conscientia, Gewissen, Studie zum Bedeutungswandel eines moraltheologischen Begriffes*, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn, 1963.

²⁴⁸ C.A. Pierce: *Conscience in the New Testament*, Cambridge, SCM Press Ltd.,

²⁴⁹ “Whatsoever is not from faith (conviction) is sin.” (Rom. 14,23)

²⁵⁰ Philip the Chancellor: „De bono”, in: T.C. Potts: *Conscience in Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 1980.

²⁵¹ B.F. Murphy: *The Catholic Doctrine of Conscience*, Washington, Catholic University Press, 1944.

H. Appel: *Die Lehre der Scholastiker von der Synderesis*, Rostock, 1891.

St. Thomas: *Summa Theologiae*, London – New York, Blackfriars. Ia. q.85, a6

²⁵² X.G. Colavechio: *Erroneous Conscience and Obligations*, Washington D.C., 1961.

A. Kolnai: „Erroneous Conscience” in: Balázs, Z. – Dunlop, Fr. eds. *Exploring World of Human Practice: Readings in and about the Philosophy of Aurel Kolnai*, CEU Press, Budapest – New York, 2004

²⁵³ P. Vinogradoff: „Reason and Conscience in Sixteenth-Century Jurisprudence”, in: *Collected Papers*, vol. II. Oxford, 1928

²⁵⁴ Conscience tells to Conformity: “you ground your conscience upon men for their number, learning, piety, making them the rule of your conscience, and not Gods alone.” In: Henry Burton: *Conformities deformity, In a Dialogue between Conformity and Conscience*, 1646, London, p.3.

J. Goodwin: *Theomaxia*, London, Henry Overton, 1644. p. 32. They often referred to Luke 12,5.

²⁵⁵ „it is very un-Christian and unworthy... to fight against the peace of the consciences of other men” (Goodwin *Theomaxia* p. 28.)

²⁵⁶ See one of the last from this literature: Perez Zagorin: *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2003.

²⁵⁷ John Milbanks: *Theology and Social Theory. Beyond Secular Reason*, Blackwell, 1990.

²⁵⁸ St. Holmes, „Jean Bodin. The paradox of sovereignty and the privatization of religion”, in: J.R. Pennock – J.W. Chapman: *Religion, Morality and the Law*, New York – London, 1988. p.6.

²⁵⁹ Bodin, Jean: *Colloquim of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*. Princeton, Princeton University Press. p.151

²⁶⁰ Bodin *ibid* p. 165

²⁶¹ 'The Kings of Turks... safeguards the rites of religion as well as any prince in this world. Yet he constrains no one, but on the contrary permits everyone to live according as his conscience dictates.' (Bodin, Jean: *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford. P 142)

²⁶² Bodin, Jean: *Colloquim of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*. Princeton, Princeton University Press. p 154.

²⁶³ Bodin, Jean: *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford. P. 141.

“But if the prince who has assurance of the true religion wishes to convert his subject, split by sects and factions, he should not, in my opinion, attempt to coerce them. The more one tries to constrain men’s wills, the more obstinate they become... those who are prevented from the exercise of their own religion, and not in sympathy with any other end by becoming atheists, as we know. One they have lost the fear of God, they trample under foot the law and the magistrate, and give themselves over to every sort of impiety and wickedness, beyond the power of any human law to remedy.’ (Bodin *ibid* p. 142.)

²⁶⁴ Bodin, Jean: *Colloquim of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*. Princeton, NJ., Princeton University Press. p.152.

²⁶⁵ „whatsoever a man does against his conscience is sin” and „faith and sanctity are not to be attained by study and reason, but by supernatural inspiration or infusion” are teachings inimical for any empirical order. Hobbes: *Leviathan*, ch. 29.

²⁶⁶ John Locke: *Letter on Toleration*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1968.

²⁶⁷ W.J. Stankiewicz: *In search of a political philosophy*, Routledge, London, 1993.

²⁶⁸ **Th. E. Long: „A Theory of Prophetic Religion and Politics” in: A. Shupe – J.K. Hadden eds.**

***The Politics of Religion and Social Change*, New York, 1988.**

²⁶⁹ See Robert Audi who has argued that the ethics of liberal democracy oblige not to act unless one is willing to offer and is motivated by adequate secular reasons for this act. (R.Audi: *Religious Commitment and Secular Reason*, Cambridge University Press, 2000.)

²⁷⁰ Max Weber: *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, London, Routledge, 1992.

²⁷¹ Max Weber: *Economy and Society*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978.

²⁷² „When the persons are omitted, then men judge erroneously. The reason is that they are passing judgment on themselves, and most people are bad judges in their own case.” Aristotle, *Politics*, bk. 3. 9. (1280a)

²⁷³ „In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 17, 6)

„In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21, 25)

²⁷⁴ J. Rawls: *Political Liberalism*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993.

J.Rawls: *The Law of Peoples: with, The idea of public reason revisited*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1999.

K. Greenawalt: *Private Conscience and Public Reasons*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995.

²⁷⁵ **M.C. Moen – LS Gustafson: *The Religious Challenge to the State*, Temple University Press,**

1992. p. 4.

²⁷⁶ See D. Martin: *A General Theory of Secularization*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1978.

²⁷⁷ Europe and Its Discontents, *First Things*, January 2006, p. 16-22.

²⁷⁸ „This method tyrants use of stultifying their subjects cannot be more clearly observed than in what Cyrus did with the Lydians after he had taken Sardis, their chief city, and had at his mercy the captured Croesus, their fabulously rich king. When news was brought to him that the people of Sardis had rebelled, it would have been easy for him to reduce them by force; but being unwilling either to sack such a fine city or to maintain an army there to police it, he thought of an unusual expedient for

reducing it. He established in it brothels, taverns, and public games, and issued the proclamation that the inhabitants were to enjoy them. He found this type of garrison so effective that he never again had to draw the sword against the Lydians. These wretched people enjoyed themselves inventing all kinds of games, so that the Latins have derived the word from them, and what we call pastimes they call ludi, as if they meant to say Lydi. Not all tyrants have manifested so clearly their intention to effeminize their victims; but in fact, what the aforementioned despot publicly proclaimed and put into effect, most of the others have pursued secretly as an end. It is indeed the nature of the populace, whose density is always greater in the cities, to be suspicious toward one who has their welfare at heart, and gullible toward one who fools them. Do not imagine that there is any bird more easily caught by decoy, nor any fish sooner fixed on the hook by wormy bait, than are all these poor fools neatly tricked into servitude by the slightest feather passed, so to speak, before their mouths. Truly it is a marvelous thing that they let themselves be caught so quickly at the slightest tickling of their fancy. Plays, farces, spectacles, gladiators, strange beasts, medals, pictures, and other such opiates, these were for ancient peoples the bait toward slavery, the price of their liberty, the instruments of tyranny. By these practices and enticements the ancient dictators so successfully lulled their subjects under the yoke, that the stupefied peoples, fascinated by the pastimes and vain pleasures flashed before their eyes, learned subservience as naively, but not so creditably, as little children learn to read by looking at bright picture books. Roman tyrants invented a further refinement. They often provided the city wards with feasts to cajole the rabble, always more readily tempted by the pleasure of eating than by anything else. The most intelligent and understanding amongst them would not have quit his soup bowl to recover the liberty of the Republic of Plato. Tyrants would distribute largess, a bushel of wheat, a gallon of wine, and a sesterce: and then everybody would shamelessly cry, "Long live the King!" The fools did not realize that they were merely recovering a portion of their own property, and that their ruler could not have given them what they were receiving without having first taken it from them. A man might one day be presented with a sesterce and gorge himself at the public feast, lauding Tiberius and Nero for handsome liberality, who on the morrow, would be forced to abandon his property to their avarice, his children to their lust, his very blood to the cruelty of these magnificent emperors, without offering any more resistance than a stone or a tree stump. The mob has always behaved in this way---eagerly open to bribes that cannot be honorably accepted, and dissolutely callous to degradation and insult that cannot be honorably endured."

Etienne de La Boetie: *The Politics of Obedience, The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*, The Mises Institute, Auburn, p. 64-65.

²⁷⁹ The master of seraglio can dominate it by providing luxury and security: „Nevertheless, in spite of this internal disturbance, outward tranquillity will be undisturbed: great revolutions will be hidden in the depths of the heart; grief will be repressed and joy will be restrained; obedience will be no less prompt, nor discipline less inflexible: amiability, which is always exacted, will spring from the depths of of despair itself.

We have noticed that the more women we have under our care, the less trouble they give us. A greater necessity to be agreeable, less opportunity for conspiring, more examples of submission; all this increases their fetters. They are constantly watchful of the doings of their neighbours: they seem to unite themselves with us to render themselves more dependent: they take part in our labour, and open our eyes when they are closed. What do I say? They continually incite their master against their rivals, unaware how close at hand their own punishment may be.

But all this, magnificent lord, all this is nothing without the master's presence. What can we do with this vain show of an authority which can never be entirely imparted? We represent, and that but feebly, only the half of yourself: we can only show them a hateful severity; whereas you can temper fear with hope, and are more absolute when you caress than when you threaten". Montesquieu: *Persian Letters*, Letter 97. <http://www.wm.edu/history/rbsche/plp/>

²⁸⁰ Roger Boesche: *Theories of Tyranny from Plato to Arendt*, Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania, 1996.

²⁸¹ Prophetic madness is the inspiration of Apollo, initiatory is of Dionysus, poetic is of Muses, and the erotic is of Eros.

²⁸² An important exception is J.Rawls' *A theory of justice* which would combine the truth and the peace claim.

²⁸³ St. Augustine: *City of God*, Peguin Classics, London, p. 139.

²⁸⁴ R. Inglehart – P. Norris: *Sacred and secular: religion and politics worldwide*, Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2004.

²⁸⁵ “Because our world is not the same as Othello's world. You can't make flivvers without steel—and you can't make tragedies without social instability. The world's stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can't get. They're well off; they're safe; they're never ill; they're not afraid of death; they're blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they're plagued with no mothers or fathers; they've got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about; they're so conditioned that they practically can't help behaving as they ought to behave. And if anything should go wrong, there's soma. Which you go and chuck out of the window in the name of liberty, Mr.Savage. Liberty!” He laughed. “Expecting Deltas to know what liberty is! And now expecting them to understand Othello! My good boy!” Aldous Huxley: *Brave New World*, (ch. 16.)

²⁸⁶ „Universal happiness keeps the wheels steadily turning; truth and beauty can't.” Aldous Huxley, *ibid.*

²⁸⁷ D.Heinz: „The struggle to define America”, in R. Wuthnow – R.C.Liebman eds. *The New Christian Right*, New York, 1983.

²⁸⁸ Ch. Taylor: *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited*, Harvard University Press, 2002.

Ch. Taylor: *A Catholic Modernity?* New York, Oxford University Press, 1999.

²⁸⁹ „The force of religious traditions to articulate moral intuitions with regards to social forms of an dignified human like makes religious presentation on relevant political issues a serious candidate for possible truth contents that can then be translated from the vocabulary of a specific religious community into a general accessible language. The liberal state has an interest of its own in unleashing religious voices in the public sphere, for it cannot know whether secular society would not otherwise cut itself off from key resources for the creation of meaning and identity.” J. Habermas: *Religion in the public sphere, Lecture presented at the Holberg Prize Seminar*, 29. November 2005.

http://www.holbergprize.no/downloads/diverse/hp/hp_2005/2005_hp_jurgenhabermas_religioninthe_publicsphere.pdf

Also, J.Habermas: „Religion in the Public Sphere”, in: *European Journal of Philosophy*, 2006, 1. p. 10.

²⁹⁰ F.J. Sorauf: *The Wall of Separation*, Princeton university Press, 1976.

²⁹¹ Carl Schmitt: *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, 1996, Greenwood Press, Westport–London.

²⁹² See Heidegger's famous description on the cobbler in his shop. M. Heidegger: *Being and Time*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1962.

²⁹³ A. de Tocqueville: *Democracy in America*, vol. II. Everyman's Library, p. 183.

²⁹⁴ Cicero: *On Duty*, Book I. iv. 14.

²⁹⁵ Th. Hobbes: *Leviathan*, ch. XIII.

²⁹⁶ John Passmore: *The Perfectibility of Man*, Duckworth, London, 1970.

²⁹⁷ 5: And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.
6: The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.
7: And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8: And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. (Isaiah 11, 5-8)

²⁹⁸ J.J. Rousseau: *A Discourse upon the Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind.*, Introductory Note, New York , P.F. Collier and Son.

²⁹⁹ „For there is no such thing as perpetual tranquillity of mind, while we live here; because life itself is but motion, and can never be without desire, nor without fear, no more than without sense.” Th. Hobbes: *Leviathan* I. 6. ch. 26.

³⁰⁰ G. Simmel: „The Transcendent Character of Life”, In: *On Individuality and Social Forms*, University of Chicago Press, 1971. p.354.

³⁰¹ See Sophocles' *Antigone* and *Oedipus the King*

³⁰² Montesquieu: *Persian Letters*, Penguin Classics, Letter XXXII.

³⁰³ Daniel Weissbort quotes P. Viereck in: “Peter Viereck”, *Modern Poetry in Translation New Series*, No. 18 – 2001.

³⁰⁴ As in *The Tempest* and many other utopia of the same age, the perfect order was found by chance, people reached the island of brave new world by a storm on sea – see, also Andreae's *Christianopolis*. Miranda says in *The Tempest* (Act V, Scene I)

"O wonder!

How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beautiful mankind is!
O brave new world,
That has such people in't!"

³⁰⁵ G.W.F. Hegel: *Philosophy of Right*, Batoche Books, Kitchener, 2001. p. 20.

³⁰⁶ W. James: *Pragmatism*, London – New York, Routledge, 1992. p. 68.

³⁰⁷ J.S.Mill: *On Liberty*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1982.

³⁰⁸ A.Lovejoy: *A Great Chain of Being*, New York, Harper & Row, 1960.

³⁰⁹ The phrase ‘furchtbaren Simplificateurs’ appeared in a letter of 18 July 1885 to Max Alioth, but ‘terribles simplificateurs’ was used in a letter of 24 July 1889 to Friedrich von Preen. (Jacob Burckhardt, *Briefe*. vol. 9, Basel - Stuttgart, 1980, p.203.) The idea can be found in Burke as well as in Montesquieu’s work. (Montesquieu: *The spirit of laws*, bk. 29. ch. 18. “Of the Ideas of Uniformity”).

³¹⁰ Fr. Nietzsche: *The Birth of Tragedy*, Cambridge University Press, ch. 4.

³¹¹ The *locus classicus* of this attitude concerning hard issues is from Lord Halifax: “This innocent word Trimmer signifieth no more than this, that if menschliche are together in a Boat, and one part of the Company would wight it down on one side, another would make it lean as much to the contrary, it happenth there is a third Opinion, of those who conceive it would do as well, if *the Boat went even, without endangering the Passengers.*” (Lord Halifax, „The Character of a Trimmer”, *The Works of George Savile Marquis of Halifax*, 3 vols., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1989, I, p.179.); “true Vertue hath ever been thought a Trimmer, and to have its dwelling in the middle, between the two extremes.” (Lord Halifax *ibid.* p. 243)

Later it was repeated by E. Burke and M. Oakeshott : „when the equipoise of the vessel in which he sails may be endangered by overloading it upon one side, is desirous of carrying the small weight of his reasons to that which may preserve its equipoise.” (E. Burke: *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Hackett, Indianapolis – Cambridge, p. 218.); „disposes his weight so as to keep the ship upon an even keel.” (M. Oakeshott: *Rationalism in Politics*, Liberty Fund, Indianapolis, p. 123.) “It seems really to be supposed that a Trimmer means a cowardly person who always goes over to the stronger side. It really means a highly chivalrous person who always goes over to the weaker side; like one who trims a boat by sitting where there are few people seated.” (G.K. Chesterton: *What’S Wrong with the World*, Part III. Ch. 3.)

³¹² Oakeshott, “Rationalism in Politics,” in *Rationalism in Politics and other essays, new and expanded edition*, ed. Timothy Fuller (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1991), 6.

³¹³ K. Minogue, *The liberal Mind*,

³¹⁴ Oakeshott, “The Tower of Babel,” in *Rationalism in Politics*,

³¹⁵ „Rationalism in Politics”, p. 31

³¹⁶ H. Arendt, *Human Condition* p. 222