STUDIA TERRITORIALIA

**XV
2015
3 – 4**

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

You are holding in your hands issues 3–4/2015 of the journal *Acta Universitatis Carolinae – Studia Territorialia*.

While originally not conceived monothematic, this double issue of our journal features, *inter alia*, three topically and thematically intertwined articles covering American Studies and modern U.S. history.

The volume opens with a study of the life and intellectual world of Thomas Paine. This contribution, by Ryan Hoselton, traces the origins of Paine's vision of a democratic religion for the early American Republic. The article seeks to reconceptualize Paine's religious thinking from a post-secular perspective. Building upon an analysis of Paine's political writings, most notably *The Age of Reason*, it provides a reassessment of the relationship between the Enlightenment and religious forces that shaped the democratic foundations of modern America.

Marcin Gajek, for his part, examines the presidency of the United States' second president, John Adams. Whereas Adams' prominent place in American history, as a founding father, is beyond question, he is considered rather unsuccessful as a practicing politician. Using the concept of the "politics of disjunction," Gajek succinctly shows that Adams' leadership style was heavily influenced by his earlier theoretical studies on politics. He argues that Adams' increasingly old-fashioned political views and particularly his strong attachment to the ideal of an "aristocratic republic" proved incompatible with the predominant progressive moods among the American public and political elites; consequently, this led to his failed bid for re-election and the ensuing decline of the Federalist Party.

Finally, Kristýna Onderková, in her study of the status of the Aboriginal peoples, discusses the recent controversies in Canada concerning the Indian Act. This act, adopted in 1876, has provided for a special status of the First Nations in Canada. Moreover, the act has set forth guarantees of preservation and free

development of their distinctiveness, including through the rights of self-determination and self-government. Still, it has largely failed to reduce the existing substantial differences in the living standards between Native and Non-Native Canadians and address specific socio-economic problems many Aboriginal communities have faced. The author explores the latest attempts by the Conservative Harper government to reform this act of legislation, which encountered resistance from some native groups invoking their constitutionally enshrined collective rights. She exemplifies their emancipation efforts through an analysis of the grassroots protest movement Idle No More.

We hope you will take as much pleasure reading this volume as we have enjoyed preparing it for print.

On behalf of the editorial team,

Jan Šír

ARTICLES

THOMAS PAINE AND DEMOCRATIC RELIGION IN AMERICA

RYAN PATRICK HOSELTON

Abstract

This essay examines the democratic impulses that shaped Thomas Paine's vision for a religious revolution. Many historical treatments have recognized the central role that the themes of equality and freedom played in his political ideology. This study expands on this analysis by demonstrating how Paine grounded his religious beliefs in the same soil, advocating for Americans to extend the same democratic ideals of the political revolution to reform religion. Despite the irony that most Americans who supported Paine's political vision rejected his religious ideas, many orthodox religious leaders adapted their beliefs and practices to the same democratic impulses as Paine. Thus, contrary to many treatments that simplistically juxtapose Paine and America's faithful, this essay contends that both ultimately contributed to many of the same underlying democratic shifts in religious and cultural authority in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America.

Keywords: United States, Thomas Paine, American religion, democracy, evangelicalism
DOI: 10.14712/23363231.2016.1

Introduction

Alexis de Tocqueville, the French political thinker and one of America's most famous nineteenth-century visitors, found it especially unique and striking how in America, "two perfectly distinct elements that elsewhere have often made war with each other […] have succeeded in incorporating somehow into another and combining marvelously. I mean to speak of the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom."[1] He was not the first nor the last observer of America to marvel at its people's simultaneous devotion to liberty and religiosity. On the surface, it seems

---

[1] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. and trans. Harvey Claflin Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 43.

these two impulses went effortlessly hand in hand in America's early republic. However, as some studies have demonstrated, a closer look reveals a complex shift of authority, as many influential Protestant leaders adapted their language, practices, and theology to evolving democratizing impulses – namely, equality rooted in common creation, universal human reason, and self-governing moral agency.[2]

The objective of this essay is to expand on this body of literature by highlighting an important historical connection between how Protestants and the Deist Thomas Paine (1737–1809)[3] mutually shaped democratic religion in America. Drawing from developments in postsecular theory, this paper seeks to contribute to the reassessment of the relationship between Enlightenment and religious forces and its significance for the historical formation of cultural, intellectual, and religious realities in modern America.[4] Contrary to diachronic and teleological inter-

---

[2] See for example Nathan Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989); Mark Noll, *America's God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); E. Brooks Holifield, *The Gentlemen Theologians* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1978; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007); Thomas Kidd, *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

[3] For biographies on Paine, see David Powell, *Tom Paine: The Greatest Exile* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1985); John Keane, *Tom Paine: A Political Life* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1995); and for an old but classic work, see Moncure Daniel Conway, *The Life of Thomas Paine* (New York, NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1892). On the intellectual context of the Revolutionary era and Deism, see Henry F. May, *The Enlightenment in America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1976); Gary Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1979); Morton White, *The Philosophy of the American Revolution* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1978); and Kerry S. Walters, *The American Deists: Voices of Reason and Dissent in the Early Republic* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992). On Paine's thought, see Gregory Claeys, *Thomas Paine: Social and Political Thought* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Eric Foner, *Tom Paine and Revolutionary America* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1976); Alfred Owen Aldridge, *Thomas Paine's American Ideology* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1984); and Bruce Kuklick, ed., *Thomas Paine* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006).

[4] Sarah Rivett's assessment of the implications of the recent "religious turn" – i.e. the scholarly revival of interest in religion upon realizing, in the wake of 9/11, that the secularization thesis failed and American society remains deeply religious – for early American studies marks a needed step in this direction. According to Rivett, scholars in a postsecular age must "step outside this binary of secular versus religious" and reevaluate religious cultures on their own terms if they wish to understand the role of religion as a historical and social force in America. The historiography of the Enlightenment plays a central role in this revision: "The religious turn, rapidly unfolding into an era of postsecular theory, challenges our assumption that the Enlightenment replaced religion as a dominant or mainstream explanatory mechanism." Indeed, while the "Enlightenment remains the antecedent to our modern myth of secularization," the rise of "evangelicalism offers lasting evidence that this myth bears little resemblance to historical fact." Nonetheless, many scholars continue to approach the relationship between the Enlightenment and American religious history with a "telos of secularization," a "perspective that organizes historical analysis according to either a causal interpretation" in which the Enlightenment secularized religion, or as "formally distinct registers," which presents the Enlightenment and religious cultures as unrelated or polarized threads. Such

pretations that harness Paine's legacy to trace the prehistory of secular America today by juxtaposing Paine and America's faithful according to misleading binary oppositions (i.e. sacred vs. profane, religious tradition vs. modern freethinking), this essay presents them as coinciding historical forces in molding many of the same underlying democratic shifts in religious and cultural authority in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America. Whereas several studies have qualified this secularization narrative by highlighting the overlap between the political principles of Enlightenment figures and Protestants, the comparison has seldom been extended to theology. Most continue to interpret his controversial work, *The Age of Reason* (1794), as a vitriolic polemical manual promoting Deism, attacking supernatural religion, and invoking the harsh condemnation of America's faithful. Though not inaccurate *per se*, using this text as a representative example of the clash between Enlightenment ideals and Christian belief is incomplete and consequently overemphasizes the differences between Paine and his American orthodox critics while obscuring the correspondence in their agendas to reshape religion around democratic principles.[5] Although Paine and Protestant writers reached very different theological conclusions in their reactions to their shifting cultural context, the similarities in their presuppositions and methods show how both contributed to significant deviations from pre-Revolutionary forms of American religious expression.[6]

Since the available literature has largely explored the cultural, political, and religious dimensions of the democratization of religion in America, the first two

---

approaches deepen misleading narratives of secularization that have little correspondence with religious and cultural realities both in the eighteenth century and today. See Sarah Rivett, "Early American Religion in a Postsecular Age," *MLA* 128.4 (2013), 993–94.

[5] This interpretation is exacerbated by most of Paine's biographers and others who ascribe his most significant contributions to his political thought. Thus, while many treatments have drawn considerable attention to how Paine grounded his political revolutionary thought in the notion of human equality, few have explored how he planted his religious revolution in the same soil. See among others Gordon Wood, *The Idea of America* (New York, NY: Penguin, 2011), 215; and Jack Fruchtman, Jr. "Nature and Revolution in Paine's *Common Sense*," *History of Political Thought* 10 (1989): 421–38. Ian Harris' work is a notable exception: "Paine and Burke: God, Nature and Politics," in *Public and Private Doctrine: Essays in British History presented to Maurice Cowling*, ed. Michael Bentley (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 34–62. In his ninetieth footnote, Harris explains the scant attention given to the relationship between Paine's theology and his social and political principles. Despite the fact that he wrote this in 1993, I have not found much improvement since then. Most works treat Paine's religious ideas as an example of Deism while neglecting how they impact his general thinking and agenda. By contrasting Paine and Burke, Harris more adequately acknowledges the role that equality played in both Paine's political and religious thought.

[6] See James C. Turner, *Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 73–113.

sections of this essay briefly expand on these works by examining the overlap between how Protestants and Paine extended democratic values to religious belief. The last part then contributes a theological reading of his religious writings, primarily *The Age of Reason*, in order to more closely analyze the central points of his vision for a democratic religion. The limited scope of this paper is thus not to provide a comprehensive survey of democratic thought and religion in early America but rather a finite reconceptualization of Paine's religious thought from a postsecular perspective.

American Democratic Orthodoxy

Samuel Adams voiced the sentiment of many Americans in his reaction to Paine's controversial tract, *The Age of Reason*. "Your Common Sense, and your Crisis, unquestionably awakened the public mind, and led the people loudly to call for a declaration of national independence," Adams wrote to Paine. "But when I heard that you had turned your mind to a defense of infidelity, I felt myself much astonished and more grieved, that you had tempted a measure so injurious" to the "true interest of so great a part of the citizens of the United States. The people of New England, if you will allow me to use a Scripture phrase, are fast returning to their first love."[7] Many Americans enthusiastically received Paine's political revolution as expressed in *Common Sense*, the bestselling pamphlet of the Revolutionary period.[8] However, with the exception of some Deist and humanist societies, most Americans followed the orthodox clergy in censuring his religious revolutionary vision.[9] The simultaneous acceptance of Paine's political revolution and denunciation of his religious ideas was ironic – Paine would have deemed it inconsistent – since he believed that he grounded both on the same democratic principles that they commonly embraced.

---

[7] Samuel Adams to Thomas Paine, November 30, 1802. Quoted from Matthew Harris and Thomas Kidd, eds., *The Founding Fathers and the Debate Over Religion in Revolutionary America: A History in Documents* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 175. Likewise, Ebenezer Bradford, an American clergyman, simultaneously praises Paine's political revolutionary works like *Common Sense* while denouncing his religious works. See Ebenezer Bradford, "Mr. Thomas Paine's trial, being an examination of his Age of reason" (Boston: Printed by Isaiah Thomas and Ebenezer T. Andrews, 1795), 12–13.

[8] Homer L. Calkin, "Pamphlets and Public Opinion During the American Revolution," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 64 (1940): 38–40. John Adams commented that *Common Sense* "was received in France and in all Europe with Rapture." From the entry for February 11, 1779, in Lyman H. Butterfield, ed., *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1961), 351.

[9] See Holifield, *Gentlemen Theologians*, 52–57.

Many American Protestants contributed to the same political revolutions as Paine, but they believed that the anthropological principles that ignited these political revolutions would produce a very different religious revolution than what Paine envisioned. Benjamin Rush, for example, considered "Christianity as the strong ground of republicanism," not Deism. For Rush, "republican liberty and equality," and thus opposition to monarchy, were inherent to Christian belief. Hence, he pleaded for "republicanism to ally itself to the Christian religions to overturn all the corrupted political and religious institutions in the world."[10] While many American Protestants, such as Yale President Ezra Stiles and the Baptist minister Isaac Backus, disagreed about whether Federalist or Anti-Federalist politics worked best with popular democracy, they agreed for the most part that Christianity complemented republican principles of human equality best.[11] This sentiment marked a shift away from the hierarchical social ideals of seventeenth-century Puritan New England, as articulated by John Winthrop: "God Almighty […] has so disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich and some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity; others [lowly] and in subjection."[12] As Thomas Kidd notes, the "Revolution had inaugurated a new era in the Christian view of man, in which equality by creation became the guiding principle."[13] Whereas many Puritans focused on hierarchical texts in the Bible when it came to social structure, much of the Christian political discourse following the Revolution pointed frequently to more egalitarian passages like Galatians 3:28 and Acts 17:26.[14]

In the populist developments of the first Great Awakening, there were notable precedents for many of the democratizing shifts in nineteenth-century American religion. Also, many religious leaders in the mid-eighteenth century employed a republican rhetoric in their sermons and writings that helped pave the way for

---

[10] Rush claimed that he had suggested the title of *Common Sense* to Paine. Rush to Jefferson, 22 August, 1800, in *Letters of Rush*, 2:820–21. Quoted in Noll, *America's God*, 65.

[11] See Ezra Stiles, *The United States elevated to glory and honor* (Worchester, MA: Printed by Isaiah Thomas, and sold at his book-store, 1785); and Isaac Backus, *Government and Liberty Described* (1778), in *Isaac Backus on Church, State, and Calvinism: Pamphlets, 1754–1789*, ed. William G. McLoughlin (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), 345–65.

[12] John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity*, in *The Puritans*, ed. Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 1:195.

[13] Kidd, *God of Liberty*, 144. Kidd offers helpful insight into the role of human equality in the Revolution in chapter 7, "God Has Made of One Blood All Nations of Men."

[14] Kidd, *God of Liberty,* 133–34. The KJV translations of these verses are: Gal. 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Acts 17:26: "And [God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

America's faithful to embrace the Revolution, but these ideas had not yet significantly redefined their theology. During and after the Revolution, however, many ministers infused their theology with democratic themes of liberty, human agency, and a greater confidence in natural human faculties, adapting their doctrines to a new context. Religious literature – especially doctrinal polemics – increasingly appealed to self-evident principles, reason, consciousness, and common sense alongside Scripture.

Many of these democratizing impulses culminated most dramatically – at least among evangelicals – in America's most influential nineteenth-century theologian and revivalist, Charles Finney (1792–1875). Finney – who would have rejected Paine as an infidel – likewise reshaped orthodox Protestant beliefs and practices around democratic principles. In his *Lectures on Systematic Theology* (1846), he framed his theological categories as extensions of the moral government of God, highlighting themes of justice, free will, equality, and moral agency. Due to his more optimistic anthropology, he denied original sin and redefined spiritual regeneration not as a radical change in human nature but as a "change from selfishness to disinterested benevolence."[15] Seeking to present a universally fair theology, he radically departed from central Calvinist notions by ascribing human moral agency with complete freedom and the ability to fulfill moral duties to God: "The moral government of God assumes and implies the liberty of the human will, and the natural ability of men to obey God."[16] These democratizing modifications had significant implications for his understanding of religious practice. In his earlier work, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (1835), Finney declared, "Religion is the work of man," for there "is nothing in religion beyond the ordinary powers of nature."[17] In order to inspire religious vitality, Finney argued, ministers must employ ordinary means like holding protracted revivals, developing a persuasive rhetoric, and aggressively urging men and women to exercise their reason and will to choose Christianity. Among other democratic measures, he ascribed greater religious authority to lay believers, allowed women to lead religious meetings, established voluntary societies to reform morality, and he urged ministers to dress the same as their parishioners in order to avoid the appearance of inequality.[18]

---

[15] Charles G. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology,* ed. by L. G. Jr. Parkhurst (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1994), 284. This edition is taken from the unabridged 1878 edition of his *Lectures on Systematic Theology*.

[16] Finney, *Systematic Theology*, 307.

[17] Charles G. Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1835), 9, 12.

[18] Finney, *Revivals of Religion*, 232–40.

Thomas Paine's Democratic Religious Revolution

Although evangelicals and Deists drew very different conclusions regarding religious belief and practice, their shared democratic principles contributed to the same momentous shift of religious authority in the American religious context. In 1776, Paine articulated his revolutionary vision in a pamphlet arguing for the justification of an American political revolution based on *Common Sense*. The idea that lent his political discourse its revolutionary edge was the equality of mankind: "the exalting [of] one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature." The claim to royal prerogative on the basis of hereditary privilege fundamentally violated human equality: "Mankind being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance [...] that is, the distinction of men into kings and subjects." Hence, "no one by birth could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others forever," not even King George III. Paine had convinced many Americans that living under illegitimate authority demeaned their humanity, calling upon them to enact a democratic political revolution to restore their natural rights: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again." His confidence in human nature was universal. He equated "the cause of America" to "the cause of all mankind," because liberty was a right for "every man to whom nature has given the power of feeling," regardless of "class."[19] Paine channeled an Enlightenment understanding of human nature into what E. P. Thompson terms a "new rhetoric of radical egalitarianism."[20] If all humankind was equal, as Enlightenment philosophers like Locke and Jean-Jacques Burlamaqui maintained, then Paine concluded that not only government, but also religion should look very different.[21]

Paine defended the French Revolution with the same reasoning he employed to promote the American Revolution. In the *Rights of Man* (1791), Paine developed his views on human nature more fully in order to counter the Englishman

---

[19] Thomas Paine, *Common Sense,* in *Paine: Political Writings*, ed. Bruce Kuklick (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9, 8, 11, 44, 2.

[20] Edward Palmer Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1963), 103, 121.

[21] Gordon Wood writes, "The belief in the equal moral worth and equal moral authority of every individual was the real source of both Jefferson's and Paine's democratic equality." See Wood, *The Idea of America,* 216–17. Although Wood correctly recognizes that Paine drew important implications about social harmony and minimal government from his doctrine of equality, he omits any mention of how Paine extended these implications to his religious views.

Edmund Burke's attack on the French Declaration of the Rights of Man.[22] Paine once again based his apology on human equality: since "every individual is born equal in rights with his contemporary," then "civil power […] is made up of the aggregate" of all humankind.[23] The exchange between Burke and Paine displays how late eighteenth-century political theory was heavily intertwined with theology. In contrast to Burke, who argued that the divine order sanctioned certain social inequalities, Paine contested that the Creator endowed equal social rights to every human being at creation. Any claim to privileged authority not only undermined true humanity; it also subverted God's egalitarian creation order. Since every person shared a common origin and Creator, all possess the same natural and civil rights. Owen Aldridge's assessment thus overlooks the importance of Paine's religious thought and its connection to his overall democratic and political ideology: "the religious references in *Common Sense* are superfluous to Paine's political system, which could stand by itself, as it does in *Rights of Man*. In this sense, there is no essential connection between Paine's religion and his politics."[24]

By 1793, when Paine wrote Part I of *The Age of Reason*, he had anticipated that "a revolution in the system of government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion."[25] Not "until the system of government should be changed," Paine asserted, would religious traditions and authorities "be brought fairly and openly before the world" and "a revolution in religion would follow."[26] He maintained this confidence because he had based his vision for a religious revolution on the same democratic premises as his political revolution. Just as King George III had no inherent authority to rule over anyone, neither did any religious system have authoritative knowledge or privileged access to God. For Paine, if the equality of mankind entailed the democratization of politics, it also entailed the democratization of religion.

---

22 The work that Paine responded to was Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France.* On the differences between Burke and Paine on religion and politics, see Harris, "Paine and Burke," 34–62.

23 Paine, *Rights of Man, Part I,* in *Paine: Political Writings*, ed. by Bruce Kuklick (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 85, 87.

24 Aldridge, *Paine's American Ideology*, 102.

25 Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*, in *Paine: Political Writings*, ed. Bruce Kuklick (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 269. Paine published *The Age of Reason* in two parts: Part I in 1794, and Part II in 1795. As Paine wrote Part I, he did not have access to a Bible. Thus, he wrote Part II to extend his criticisms on the Old and New Testament texts once he obtained one (after release from prison). This essay focuses on Part I because it expresses his religious revolutionary vision more thoroughly. Nonetheless, although this essay does not address this point in depth, Paine's democratic ideals deeply impacted his interpretation and use of Scripture.

26 Ibid., 268.

While many Americans seized the momentum of the political revolution for Christianity, multitudes in France harnessed it for atheism. Paine addressed *The Age of Reason* to his fellow American citizens, but he aimed to convert French atheists to his religious revolution as well. While in France, Paine witnessed the "total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion and […] articles of faith."[27] Political and religious revolutions went hand in hand in France, but Paine found the militant atheism behind it a threat to establishing true democracy, morality, and social order. In 1793, the French beheaded their royalty and transformed Notre Dame into a Temple of Reason. For Paine, this was not the kind of religious revolution that should follow a proper democratic political revolution.[28] The circumstances in France assured Paine that the vision he promoted in *The Age of Reason* was "exceedingly necessary," lest "in the general wreck of superstition, of false government, and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity, and of the theology that is true."[29] In a letter to Samuel Adams, Paine explained that he wrote *The Age of Reason* partly because "the people of France were running headlong into atheism," and he aimed to "stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article of every man's creed, who has any creed at all, I believe in one God."[30] Thus, interpretations that portray Paine's significance and contribution as an anti-religious, secularizing force deeply conflict with his own statements about the importance of religious belief for achieving true social democracy.

Paine envisioned a dramatically different revolution in religion than the Christians and the atheists. For Paine, formal religion and atheism undermined the equality of mankind. Christianity discriminated against men and women by insisting on exclusive revelation and salvation, while atheism subverted the basis of equality by negating the Creator, the giver of natural rights. Neither Christianity nor atheism held promise as a sufficient social companion to the egalitarian political revolution that Paine espoused. In a lecture to The Society of Theophilanthropists at Paris, Paine contended, "Religion has two principal enemies, Fanaticism and Infidelity, or that which is called Atheism. The first requires to be combated by reason and morality, the other by natural philosophy."[31] Christianity, Judaism, and

---

27 Ibid., 267.
28 John Keane, *Tom Paine: A Political Life* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 393–96.
29 Paine, *Age of Reason,* 267.
30 Thomas Paine, "Letter to Samuel Adams," in *The Complete Religious and Theological Works of Thomas Paine* (New York, NY: Peter Eckler, Publisher, 1895), 375.
31 Thomas Paine, "A Discourse Delivered to The Society of Theophilanthropists at Paris," in *The Complete Religious and Theological Works of Thomas Paine* (New York: Peter Eckler, Publisher, 1895), 300.

"Mahometism" exercised a form of oppression that was just as egregious as that of the political tyrants overthrown in the revolutions, Paine submitted.

Paine's Democratic Theology

In *The Age of Reason*, Paine grounded his democratic theology in a confession of faith comprised of two articles: "I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life. I believe in the equality of man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow-creatures happy."[32] First, Paine's belief in God legitimated the democratization of both civil and religious rights because God created everyone with equal natural rights. Second, human equality entailed replacing political and religious tyranny with egalitarian, universal, and democratic beliefs and practices. Paine expanded on his egalitarian understanding of God and humanity in order to promote new ways of thinking about religious knowledge, God, redemption, and morality in more democratic terms.

First, Paine sought to reshape traditional understandings of religious knowledge and revelation based on his driving theological principle of common creation.[33] He wrote, "It is always necessary that the means that are to accomplish any end be equal to the accomplishment of that end."[34] If God desired human beings to know and obey him, he would make the means to achieve this end accessible to everyone. This point comported with Paine's criteria for religious truth consisting in equality and universality: "A thing which everybody is required to believe requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal."[35] Hence, Paine's goal was to condense theology into universal beliefs that everyone could affirm.

Paine thus dismissed any revelation through human testimony as a discriminatory and mythological fabrication. Human means were finite and therefore inadequate to make any revelation known to everyone: "human language, more especially as there is not a universal language, is incapable of being used as a universal means of unchangeable and uniform information and therefore it is not the means that God useth in manifesting himself universally to man."[36] On the basis

---

[32] Paine, *Age of Reason*, 267.
[33] This first section requires more elaboration than the others since Paine largely built his other religious views on his egalitarian epistemology of revelation.
[34] Paine, *Age of Reason*, 287.
[35] Ibid., 272.
[36] Ibid., 287.

of his universal and democratic criteria, Paine discredited the Jewish Scriptures, the Christian Bible, the Muslim Quran, and every other oral, written, or illustrated revelation claiming divine origin.[37] These forms of revelation are confined to human language, which "is local and changeable."[38] Paine rejected Christianity because it undemocratically boasted special revelation. The "idea that God sent Jesus Christ to publish […] the glad tidings to all nations" struck Paine as cockamamie, for "how was Jesus Christ to make anything known to all nations?"[39] Paine protested that Jesus did not speak all the world languages, and if he had, the process of translation would have altered the message. Even more, no one was present to corroborate the verity of the virgin birth, and although the resurrection "admitted of public and ocular demonstration," it still "falls to the ground because that evidence was never" reported to everyone, everywhere, at all times.[40] "Now, had the news of salvation by Jesus Christ been inscribed on the face of the sun and the moon, in characters that all nations would have understood," Paine explained, then "the whole earth had known it in twenty-four hours, and all nations would have believed it." But still after 2,000 years, the vast majority of the world knows nothing of Jesus Christ's salvation.[41]

Thus, Paine eschewed the notion of oral and written divine revelation and believed that knowledge of religious belief and practice must be equally attainable through natural human faculties.[42] Echoing the American Declaration of Independence, Paine based his assertion of religious truth on self-evidence: "The nations who never heard of such books, nor of such people as Jews, Christians, or Mahometans, believe the existence of God as fully as we do, because it is self-evident."[43] What God has revealed about himself, such as his existence, he has made self-evident and therefore equally perceivable to all. Since God created all humankind with the same natural faculties, everyone has equal natural ability to discover universal self-evident

---

[37] Ibid., 269.

[38] Ibid., 286.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 271–72.

[41] Thomas Paine, *An Examination of the Passages in the New Testament Quoted From the Old, and Called Prophecies of The Coming of Jesus Christ,* in *The Complete Religious and Theological Works of Thomas Paine* (New York: Peter Eckler, Publisher, 1892), 249.

[42] Paine's egalitarian vision for knowledge was sometimes imaginatively consistent, believing that even aliens enjoyed equal access to knowledge: "The inhabitants of each of the worlds of which our solar system is composed, enjoy the same opportunities for knowledge as we do." Paine, *Age of Reason*, 308.

[43] Thomas Paine, *Of the Religion of Deism,* in *The Complete Religious and Theological Works of Thomas Paine* (New York: Peter Eckler, 1892), 399.

revelation.[44] The natural faculty that ascertained these self-evident religious truths was reason: "it is only by the exercise of reason that man can discover God."[45] Reason, "the choicest gift of God to man," was a natural faculty endowed to every human being at creation.[46] While a few privileged believers could enjoy exclusive revelations by utilizing their spatial and linguistic similarities, everyone in the world had reason at their disposal. For Paine, reason was the "faculty by which [mankind] is enabled to contemplate the power, wisdom and goodness of the Creator displayed in the creation."[47] Paine did not need institutions, books, or witnesses to determine or uncover religious belief for him. In a thoroughly democratic, individualistic axiom he asserted, "my own mind is my church."[48]

While reason was the universal tool for religious knowledge, creation was the universal object, "THE WORD OF GOD IS THE CREATION WE BEHOLD; and it is in this word, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God speaketh universally to man."[49] For Paine, if anyone employed his or her reason and observed creation anywhere at anytime, they could deduce the two most fundamental religious beliefs: the existence of a Creator and the equality of mankind.[50] Thus, reason and creation were God's universal means to accomplish universal ends: to indiscriminately make his existence known to all.

Second, Paine's egalitarian and universal criteria determined his understanding of God's character. As Ian Harris explains, "The God of Thomas Paine was impartial and His impartiality was used to prove that nature authorised no morally or politically significant distinctions among persons."[51] On the one hand, Paine claimed to have grounded human equality in the Creator and giver of natural rights. But on the other hand, as Harris suggests, Paine conformed his understanding of God to his anthropology: "Paine developed motifs about nature in relation to politics, and a view about God to explain them."[52] Paine posited a God who not only squared with his egalitarian anthropology but also legitimated and sanctioned it.

---

[44] As Ian Harris notes, "Paine pictured God as creating no distinctions by natural processes." See Harris, "Paine and Burke," 44.

[45] Paine, *Age of Reason,* 288.

[46] Ibid., 286.

[47] Paine, *Of the Religion of Deism,* 404.

[48] Paine, *Age of Reason,* 268.

[49] Ibid., 286. Emphasis original.

[50] Paine reproduced forms of the cosmological and ontological arguments as ways of utilizing reason to arrive at religious truths. Ibid., 288–90.

[51] Harris, "Paine and Burke," 58.

[52] Ibid., 44.

For Paine, if God became involved in human affairs, he would have to do it for everyone. Thus, he adopted a traditional Deist view of God as transcendent and withdrawn from the details of world affairs. He described God's involvement with the world thus: "It is as if he had said to the inhabitants of this globe that we call ours: 'I rendered the starry heavens visible, to teach him science and the arts. He can now provide for his own comfort, AND LEARN FROM MY MUNIFICENCE TO BE KIND TO EACH OTHER.'"[53] God created men and women with equal access to knowledge about their existence and moral duties, and he removed his presence to allow humankind to exercise their reason freely.

Paine aggressively opposed the traditional Christian doctrine of the Trinity, frequently stressing that God was one single being. One of the main goals of his religious revolution was to "return [man] to the pure, unmixed, and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more."[54] Paine's insistence on one God did not originate directly from his scientific study of nature but rather from his egalitarianism. While people worldwide varied in the number of gods they affirmed, everyone could employ their natural faculties and acknowledge at least one God. Paine aimed to reduce religious knowledge to universal facts; therefore, he affirmed the singularity of God as a universal common denominator. Paine derived his egalitarian view of God from his view of religious knowledge: he would only identify traits about God that he believed could be universally known. One arrived at a knowledge of God through contemplating creation and reflecting with his or her reason. This process led Paine to conclude that God was truthful, just, merciful, good, moral, benevolent, powerful, and wise. He suggested that "Deism" taught him "that God is a God of truth and justice."[55] The just God "acts benignly towards all."[56] Paine charged the view of God as one who limits his benefits to some and not others as inequitable and unjust: "Paine's God is nothing if not evenhanded."[57]

Paine even democratized worship of God. Christians studied their Bibles not only for knowledge about God but also as a devotional book. Paine read creation the same way: "contemplation of the works of creation" constituted his "devotional study."[58] Paine deemed worship of God on the basis of special revelation or redemptive acts no true worship at all, because it adored a God of partiality and fantasy.

---

[53] Paine, *Age of Reason,* 294.
[54] Ibid., 268.
[55] Thomas Paine, *Examination of Prophecies* (1807), in *The Writings of Tom Paine*, ed. Moncure Daniel Conway, 4 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), IV, 357.
[56] Paine, *Age of Reason*, 311.
[57] Harris, "Paine and Burke," 53.
[58] Paine, *Age of Reason,* 291–92.

Instead, the "only idea we can have of serving God is that of contributing to the happiness of the living creation that God has made."[59] True worship of God entailed imitating his impartiality and benevolence by serving and profiting humankind.

Third, Paine's view of redemption also conformed to his egalitarian criteria. Paine rejected all forms of religious redemption for two reasons. First, redemption was unnecessary because humankind never fell from its original state. Men and women still possessed all the same natural faculties and rights as when they were created, and man "stands in the same relative condition with his Maker […] since man existed."[60] Thus, human beings needed no redemption from sin, nor did they need restoration to their Creator. Second, Paine believed that any external mediation between God and human beings undermined reason and humanity. Christianity could not provide universal redemption because not everyone could know about it. The only sufficient "mediation" between God and human beings was universal reason. The notion that God would redeem some and not others struck Paine as appallingly unfair.

Paine perceived the notion of redemption as proof that abusive religious authorities invented the doctrine as a ploy for unfair gain.[61] Christians "fabricated" the doctrine of redemption in order to justify their "secondary and pecuniary redemptions," Paine asserted.[62] The church based redemption on "a mere pecuniary idea corresponding to that of a debt," rather than upon "moral justice."[63] On the basis of the idea that Christ redeemed human beings by paying their debt, the church invented "secondary" redemptions through "the selling of pardons, dispensations, and indulgences" to those who would pay money on behalf of their sinful debts or of their loved ones.[64] Paine thus rejected the doctrine of redemption as a prop for religious oppression and inequity.

Lastly, Paine's egalitarian and universal criteria determined his views on morality. He submitted that the "spirit of universal justice" should "preside equally over all mankind."[65] As Paine professed in the second and last article of his religious creed, "human equality" grounded "religious duties" to perform "justice" and "loving

---

[59] Ibid., 311.

[60] Ibid., 285.

[61] He actually examines certain Roman Catholic ideas of redemption, which most of his Protestant readers would also consider doctrinally erroneous.

[62] Ibid., 284.

[63] Ibid., 285.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Thomas Paine, *Public Good* (1780), in *The Writings of Tom Paine*, ed. Moncure Daniel Conway, 4 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), II, 35.

mercy" for the purpose of making "our fellow creatures happy."[66] Paine rested the standard of morality in a nondiscriminatory benevolent God: "the practice of moral truth, or in other words a practical imitation of the moral goodness of God, is no other than our acting towards each other as he acts benignly towards all."[67] Human moral duty consisted of emulating God's impartiality and munificence.

Since special revelations suffered spatial and linguistic limitations, Paine did not think it was fair to impose their laws and principles as moral duties on all humankind. However, if universal creation or reason revealed a moral principle, everyone had the obligation to follow it: "Religion, considered as a duty, is incumbent upon every living soul alike and, therefore, must be on a level to the understanding and comprehension of all."[68] Men and women learned their moral responsibilities in the same way that they ascertained knowledge of God: through reason and observation of nature. Creation revealed what humankind needed to know about the moral goodness of God so that everyone would learn to imitate it: "Moral principle speaks universally for itself."[69] Reason instructed men and women that revenge, persecution, and cruelty violate moral duty, while mercy and justice harmonize with divine goodness.[70]

Paine's model for human morality was Jesus Christ: "He preached most excellent morality, and the equality of man."[71] Paine maintained that Jesus never claimed to be God or to possess supernatural powers – the New Testament writers invented these beliefs. Paine's Jesus was no Savior but a humanitarian extraordinaire: "Jesus Christ founded no new system. He called men to the practice of moral virtues, and the belief of one God. The great trait in his character is philanthropy."[72] The egalitarian, rational, and philanthropic Jesus of Thomas Paine embodied pure religion.

Conclusion

Although Paine reached dramatically different theological conclusions than his late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Protestant contemporaries – especially evangelicals – their separate visions for reforming religion contributed to the same overall democratization of religious authority in nineteenth-century

---

66 Paine, *Age of Reason*, 267.
67 Ibid., 311.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid., 315.
70 Ibid., 317.
71 Ibid., 272.
72 Ibid., 282.

America. Both groups empowered lay believers by reframing theology and practice around themes of God's moral government, equality by creation, moral agency, liberty, and an optimistic view of natural human abilities like common sense and reason. Even though Paine's *The Age of Reason* was largely lambasted in the early Republic, many of its democratic religious impulses and presuppositions reflected important similarities with its critics. Thus, a closer look at Paine's religious thought in this context provides a better explanation for how religious thinkers ranging from evangelicals to Deists simultaneously arose and prospered at the turn of the nineteenth century and beyond by adapting their beliefs to widespread cultural and intellectual democratic values.

Biographical Note
Ryan Hoselton is a doctoral student in American religious history at Universität Heidelberg. His dissertation deals with experiential knowledge and biblical exegesis in early American evangelicalism, focusing particularly on Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards.
E-mail: rhoselton@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

JOHN ADAMS AND THE POLITICS OF DISJUNCTION

MARCIN GAJEK

Abstract

While John Adams' position as one of the prominent founding fathers has never been disputed, his presidency is predominantly assessed as mediocre. Many scholars argued that Adams was not only deprived of leadership and executive skills, but that he also lacked a coherent policy vision. The present paper argues that Adams' failure as a chief-executive resulted not from the lack of a set agenda but rather from his outdated visions of politics and presidency. Both his leadership style and specific policies pursued by him constitute an example of the *politics of disjunction*. His desire to follow Washington's Farewell Address was doomed to failure because of the quick transformation of American politics at the beginning of the nineteenth century. At the same time, his attachment to the classical ideal of the "aristocratic republic" was indefensible in the era of progressing democratization of popular moods. Combined, those two elements resulted in Adams failing to provide strong leadership to the Federalist party and to his inability to secure presidential re-election.

Keywords: United States, John Adams, presidency, politics of disjunction
DOI: 10.14712/23363231.2016.2

Introduction

The second president of the United States did not enjoy great popularity among his contemporaries. "Some presidents leave the executive office in fame and glory," wrote his biographer, "others in shame and disgrace. Adams left in silence and darkness."[1] After his death he became a somewhat forgotten (or, to use a gentler expression, effaced) person. He himself predicted his posthumous obscurity. "Mausoleums, statues, monuments will never be erected to me […].

---

[1] John Patrick Diggins, *John Adams* (New York: Times Books, 2003), 2. Also see George W. Carey, Introduction to *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George W. Carey (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000), vii; and Gilbert Chinard, *Honest John Adams* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964), v.

Panegyrical romances will never be written, nor flattering orations spoken, to transmit me to posterity in brilliant colors."[2] The foregoing words proved to be prophetic. Contemporary Americans feel a common admiration for George Washington, Benjamin Franklin or Thomas Jefferson. Their stars shine most brightly. Their names are recalled in almost every discussion concerning the founding era. The authors of *The Federalist Papers*, especially Madison and Hamilton, are also quoted much more often in studies devoted to the beginnings of the American republic.[3] Even in his native state, Massachusetts, the second president of the United States loses the battle for civic memory with his cousin Samuel Adams. Indeed, John Adams was by no means a popular statesman.

The uncompromising character of his philosophical and political views, combined with an impolitic behavior and the lack of personal charm, won him enemies rather than friends. He had rather impetuous personality and, at times, emotions took over his reason (as he himself admitted), which discouraged people from him.[4] He also had an unfortunate habit of being sincere and straightforward; he used to speak and write openly what he had in mind – without paying much attention to the possible misperceptions of his views. He was always ready to enter into a polemic and – as he put it himself – "quarrel with both parties and every individual in each."[5] Without a doubt, he was not a master in the art of creating a positive self-image. Actually, he "scorned self-promotion" and cared very little for popularity[6] (and this despite the fact that his diaries reveal a serious

---

[2] John Adams, "To Benjamin Rush, 23 March 1809," in *The Works of John Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, vol. 9 (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1856).

[3] All this despite the fact that many scholars stressed the great influence of Adams' political writings – especially *A Defence of the Constitutions of the Government of the United States of America* – on the Framers deliberating at the Great Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. See Manning Julian Dauer, *The Adams Federalists* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968), 50–51. According to Richard Hofstadter, the third volume of *A Defence* was quoted with a common approval during the Convention by several delegates. See Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1961), 10. Furthermore, Adams' earlier work *Thoughts on Government* as well as Massachusetts constitution drafted by him strongly influenced the authors of states' constitutions. See John R. Howe, *The Changing Political Thought of John Adams* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), 80–81; and David Waldstreicher, "Introduction: The Adams Paradox," in *A Companion to John Adams and John Quincy Adams*, ed. David Waldstreicher, Wiley-Blackwell Companions to American History (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 12.

[4] See for example Fred I. Greenstein, "Presidential Difference in the Early Republic: The Highly Disparate Leadership Styles of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (September 1, 2006): 384.

[5] Quoted in Fred I. Greenstein, *Inventing the Job of President: Leadership Style from George Washington to Andrew Jackson* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 32.

[6] Greenstein, "Presidential Difference," 385; and Andy Trees, "John Adams and the Problem of Virtue," *Journal of the Early Republic* 21, no. 3 (2001): 397–98.

preoccupation with how he will be remembered). For honesty and going against the common opinion he paid with personal unpopularity and the defeat in the 1800 presidential elections.

Against this background it is noteworthy that at the beginning of the twenty-first century we witnessed a renaissance of interest in John Adams. One of his latest biographies had been awarded a Pulitzer Prize[7] and became a basis for an HBO television mini-series which won an Emmy Award.[8] Also several new important scholarly studies devoted to Adams have been published,[9] which create an opportunity for a renewed reflection on the reasons of his political failure.

According to Fred Greenstein the second president of the United States "had no general policy vision," which combined with his lack of political skill resulted in the poor presidency.[10] While Adams' shortcomings in regards to specific executive skills as well as personal charm are commonly known (and well documented), I argue that the predominant reasons of his political failure as the president resulted not from the lack of policy vision or a set agenda. Rather the vision advocated by Adams was inadequate to his times. Adopting Stephen Skowronek's typology, introduced in *The Politics Presidents Make*, I argue that John Adams was a leader pursuing the *politics of disjunction* – that is, sustaining the regime and defending views which no longer enjoyed public support. His political activity – both as vice-president and as president – reveals a serious incompatibility with his times and with popular moods prevailing among his fellow citizens. In the light of such analysis, John Adams can be presented simply as the leader who – despite his great intellectual perspicacity[11] – was a poor reader of his own times.

As Stephen Skowronek notes, leaders who have pursued the politics of disjunction were usually unsuccessful. The second president of the United States was no exception. The balance of his presidency confirms this assumption: not only did he lose re-elections to Thomas Jefferson in 1800; his actions also caused the

---

[7] David G. McCullough, *John Adams* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2001).
[8] *John Adams*, TV mini-series, directed by Tom Hooper (2008; New York, HBO Video).
[9] Waldstreicher, *A Companion to John Adams*; Greenstein, *Inventing the Job*; Greenstein, "Presidential Difference"; and Trees, "John Adams and the Problem of Virtue."
[10] Greenstein, "Presidential Difference," 386–87.
[11] Vernon Louis Parrington, for example, in his monumental history of American thought describes Adams as "the most notable political thinker – with the possible exception of John C. Calhoun – among American statesmen." See Vernon Louis Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought, Volume 1: The Colonial Mind, 1620–1800* (Norman, OK, and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 320. For more examples of the appreciation of Adams political thought see Stephen G. Kurtz, "The Political Science of John Adams: A Guide to His Statecraft," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (1968): 607–8.

breakup of his own political camp.[12] In the present essay I will try to demonstrate why Adams' policy led to the above-mentioned defeat, but also in what ways his political philosophy was less and less compatible with prevailing moods (both of ordinary citizens and of political elites). It is important to remember that Adams was primarily a theoretician of politics, and only secondarily a practicing politician. His theoretical studies of politics greatly influenced both the style of his presidency and his political decisions. However, as the present essay is a study in political leadership rather than in political philosophy, I will analyze only selected and most relevant themes of Adams' political doctrine.

The Presidency of John Adams and Its Political Context

Before I examine in detail specific policies advocated by the second president of the United States, which constituted the politics of disjunction, some preliminary remarks concerning Adams' situation and position on the American political scene seem necessary. His predecessor in the presidential office was, one could say, the "natural first president" of the American republic. Washington's presidency was commonly perceived as the only possible aftermath of adopting the Constitution. The first elections in 1789 were simply a formal confirmation of the obvious. The thirteen former English colonies in America, shortly after the commonly undertaken war effort resulting in their independence, were still very much distinct, sovereign entities. It is a common oversimplification of textbooks to point at the Civil War as the great illustration of separate, and sometimes contradictory, interests of different states. In fact, those differences had their roots in colonial times and were already clearly visible in the founding era. Mutual distrust between the northern and southern states, strengthened by the awareness of different economic interests and social institutions, expressed itself vigorously during the process of ratifying the Constitution. Both sides were afraid that the federal government, established by the new fundamental law, might be used to promote the interests of one of these regions with simultaneous neglect of the other.[13] The only factor capable of linking together those different states and instilling a sense of fellowship was the

---

[12] However, it is an open question who contributed more to both failures: president Adams or the actual (though informal) leader of the Federalists, Alexander Hamilton? The fact is that the 1800 elections mark the beginning of the decomposition of the Federalists, who never again managed to elect their own president and by 1820 practically ceased to exist. For a comprehensive discussion of Adams' presidency see Ralph Adams Brown, *The Presidency of John Adams* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1989).

[13] Melvin E. Bradford, *Original Intentions: On the Making and Ratification of the United States Constitution* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1993), 49–50, 63–66, 80.

fresh memory of a common enemy and of the commonly fought (and won) war. Who else but the victorious General, who led the united army during the war, could become the first president of the young, newly founded republic? Washington's candidacy for that position was not only desirable but also widely expected.

The only question to be answered was: who should become vice-president? John Adams' candidacy, put up by Federalists, was to some extent accidental. The very rapprochement between Adams and his supporters resulted from political strategy rather than from proximity of political views.[14] It is true that he was perceived as a nationalist, who wanted to tighten political bonds between the states under a relatively strong federal executive. At the same time, he rather disliked the states' rights theory. Nevertheless, on many questions concerning both domestic and foreign policy he differed substantially from Hamilton. He had always sympathized with the Jeffersonian concept of the "agrarian republic" and was rather suspicious of the Hamiltonian agenda for an energetic federal government – inducing the fast growth of industry and the financial sector. In his letter to John Taylor of Caroline he wrote:

> I have never had but one opinion concerning banking […] and that opinion has uniformly been that the banks have done more injury to the religion, morality, tranquility, prosperity, and even wealth of the nation than they can have done or ever will do good. They are like party spirit, the delusion of the many for the interest of a few.[15]

Views like this certainly made his candidacy acceptable for southerners. On the other hand, there were substantial philosophical differences between him and Jefferson. The peak of those differences was reached in their assessment of the French Revolution, which the Sage of Monticello admired and Adams fiercely criticized (and, it should be noted, preceded Edmund Burke by more than a year in doing so).[16] Jeffersonian Republicans were dubbed "democratic" by their political opponents not without a reason (and the term was, obviously, used in the pejorative sense at the time). Adams feared democracy and judged it very harshly.

---

14 See Jerzy Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach Johna i Johna Quincy Adamsów (1755–1848)* [World and politics in views of John Adams and John Quincy Adams] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1989), 122.

15 John Adams, "To John Taylor of Caroline, 12 March 1819," in *The Works of John Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, Volume 10 (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1856), 375.

16 The fundamental difference of views on the French Revolution was – according to Adams' letter to Jefferson from 13 July 1813 – the main cause of the breakup of their political friendship. See John Adams, "Letter to Thomas Jefferson, 13 July 1813," in *The Adams-Jefferson Letters: The Complete Correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and Abigail and John Adams*, ed. Lester J. Cappon (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 354–56.

While the leader of Democratic Republicans was clearly fascinated by French *philosophées* and their rhetoric of "equality of men," his Bostonian colleague was a realist – educated on seventeenth-century empirical British republicanism – who disliked arguments based on abstract speculations and appealing to the natural law in the sphere of politics.

As we can see, Adams' political views posited him somewhere between the two main competing political camps. He was officially supported by one of them but was not its real leader and, in many respects, held different views from politicians constituting its core (so-called High Federalists). Hamilton himself could not run for the presidency, being too radical and nationalistic for the South. Eventually, Adams became vice-President and then President. His situation, however, was extremely difficult: differing substantially from his own political camp, he could neither fully realize the Federalists' agenda nor completely reject it. Such a situation seems a perfect embodiment of what Stephan Skowronek defined as the *politics of disjunction*. When describing its main features, the author of *The Politics Presidents Make* writes about the "impossible leadership situation." The impossibility of this situation could be compared to that of a classically tragic figure: none of the available alternatives will guarantee success (or, to stick to the realm of drama, a "happy ending"). As Skowronek explains, "To affirm established commitments is to stigmatize oneself as a symptom of the nation's problems and the premier symbol of systemic political failure; to repudiate them is to become isolated from one's most natural political allies and to be rendered impotent."[17] Moreover, such a situation characterizes a leader "affiliated with a set of established commitments that have in the course of events been called into question as failed or irrelevant responses to the problems of the day."[18] In many respects this was the situation of Adams' presidency. He was determined to continue the policy of George Washington but, because of changed circumstances, was unable to do so. One of his first decisions – to keep the personnel of Washington's administration – was clearly a manifestation of his desire to provide political continuity. It reaffirmed his affiliation with Hamiltonian Federalists and could be read as an announcement of the will to continue the policies of the past.[19]

---

[17] Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993), 39.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., 66. It is also noteworthy that at least half of Adams' Inaugural Address was devoted to contemplating the past events and outlining the basic principles upon which American government has been founded. The second president of the United States did not set any specific agenda in his speech, nor he defined any goals of national policy. Instead he included into the Address a great praise of his predecessor – clearly sending a message that his own presidency would be a continuation of Washington's work rather than something radically different. See John Adams,

However, Adams' decision to hold the presidential office without a cabinet reshuffle was more than a personnel decision. His vision of the president's role and of desirable national politics was enormously influenced by Washington's Farewell Address from September 17, 1796. At least three themes of that document became important elements of Adams' presidential agenda and need to be described in detail.

Before leaving office, the first president of the United States warned his fellow-citizens against entering into permanent foreign alliances and becoming involved in European politics. America, isolated from the old continent, should focus on self-development and realization of its own interests. The history of Europe was a history of wars and bloody conflicts. Puritan America, on the other hand, was supposed to be a "city upon a hill" and defined itself in opposition to the corrupted Old World. John Adams was determined to continue this politics of relative isolationism. The newly created young American republic should, in his opinion, acquire a certain level of stability and development in isolation and without foreign interference.

However, times were changing quickly and the Hamiltonian vision of America required acquisition of new lands and the capture of strategic bridgeheads. According to the Federalists the United States should be essentially a commercial and industrial state. Therefore, their agenda put great stress on the development of sea routes. It also included the acquisition of Florida and Louisiana, as well as an offer of assistance to Francisco de Mirenda, who was fighting for the independence of South America from Spanish supervision. In the Federalists' vision, the federal government should energetically protect American shipping interests with their expanding trade, which included the spice trade of the East Indies. They were determined to challenge Spanish and Portuguese sea powers and demanded that both make their ports available for American ships.[20] Overall, as Dauer maintains,

> Hamiltonian policy meant the abandonment of the neutrality and nonintervention policy advocated by Washington. It meant involvement in foreign adventure. At least a temporary alliance with England would have followed a declaration of war against France, and involvement in South America would probably have made this a more lasting one […]. What was projected was a complete change in the position that the United States had held since independence.[21]

"Inaugural Speech to Both Houses of Congress," in *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George W. Carey (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000).

[20] For detailed discussion of the Federalists' foreign policy agenda see Dauer, *The Adams Federalists*, 172–97.

[21] Ibid., 195–96.

Significantly, the desire for war with France was in 1797 quite widespread among the commercial group of American citizens who sought ways to expand their commerce. The Federalists were also pushing for a war in order to discredit Jeffersonian Republicans (opposing the war) as disloyal and unpatriotic.[22]

Against this background, Adams' firm opposition to the Federalist agenda has to be interpreted in terms of the politics of disjunction. Not only was he determined to continue Washington's policy of neutrality, he also shared his predecessor's fear (inherited after English republicanism) of a large standing army, which would be necessary if America was to enter the war with France or Spain.[23] He wanted to maintain peace at all costs and suggested the development of navy – that is defensive forces. However, for peace with France (and peace was undoubtedly Adams' merit) the Federalists paid the price of a serious decomposition of their political camp, which in turn led to the lost elections in 1800.[24] Moreover, the flow of history soon proved that Adams had tried to resist the inevitable. The purchases of Louisiana in 1803 and of Florida in 1819 clearly demonstrated that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the American republic had already entered the era of quick territorial expansion.

Discrepancies between the second president of the United States and the Federalists were not limited to the foreign policy. As Dauer claims, there were crucial differences between them regarding fiscal and banking questions.[25] Unlike Hamilton, Adams did not favor the wealthy class over others. He believed that banks, through certain financial operations, rob the community. It seems that his puritan mentality made him suspicious of emerging capitalism. "His strict moral code," writes Dauer, "caused him to condemn anything which smacked of speculation."[26] He could not accept the idea of a profit disconnected from labor and based solely on interest. In his letter to John Taylor he describes "paper wealth" as "the madness of the many for the profit of a few."[27] His views on economic and fiscal issues were,

---

[22] Ibid., 198–99.

[23] In his Farewell Address, Washington suggested to "avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty." See George Washington, "The Farewell Address," in *The Washington Papers*, ed. Saul K. Padover (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1955), 313. Adams' desire to maintain American neutrality was expressed already in his Inaugural Address, which could also be interpreted as a portent of continuation of his predecessor's policy in this regards. For more on that issue, see McCullough, *John Adams*, 469.

[24] Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach*, 16.

[25] Dauer, *The Adams Federalists*, 63–64.

[26] Ibid., 57.

[27] John Adams, "To John Taylor, 14 April 1814," in *The Works of John Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, Volume 6 (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1856), 508.

obviously, an obstacle for the uninhibited growth of commercial groups. Instead he was in agreement with the agrarians, even when he opposed them on particular issues of political theory. Hamilton wanted to build a net of federal roads, increase the role of federal courts, develop federal bureaucracy and strengthen the Treasury Department. All this required raising taxes. Adams believed that those plans only supported the interests of one part of the country. He feared that realizing the Hamiltonian agenda would breakup the Union. Yet again, Adams' stance on this issue reveals his lack of readiness to adapt to changing times. He was, to some degree, an idealist believing in strict republican virtues (yet reinforced by puritan moderation). "To Adams," explains his biographer,

> once a regime starts to face the future and begins to develop and modernize, there is little chance for the restoration of civic virtue and the classical return to first principles. "Will you tell me how to prevent riches from becoming the effects of temperance and industry?" Adams asked Jefferson as late as 1819. "Will you tell me how to prevent luxury from producing effeminacy intoxication extravagance Vice and folly?"[28]

Having studied the works of ancient writers, Adams saw the only chance for the lasting of any republic in the preservation of strict civic virtues. Although he admitted that people are self-interested and they must be encouraged to virtue, he was also afraid of any social and economic institution that might increase people's passions and desires. And once again, history brutally verified his ideals. Paradoxically, during Jefferson's administration the Hamiltonian economic agenda started to be consistently implemented. Once again, Adams' leadership proved to have all the traits of the politics of disjunction – aiming at the perpetuation of a regime and social structure which had already become outdated and no longer enjoyed general support.

Finally, Adams adopted quite literally Washington's warning against the development of the party system. He consequently presented himself as a "man of the whole nation" and distanced himself from party struggles. Already in his Inaugural Address he stressed that he was going to impartially represent the interests of the whole country and not just separate regions.[29] Such an attitude (leaving aside Washington's influences) resulted largely from Adams' political theory.[30]

---

[28] Diggins, *John Adams*, 167.
[29] John Adams, "Inaugural Speech to Both Houses of Congress," in *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George W. Carey (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000), 639.
[30] It should also be noted that the disdain for political parties and geographical divisions driven by interests was a steady element of Adams' thinking since his youth. See McCullough, *John Adams*, 397.

He perceived the realm of politics in the terms of a class struggle between the poor and the rich. In order to achieve political stability, both groups should be represented in the legislature (hence Adams' stress on the superiority of bicameral over unicameral legislatures). Political representation, however, is not enough to prevent violent struggles that can potentially endanger the stability of society. What is necessary is a strong executive, acting as an arbiter and stabilizing the entire system. Adams' conception of presidency rested, to a great degree, on the foregoing vision of politics. "Equally skeptical of Jefferson's democracy as well as Hamilton's plutocracy," explains Diggins, "Adams looked to the executive to assure that government serves neither the many nor the few but the public good at large. Thus he entered the presidency assuming that if he conducted himself fairly, justly and independently, he would enjoy the respect and trust he deserved."[31]

However, as Jerzy Grobis observes, Adams (perceiving himself as the continuator of Washington's policy) failed to notice substantial changes in the attitude of his contemporary politicians, who were more often ready to accept parties' interests rather than those of the president.[32] Jefferson's victory in the 1800 elections proved that Adams' vision of an independent and impartial executive was, at the time, already a daydream. George Washington attempted to pursue such a policy by appointing people from all political factions for department heads in his administration, including both Jefferson and Hamilton. But before his second administration closed, this concept had already been abandoned out of necessity. By 1800, progressing political polarization was making the presidential office more and more dependent on the support of one of two major political parties and according to Manning Dauer, this was precisely the reason why Washington refused to run for the third term.[33] He understood very well that times had changed.

It seems that his successor had some difficulties with understanding that. Moreover, he did not take into account that even being the "Atlas of Independence" did not make him a "Cincinnatus of Mount Vernon."[34] Adams, despite some

---

[31] Diggins, *John Adams*, 13. Compare with Douglas Bradburn, "The Presidency of John Adams," in *A Companion to John Adams and John Quincy Adams*, ed. David Waldstreicher, Wiley-Blackwell Companions to American History (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 167, 169, 171; and Greenstein, *Inventing the Job*, 32.

[32] Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach*, 136.

[33] Dauer, *The Adams Federalists*, 262.

[34] Adams got the nickname of "Atlas of Independence" as a result of his devotion and extremely hard work during the First Continental Congress. He was one of the busiest delegates, participating in the works of more than 100 commissions and committees. See Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach*, 79. Also see Peter Shaw, *The Character of John Adams* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1976), 76–105. "Cincinnatus of Mount Vernon" was, of course, a nickname of George Washington.

signs of public respect, never enjoyed the enormous charisma that characterized Washington, whose very presence at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia was crucial for holding it together. In some of the southern states, where the position of anti-Federalists was very strong, the Constitution was ratified only because of a tacit understanding that the "father of the nation" would become the first president. With such a strong position and such prestige, Washington could relatively successfully pursue the policy of an independent, impartial president. What was possible in his case, however, could not succeed in the case of the lawyer from Braintree. As Dauer writes, Adams "still hoped throughout his administration, for the President to be regarded as above party, as representing the national interest" but "[t]he force which actually prevailed in the development of American politics was the growth of parties. The authority of the President rested upon political power as represented by these parties."[35]

Also, the idea of a president as truly national leader – uniting all member-states of the Union, despite all the differences and partisan hostilities – became problematic even before Adams took that office. Nothing illustrates it better than the outcome of 1796 elections in which Massachusetts lawyer received only two electoral votes south of Mason–Dixon line. "There was no one to replace Washington as a national figure," observes Douglas Bradburn, "and the fantasy that the president could somehow stand above region – without an aggressive engagement in the nascent party system – should have been clear to Adams."[36] Should have been, but – as Adams' writings and letters attest – was not. Also in this regards, the second president of the United States lacked a precise insight into his times. While he "always prided himself on his independence," notices Bradburn, "his independence too often translated into isolation."[37]

Adams' situation as a leader was all the more difficult because of problematic relationships with his own political camp. Throughout his presidency he felt Hamilton's presence behind his back. Members of his own cabinet often expressed greater loyalty to the New York politician than to their formal superior. By the end of his term, Adams' "grip on his office had become doubtful."[38] His determined decision to save peace with France in 1799 – contrary to Federalists' wishes – was the last attempt to regain control over his cabinet. He did not hesitate to purge it when its members conspired to scuttle his peace mission and preserve the party's war program. But that action took place too late. According to Skowronek,

---

[35] Dauer, *The Adams Federalists*, 263.
[36] Bradburn, "The Presidency of John Adams," 169.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*, 67.

Adams's final assertion of independence may have saved the nation from certain disaster, but it failed to save him from political disgrace. When push came to shove and Adams seized control in his own right, his own compatriots charged him with betrayal, and he went to the nation having repudiated the very system he seemed to represent.[39]

Perhaps most striking in the whole situation was the reaction of the main character in the story. According to Adams, "[t]he party committed suicide; they killed themselves and the national President [...] at one shot, and then as foolishly or maliciously indicated me for the murder."[40] The foregoing quote is a perfect illustration of both Adams' straightforwardness and his lack of readiness to practice party politics. Such a combination could not result – in the era of sharp crystallization of party divisions – in anything but a political failure.

Selected Elements of Adams' Political Philosophy

The style of his presidency and his vision of political leadership were not the only factors that distanced Adams from the majority of his contemporaries. His most fundamental philosophical views were quite unpopular as well. By defending them publicly (and stubbornly), the second president of the United States contributed all the more to practicing the politics of disjunction.

One of the best-known, and most often elaborated, elements of Adams' political philosophy was his appreciation of "natural aristocracy." Through historical studies he became convinced that every regime leads to the development of its own elite (or aristocracy). The "passion for distinction," as he wrote in *Discourses on Davila*, is one of the most profound feelings animating human behavior.[41] Sooner or later, in any society, it will lead to the rise of social ranks and distinctions. More importantly, Adams perceived natural aristocrats as both useful and necessary – "for all governments, even the most democratical, are supported by a subordination of offices, and ranks too. None ever existed without it but in a state of anarchy and outrage, in a contempt of law and justice, no better then no government."[42] Their existence, then, was not only natural but also beneficial for the political

---

[39] Ibid., 67–68.

[40] John Adams, "To James Lloyd, 6 Feb. 1815," in *The Works of John Adams*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, Volume 10 (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1856), 115.

[41] John Adams, "Discourses on Davila," in *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George W. Carey (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000), 311.

[42] John Adams, "A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America," in *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George W. Carey (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000), 113.

community. That is why Adams thought of philosophical doctrines appealing to universal equality as naive and annoying. "[W]hat are we to understand here by equality?" – he asked while commenting on Turgot's idea of government "founded on equality of all citizens."

> Are the citizens to be all the same age, sex, size, strength, stature, activity, courage, hardiness, industry, patience, ingenuity, wealth, knowledge, fame, wit, temperance, constancy, and wisdom? Was there, or will there ever be, a nation, whose individuals were all equal, in natural and acquired qualities, in virtues, talents, and riches? The answer of all mankind must be in the negative. It must then be acknowledged, that in every state […] there are inequalities which God and nature have planted there, and which no human legislator ever can eradicate.[43]

The foregoing words come from Adams' *Defence of the Constitutions of the Government of the United States of America* and had been published less than two years before he became vice-president. Nothing illustrates better the disjunction between Adams' philosophical views and progressing leveling trends than a comparison with the opening of the famous *Democracy in America* written by Tocqueville forty years later, in which he characterized American society of that time in the following way:

> Amongst the novel objects that attracted my attention during my stay in the United States, nothing struck me more forcibly than the general equality of conditions. […] The more I advanced in the study of American society, the more I perceived that the equality of conditions is the fundamental fact from which all others seem to be derived, and the central point at which all my observations constantly terminated.[44]

Forty years after the publication of Adams' work, the dominant feeling among Americans was already "passion for equality."[45] But obviously, egalitarian trends started much earlier and intellectuals' sympathies for democratic ideals of the French Revolution were already strong in the times of Adams' leadership. Against their background, his writings had to be perceived by a substantial part of the general public as conservative, or even reactionary. Similarly, his campaign for establishing certain titles for the highest officials and ceremonies modeled on

---

[43] Ibid., 141–42. Also see ibid., 148.

[44] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Bruce Fronhen, transl. Henry Reeve (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2002), 3.

[45] Ibid., 463.

the patterns of European etiquette contributed greatly to solidifying his image as a "concealed monarchist." Adams' motives (as his letters prove) were honest and based on the desire to increase the authority and prestige of the young republic's president on the international arena. But those efforts – undertaken in times of the quick dissemination of progressive democratic and egalitarian ideals of the French revolution – were completely wrongly perceived.[46] While French revolutionists were abolishing all titles and distinctions (treated as anachronisms of the feudal era), Adams tried to persuade Congress to adopt the title "Majesty" for Washington. Republican press and Adams' political opponents reacted with violent attacks. He was accused not only of monarchical sympathies but also of betraying liberty and republican ideals. According to his critics, "[t]he pseudo-president, the 'Duke of Braintree,' was planning to marry one of his sons to the daughter of George III, and thus America would awake one day to discover it had an inherited monarchy and had been reunited with England."[47] Anyone who knew Adams' true political views could tell that those accusations were unfair. In his letter from October 18, 1790, to Samuel Adams, he assured: "It is a fixed principle with me, that all good government is and must be republican."[48] Nevertheless, the monarchist label clung to Adams and his chances for explaining the subtle complexity of his political convictions, as well as for correcting all misunderstandings, were close to none.

The foregoing remarks must be considered in the broader intellectual and political climate dominating in America at the time. Thomas Paine's pamphlet *The Rights of Man* – a direct polemic with Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* – was welcomed by progressive American thinkers and politicians with a common enthusiasm. Such a political climate surely was not conducive to formulation of the theories of natural aristocracy. Democratic social ideas propagated by Thomas Jefferson were gaining greater and greater recognition at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this context, the political writings of vice-president

---

[46] As Joyce Appleby noticed, Adams' attempt to establish elaborate titles for Washington were probably influenced by his fascination with political theory of Jean Louis De Lolme. However, in this particular case "De Lolme proved to be a siren song for Adams, pulling him away from his grasp of American sensibilities." See Joyce Appleby, "The New Republican Synthesis and the Changing Political Ideas of John Adams," *American Quarterly* 25, no. 5 (1973): 589.

[47] Diggins, *John Adams*, 161. Also see Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach*, 124–25, 131, 142. Parrington writes extensively on how the unfortunate moment of publication of Adams' philosophical works discussing the problem of natural inequality and aristocracy coincided with his political efforts aiming at introduction of the titles for high officials. See Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, 311.

[48] John Adams, "To Samuel Adams, 18 October 1790," in *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George W. Carey (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000), 665.

Adams were damaging both to him and to the Federalist camp. His *Discourses on Davila*, originally published as separate letters in *The Gazette of the United States*, only deepened the author's political isolation.[49] Ruthlessly attacked by the Left, he was simultaneously regarded as too straightforward by the republican, more conservatively oriented Right. In response to the critique, Adams consistently tried to present himself as a "man of the whole nation," but this strategy – as explained earlier – was no longer viable. The French Revolution marked the beginnings of modern democracy as well as modern political parties (also in America), and Adams was too uncompromising thinker to change his views only because of their unpopularity.

The second president of the United States looked with a great concern at the revolutionary turmoil in France. He was afraid of the revolution, which he identified with the state of lawlessness and the decay of society. The French events did not remind him of the American severance of ties with Britain originating in 1776. Diggins, summarizing his fears, wrote:

> Against the crusading revolutionary exuberance of Jefferson and Tom Paine, who also believed that heads must fall so that freedom may arise, Adams sought to keep things in perspective. "Our was a revolution against innovation," he emphasized, reminding Americans that the "spirit of '76" was meant to preserve old freedoms, not to propagate new fictions.[50]

For Adams, the art of restraining men's passions and desires, through wise and well-designed institutions, was the peak of political science. The French Revolution was, from this perspective, a great misunderstanding. Instead of reducing emotions and passions, it kindled them. Moreover, it resulted in the introduction of a democratic form of government – the one which is the most conducive to people's passions and devoid of checks and balances. In democracy – the regime that gives direct and ultimate power to the people – passions reach their critical level. That is why, in Adams' opinion, democracy means a state of permanent disorder and easily transforms into anarchy. He noticed in "pure democracy" exactly the same disadvantages that had already been identified by Plato. In such

---

[49] Their publication was suspended after the 37th letter because of the overwhelming negative public reaction. See Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach*, 129, 131.

[50] Diggins, *John Adams*, 7–8. For a summary of Adams' views on the French Revolution see Zoltán Haraszti, *John Adams & the Prophets of Progress* (New York, NY: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964), 180–234; and Edward Handler, *America and Europe in the Political Thought of John Adams* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), 156–90.

a regime, a class struggle between the rich and the poor is inevitable. The latter will, at a certain moment, desire to take property from the former: debts will be annulled, heavy taxes laid on the rich and, ultimately, equal distribution of wealth will be enforced. Private property was for Adams a sacred right, which is why he perceived democracy as a threat to human freedom. The people, contrary to what was said by French *philosophées*, is not the best guardian of its liberties. In fact, it is the worst one. "Adams said in 1788 what Lincoln said in 1838: The Constitution is necessary to protect people from their worst enemy – themselves."[51] He was convinced that democracy, which is not based on the rule of law – but rather on human passions – never lasts long. In a short time it exhausts itself and commits suicide.[52] Needless to say, such views did not win him sympathy in the democratizing political environment of America at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Adams looked for the remedy against excesses of pure democracy in the old, tested British constitution. He consequently defended not only the idea of a mixed government but also the notion of an "aristocratic republic" – based on the qualification, education and wisdom rather than changeable, unpredictable, irrational passions of the people. In the debate between *Anglomanes* and *Jacobins* Adams took part of the former.[53] However, while his views – expressed in the *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* – were rooted soundly in the context of contemporary European discussions, they were at the same time more and more "anomalous" on American soil. As Gordon Woods observes, Adams' political and constitutional theory was simply "contrary to the central thrust of [American] constitutional thought in 1787."[54]

It is noteworthy that Adams perceived human nature in universal terms. Therefore, he refused to treat American experiment in government as something exceptional. He was convinced that the same laws which apply to all societies and political phenomena bound also his fellow citizens. American political and social institutions were exposed to the same passions and dangers that were well documented and analyzed by historians and political thinkers; hence his devotion

---

[51] Diggins, *John Adams*, 172.
[52] For Adams' views on democracy see Stanisław Filipowicz, *O władzy grzechu i grzechach władzy. Rozważania o rodowodzie amerykańskiego antyutopizmu* [On the power of sin and the sins of power. Reflections on the genealogy of American anti-utopianism] (Warszawa: Oficyna Naukowa, 1992), 216–18. Also see Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought*, 313–16; Dauer, *The Adams Federalists*, 42, 50, 53; Diggins, *John Adams*, 6–8, 172; and Grobis, *Świat i polityka w poglądach*, 112.
[53] For more on this subject see Appleby, "The New Republican Synthesis."
[54] Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 580.

to studying history.[55] This scholastic disposition influenced his understanding of politics as well as the vision of his own presidency. One might argue that being so deeply rooted in universal historical studies at times made Adams a poor reader of his own times and specifically American needs and expectations.

Conclusion

The foregoing considerations seem to confirm the thesis that John Adams is an example of a political leader pursuing the politics of disjunction. He undertook the great effort of sustaining the classical republican understanding of politics and political institutions in an era of progressive democratization. Both his philosophical views and political decisions made as the head of the executive branch went against the tide. In an era of democratization and progressing egalitarianism he praised the positive role of aristocracy and social hierarchy. While the progressive world marveled at the achievements of the French Revolution, he praised British republicanism as the greatest form of government that had ever existed.

The question that needs to be addressed at this point is whether Adams was simply a poor observer of his immediate political surroundings or if he consciously refused to conform to them. Many arguments support the latter answer. According to Parrington, Adams never bowed to the mood of the crowd and never cared for popularity when expressing his views.[56] He always spoke from the principle he believed was right. He surely was, as Diggins aptly described him, a "moralist in politics":

> Adams was a case of Niebuhr's "moral man in immoral society," a president who believed in honor and upheld ideals that, curiously enough, his own modernist theory of the "machinery of government" did not require. Convinced that human nature is inevitably egoistic and prone to sin, he believed that the president cannot count upon ideals as motives of action. Thus, the very virtues he asked of himself he doubted he would find in the people themselves.[57]

---

[55] Kurtz, "The Political Science," 610, 612–13. Adams devotion to studying politics resulted in a great erudition on one hand but also in the imitative nature of his own political thought. Zoltán Haraszti claims that at least three-fourths of Adams' two major works – *Defence of the Constitutions* and *Discourses on Davila* – are direct quotations from other authors like Adams Smith or Machiavelli. See Haraszti, *John Adams & the Prophets of Progress*, 46–47.

[56] Parrington, *Main Currents of American Thought*, 308.

[57] Diggins, *John Adams*, 173.

In the light of the foregoing quote, Adams' leadership suits a category of the politics of disjunction. Impressive historical and philosophical studies resulted in the conviction that the young American republic needed the perpetuation of already tested principles of British constitutionalism, supplemented by the mechanism of checks and balances as well as the existence of an enlightened, noble leadership. He advocated public policies and believed in philosophical ideals that were unacceptable for many of his contemporaries. He himself was probably quite aware of that fact. Several weeks after the presidential inauguration, he spoke of his isolation in almost every letter to his wife.[58] With time, frustration and bitterness grew in him, but could events have transpired differently? "Combine Adams' philosophical reflections with his political aspirations, and what do we get?" – asks his biographer. "A formula for frustration. While he doubted that the people had a capacity to think rationally and to act virtuously, he would see himself as doing so, only to wonder why he went unappreciated in a democracy of the unenlightened."[59] He was a tragic figure, whose conservative social policy was not accepted among his contemporaries. His leadership is an example of the failure of the "man of principles" in the realm of politics.

Biographical Note

Dr. Marcin Gajek is associate professor at the Institute of Sociology at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw. His research interests include political philosophy and history of political thought. E-mail: marcin.gajek@civitas.edu.pl

---

[58] Dauer, *The Adams Federalists*, 120.
[59] Diggins, *John Adams*, 11.

THE HARPER GOVERNMENT, THE ABORIGINAL RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, AND THE INDIAN ACT OF 1876

KRISTÝNA ONDERKOVÁ

Abstract

A debate on the reform of the frequently criticized Indian Act of 1876 – the basic law governing the rights and responsibilities of First Nations and their special status within Canada – is getting more intense with the ongoing socio-economic problems of Aboriginal peoples. Whereas the federal government emphasizes self-sufficiency and financial responsibility, First Nations require the assertion of their constitutional rights to self-determination and self-government in any future reform. This paper examines various proposals to reform the Indian Act and their potential effect on the status of First Nations. In particular, it focuses on Aboriginal policy stances of the Harper Government and the First Nations' reaction to the federal government's approach. The author concludes by arguing that any effort to change the current situation will run into problems because of the discrepancy of ideas on how to implement the reform of the Indian Act and how to enforce the right to self-determination.

Keywords: Canada, First Nations, Indian Act of 1876, right to self-determination, Idle No More
DOI: 10.14712/23363231.2016.3

Introduction

The debate around the controversial Indian Act of 1876, which – along with the Canadian Constitution of 1982 – provides the basis for the rights of one of the largest groups of Indigenous peoples in Canada, the First Nations, has been going on since its approval. However, resounding calls for the act's amendment or even replacement have been recently issued both by the country's political elites and First Nations' leadership.

Since 1969 when the White Paper, a first major federal attempt to replace the Indian Act, was presented, successive governments have more or less continued

to endorse a special status for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Nevertheless, the substantial difference in living standards of Native and non-Native Canadians has not diminished, and the socio-economic problems of many Aboriginal communities, such as bad housing situation, alcoholism, domestic violence, sexual abuse, suicides, unemployment, poverty and drug addiction, remain.[1] Canadian governments have tried to solve the issue and find new ways to improve the conditions of Aboriginal peoples but they have failed to achieve amelioration of the Native peoples' situation.

In contrast with the previous Liberal governments' approach of "equal negotiation" – an approach towards Native peoples consisting in negotiations and dialogue between the federal government and Aboriginal communities –, the Conservative legislative framework has adopted a neoliberal way of dealing with the issue. The Conservative Government calls for responsibility and self-sufficiency for Indigenous peoples. It seeks to boost their economic activity and reduce Aboriginal dependence on federal funding and social benefits.

The Idle No More (INM) protest movement founded in 2012 in reaction to some of the federal government's laws pertaining to Indigenous peoples promotes the Aboriginal rights to self-determination and self-government, sustainable development, and environmental protection that are inextricably linked with Indigenous identity. Both the First Nations communities and the federal government thus appear to aim for self-governance of Indigenous peoples; however, the ways by which these two groups want to accomplish such a goal vary considerably.

The aim of the article is to present the Conservative Government's and First Nations' ideas on how to reform the Indian Act of 1876 in order to enforce the Aboriginal rights to self-determination and self-government, and more precisely, to examine the extent to which the two ways of how to achieve Indigenous self-government differ.

The first part will provide a theoretical framework introducing and comparing the main approaches that deal with the status of Native peoples – the Hawthorn Report's and Alan Cairn's concept of "differentiated citizenship," in contrast to the White Paper and Thomas Flanagan's philosophy of "undifferentiated citizenship" – with regard to the question of the Aboriginal rights to self-determination and of self-government. The Idle No More movement's statements and stances on the issues of self-determination and self-government on the one hand, and the

---

[1] Éric Gourdeau, "Les autochtones et le Québec," in *Le Québec aujourd'hui: Identité, société et culture*, ed. Marie-Christine Weidmann-Koop (Saint-Nicolas: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2003), 137–38.

rhetoric and reform proposals of the Conservative Government on the other hand, will be examined in the second part of the article.

Aboriginal Peoples, First Nations, and the Indian Act of 1876

"Aboriginal peoples," "Native peoples," and "Indigenous peoples" are all common terms used for the descendants of the first inhabitants of Canada who most probably came to the continent across the Bering Strait about 12,000 years ago.[2] Section 35 (1) of the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 reads that the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are recognized and affirmed. Section 35 (2) explicitly recognizes the rights of three Aboriginal groups: the Indians (First Nations), the Métis (the half-caste descendants of Aboriginal peoples and European settlers) and the Inuit (Eskimos).[3]

This constitutional framework was groundbreaking, since the Constitution Act of 1867, also known as the British North America Act (specifically its Section 91 [24]), had established that the federal government had legislative jurisdiction over Indians and lands reserved for Indians, which had enabled the federal government to unilaterally impose the Indian Act on Aboriginal peoples.[4] The Constitution Act of 1982 thus constitutionally enshrined Indigenous rights for the first time in Canadian history.

The Indian Act of 1876 remains the basic legal anchor of First Nations' rights and responsibilities in the current Canadian legal system. It intervenes in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of the lives of First Nations. It covers both private and public questions such as Indian Status and band membership, property rights, housing, inheritance, administration of reserves, political rights and freedoms, elections, taxation, Indian lands and resources, and education.[5]

The original intention of the legislation was to absorb Indians into the rest of Canadian society. Indians were to be "civilized" and Christianized, and their traditional community structures, ceremonies and rituals were to be eliminated. The main purpose was assimilation;[6] however, some provisions of the Indian Act were

---

[2] Olive Patricia Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earlier Times* (Toronto: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 21.

[3] The Constitution Act, 1982, Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), c 11, http://laws-lois.justice .gc.ca/eng/Const/FullText.html.

[4] The Constitution Act, 1867, 30 & 31 Vict, c 3, http://canlii.ca/t/ldsw.

[5] Indian Act, R.S.C. 1985. c. I-5. http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/I-5/page-1.html.

[6] Carrie Bourassa and Ian Peach, Reconceiving Notions of Aboriginal Identity. Research paper for the Institute on Governance (November 2009), 4, http://iog.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/01 /November2009_Reconceiving-Aboriginal-Identity.pdf.

designed to protect First Nations, since the government was obliged by treaties to protect Indian interests and lands. Nevertheless, the Indian Act eventually proved to be little more than a colonial instrument for subordination of First Nations since it essentially deprived them of self-governance.[7]

Many First Nations have an ambiguous relationship towards the Indian Act. They denounce its paternalism, but they are reluctant to renounce some of its protections (one of the most advantageous of such protections is Section 87 of the Indian Act, which exempts Status Indians from provincial and federal taxation).[8] Without these protections, the risk that First Nations were assimilated into Canadian non-Native society would increase.

Citizens Plus or "Undifferentiated" Citizens?

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples affirms the importance of the right to self-determination of all peoples "by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."[9] In its Articles 3 and 4, the UNDRIP states that Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination, and in exercising their right to self-determination, Aboriginal peoples are endowed with the "right to autonomy or self-government" in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.[10]

The inherent right to self-government is recognized as an existing Aboriginal right under Section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982.[11] It is based on the belief that Indigenous peoples have the right enforceable through the courts to govern themselves in internal matters concerning their communities due to their unique identities, cultures, traditions and institutions.[12] The right to self-government includes jurisdiction over the definition of governance structures, (band)

---

[7] Duncan Ivison, *Political Theory and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 118.

[8] Isabelle Montpetit, "Background: The Indian Act," *CBC News*, May 30, 2012, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/background-the-indian-act-1.1056988.

[9] United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly, October 2, 2007, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.

[10] United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

[11] Although recognition of the right to self-government is not explicitly stated in Section 35, it is interpreted in this manner. See Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, The Government of Canada's Approach to Implementation of the Inherent Right and the Negotiation of Aboriginal Self-Government, 2010, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100031843/1100100031844#esga.

[12] Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, The Government of Canada's Approach.

membership in First Nations, family matters, education, health services, and ownership of land.[13]

In the following part, I will discuss the concepts that are inextricably linked with the questions of the legal anchoring of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, and with their rights to self-determination and self-government, developed by scholars Thomas Flanagan and Alan Cairns. I will analyze and compare their theoretical approaches to the Aboriginal question in order to see the issue from very different perspectives. The concept of "undifferentiated citizenship" advocated by Flanagan was partly influenced by the Trudeau Government's White Paper, and it partly forms the ideological basis for the policy of the Harper administration.[14] Cairns' concept of "citizens plus" is based on the recommendations of the Hawthorn Report.

In 1966–67, Harry B. Hawthorn published A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies, also known as the Hawthorn Report. This was the first impetus for a significant reform of the Indian Act since its adoption because it drew attention to the poor conditions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.[15] Hawthorn argued that the disadvantaged situation of Aboriginal communities stemmed from ill-designed government policies. Additionally, the Report supported the idea that since Indigenous peoples had inhabited the American continent before the arrival of Europeans, who subsequently treated them as inferior and subordinate, a positive recognition of Status Indians as so called "citizens plus," would counterbalance their historical mistreatment.[16] The term "citizens plus," which was at the time very positively received by Indian groups,[17] was subsequently adopted into Indigenous affairs scholarship by Canadian political scientist Alan Cairns.

The Hawthorn Report launched consultations between the federal government and First Nations' leadership across Canada in order to amend the Indian Act, and the issue of self-determination and self-government of Indigenous

[13] James Anaya, The Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples. United Nations, General Assembly, Human Rights Council, July 4, 2014, 6, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/SR/A.HRC.27.52.Add.2-MissionCanada_AUV.pdf.

[14] Marci McDonald, "The Man behind Stephen Harper," The Walrus, October 2004, http://thewalrus .ca/the-man-behind-stephen-harper/.

[15] Harry B. Hawthorn, ed., A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies, Indian Affairs Branch, October, 1967, 5, https://www.aadnc -aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ai-arp-ls-pubs-sci3_1326997109567 _eng.pdf.

[16] Hawthorn, A Survey of the Contemporary Indians, 7.

[17] Alan Cairns, Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), 164.

peoples came to the foreground. In 1969, the Government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau proposed the Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, known as the White Paper. The drafters of the White Paper agreed with the Hawthorn Report's conclusion that the system of separate institutions and the special legal status of First Nations created by the Indian Act were ineffective, and contributed to their lagging behind the non-Aboriginal Canadians in well-being. However, the proposed means of reform in the Hawthorn Report and the White Paper substantially differed.

The Trudeau Government's policy towards Aboriginal peoples based on a Western liberal mindset[18] can be interpreted in the light of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, especially the emancipation of Afro-Americans in the 1960s, and the rhetoric of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Brown v. Board of Education of 1954. It is evidenced by the White Paper's statement "separate but equal services do not provide equal treatment."[19] The Report suggested, *inter alia*, abolishing the special status of Indigenous peoples in order to fully integrate them in Canadian society. Furthermore, it called for revoking the Indian Act and terminating the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.[20]

Most First Nations opposed the government's proposal because it would have meant the end of their special legal status and their right to self-determination and self-government would be suppressed. The rhetoric of the proposal was criticized for being peremptory and unyielding.[21] Citizens Plus, an Indian response to the White Paper, also called the Red Paper, was published in 1970 by the Indian Association of Alberta, with the support of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB). The Red Paper partly adopted the Hawthorn Report's concepts. In particular, it suggested that the constitutional basis of Indian rights and their legal status should be preserved, because only the First Nations themselves can renegotiate them.[22] In the same year Trudeau withdrew his proposal.

---

18 Menno Boldt, *Surviving as Indians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 21.

19 Hamar Foster, Heather Raven and Jeremy Webber, eds., *Let Right Be Done: Aboriginal Title, the Calder Case, and the Future of Indigenous Rights* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 101.

20 Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969. Paper presented to the First Session of the Twenty-eighth Parliament by the Honorable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010189/1100100010191.

21 Susana Mas, "Trudeau Liberals Woo High-Profile Aboriginal Candidates Ahead of 2015," *CBC News*, September 29, 2014, http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-liberals-woo-high-profile-aboriginal-candidates-ahead-of-2015-1.2764945.

22 Indian Chiefs of Alberta, Citizens Plus. A Presentation by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta to Right Honorable P. E.Trudeau, Prime Minister and the Government of Canada, June 1970, *Aboriginal Policy Studies* vol. 1, no. 2 (2011): 189–90, http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/aps/article/download/11690/8926.

The Erasmus-Dussault Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was put together in order to "help restore justice to the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada, and to propose practical solutions to stubborn problems."[23] The five-volume, 4,000-page Report with its 440 recommendations covered an extensive range of issues. It proposed to implement radical measures in order to replace the old colonial and paternalistic governmental approach towards Native peoples with an approach based on partnership. It endorsed changes such as the reform of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the creation of an Aboriginal parliament, or a system of dual citizenship.[24]

The critics of the RCAP stressed the Report's disproportionate emphasis on self-government and, inversely, its omission of Aboriginal peoples' representation in non-Aboriginal bodies. The recommendations of the Erasmus-Dussault Report did not fit into mainstream Canadian historical tradition and political context. On the other side, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) criticized it for its moderation, but later blamed the Liberal government for failing to put into practice the Report's recommendations.[25]

Thomas Flanagan, an American-born conservative political scientist and a former advisor to Stephen Harper, has been one of the leading critics of the RCAP's way of promoting Aboriginal self-government. According to his critical approach, a greater political autonomy of Indigenous peoples is counterproductive because it places them outside the economic realities of today's world. Flanagan, who had a significant impact on shaping Harper's policy towards Indigenous peoples, advocates the concept of "undifferentiated citizenship." This contradicts the Report of the RCAP, as well as the concept of "citizens plus" promoted by the Hawthorn Report and by Alan Cairns.

According to Flanagan, "in order to become self-supporting and get beyond the social pathologies that are ruining their communities, Aboriginal peoples need to acquire the skills and attitudes that bring success in a liberal society, political democracy, and market based economy. Call it assimilation, call it integration, call

---

[23] Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 2014, http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014597/1100100014637.

[24] Royal Commission Report on Aboriginal Peoples, Government of Canada Web Archive, Library and Archives Canada, 1996, http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071115053257/http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm_e.html.

[25] Cairns, *Citizens Plus*, 141, 157. The Assembly of First Nations is an official organization of First Nations, in which each band is represented by its chief. The AFN' mission is to protect and promote the Indigenous rights and interests.

it adaptation, call it whatever you want: it has to happen."[26] Instead of the enforcement of the rights to self-determination and self-government, Flanagan's concept of "undifferentiated citizenship" suggests a return to the policy of voluntary assimilation of Indigenous peoples with an emphasis on their economic self-sufficiency. This implies that economic development is not possible without the normalization of political rights and without the reform of the Indian Act which effectively keeps Indigenous peoples in economic isolation.

Alan Cairns believes that Indigenous peoples differ from non-Aboriginal Canadians, but not completely, because of their common living space.[27] He argues that the future of Aboriginal peoples lies "inside" the Canadian federation. Unlike Flanagan, however, Cairns suggests that Aboriginal peoples should be understood as "citizens plus" – Canadians with special rights; "by 'plus' we referred to ongoing entitlements, some of which flowed from existing treaties while others were to be worked out in the political processes of the future, which would identify the Indian peoples as deserving possessors of an additional category of rights based on historical priority."[28] The concept of "citizens plus" thus combines the recognition of the distinctiveness of Indigenous peoples with their inclusion in Canadian society.[29]

The Right to Self-Government and Self-Government Agreements

In the last decade of the twentieth century, an attempt to negotiate a constitutional anchoring of the Indigenous peoples' right to self-government was included in the proposed Charlottetown Accord. The Charlottetown Accord suggested amending the Constitution of 1982 and enacting a law allowing for guaranteed representation of Indigenous peoples in the Canadian House of Commons and Senate. Representatives of Aboriginal peoples were to get a say in the selection of Supreme Court judges and in the debates over the future constitutional amendments. According to the Charlottetown Accord, they were to be consulted when discussing legislation that might directly affect them.[30] The proposed agreement was, however, rejected in a general referendum in October 1992.

---

[26] Thomas Flanagan, *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 196.

[27] Cairns, *Citizens Plus*, 5.

[28] Ibid., 12.

[29] Ibid., 90–91.

[30] Consensus Report on the Constitution, Charlottetown, August 28, 1992, https://www.saic.gouv .qc.ca/publications/Positions/Part3/Document27_en.pdf.

Will Kymlicka, one of the most eminent contemporary Canadian political philosophers, believes the logic behind the idea of Aboriginal peoples' right to self-government included in the proposed Charlottetown Accord and supported by the RCAP is the principle of representation and power sharing. According to this liberal perspective, Indigenous peoples should not be obliged to obey a constitution drawn up by their historical "conquerors," which they did not have the chance to influence. They should not be governed by bodies formed of non-Aboriginal peoples only. They should not be expected to obey laws passed by non-Aboriginal legislators and they should not be answerable to courts where Aboriginal peoples are not represented.[31]

First, self-government could, as Alan Cairns claims, serve Native communities as a means of equalization and strengthen their position in relation to the majority population. First Nations could thus decide themselves what to adopt from non-Aboriginal society and what and how to preserve in their own traditions.[32] Second, the idea that "responsibility begins at home," which is also emphasized by the Harper Government, means that self-government would transfer the responsibility over First Nations' actions, their advancement or deterioration, to themselves. It would ease the burden of the federal government, which could no longer be blamed for the poor socio-economic situation of First Nations.[33]

However, specific circumstances must be taken into account when considering the possibility of self-governed First Nations in Canada. They form neither a coherent nor a homogeneous group. They are dispersed across all Canadian provinces.[34] Indian bands vary both in the size of their territory and the number of their members. Moreover, different First Nations have different cultural traditions, historical experience, and ways of life. Taking into account all these differences, pan-Indian self-government of First Nations would be in practice very difficult. The self-government of individual First Nations would be an option; however, it would also mean enormous political fragmentation of Canada.

One could also argue that there is no need for pan-Indian self-government of First Nations because band councils, larger groupings called tribal and chiefs' councils, and the Assembly of First Nations are able to adequately protect and promote the interests of First Nations. Furthermore, some groups such as the Cree, the Sechelt Indian Band, or the Yukon First Nations have already obtained substantial competencies, such as greater control and law-making authority over

---

[31] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 169.
[32] Cairns, *Citizens Plus*, 111.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizens*, 29.

a comprehensive range of jurisdictions, including health, education or lands,[35] and the corresponding self-government arrangements were signed between the federal government and these groups. On the other hand, band council resolutions are still only effective when approved by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development under the Indian Act.[36]

In 1983, Canada's House of Commons set up a parliamentary committee known as the Penner Committee to inquire into matters of Aboriginal self-government. In its report, the Penner Committee acknowledged that the right to self-government was inherent to all First Nations as protected by the Constitution. In 1995, the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien introduced so called Inherent Right Policy in order to negotiate practical arrangements to implement Native self-government through new self-government agreements (SGA). These agreements are negotiated with the federal government to enhance greater Aboriginal control and law-making authority.

The self-government agreements do not fall under the Indian Act and enable First Nations to obtain the power to introduce and enact laws concerning their people, to tax, to provide for municipal planning, and to decide on lands and resources. Each First Nation community has its constitution containing the membership code, establishing governing bodies, and protecting the rights and freedoms of its members.

There have been 21 self-government agreements completed so far and other 90 agreements are currently under negotiation.[37] However, these Indigenous governments have only limited law-making powers under the agreements; areas such as security or transport remain under federal jurisdiction.[38] In addition, the process of submitting a proposal and negotiating an agreement is complicated and lasts for years or even decades.[39]

Moreover, Martin Papillon claims that the Conservative Government is moving away from the self-government agreements, and is increasingly pushing for

[35] Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act, S.C. 1984, c. 18, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-45.7/; Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act, S.C. 1986, c. 27, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-6.6/; and Yukon First Nations Self-Government Act, S.C. 1994, c. 35, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/Y-2.6/.

[36] See Indian Act, art. 20, 24, 45, 49, 50, 54, 83, 86, 117 and 121.

[37] Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Fact Sheet: Aboriginal Self-Government, 2014, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016293/1100100016294.

[38] Aboriginal Self-Government, official website of Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage, http://www.heritage.nf.ca/law/aboriginal_self_gov.html.

[39] Daniel Schwartz, "7 Questions about First Nations Accountability," *CBC News*, February 20, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/7-questions-about-first-nations-accountability-1.1331320.

the terms "governance agreements" and "good governance."[40] These "governance agreements" represent a "form of Aboriginal, federal, and provincial partnership in the financing, development, and delivery of services, toward a common goal – that is, to 'close the gap' between the social and economic conditions of Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians."[41] However, they also divert attention from the wider debate on the rights of Indigenous peoples, which form an integral part of their narrative, to economic sustainability and sector-specific agreements for the management of programs and services.[42]

Despite the recent developments related to the SGA, the Indian Act remains the prevailing legal regime in Aboriginal affairs. It does not permit the effective exercise of Aboriginal self-government and orders that almost all decisions made by First Nations, such as funding for reserve programs and infrastructure, changes in band by-laws, and the leasing of land, must seek the approval of the federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. In order for Indigenous peoples to exercise their right to self-determination and self-government, the current legislative settings must change.

Flanagan proposes three concrete reforms which should be carried out regarding the situation of Native peoples. First is better auditing, the creation of a professional corps of Aboriginal public servants and self-financing through taxation. He suggests that instead of the current large financial support from the federal government, First Nations should raise money from taxes. This possibility is already entrenched in Section 83 of the Indian Act, but as yet band councils have only used this power to tax non-Aboriginal people who own property on reserves.[43] Second, the concentrated power of corrupt and inefficient band councils who have control over land, housing, education, employment, and welfare need to be split among multiple actors. Third, collective ownership has to be replaced by individual ownership in order to strengthen the economic activity of Aboriginal peoples.[44]

One of the problems of Flanagan's analyses lies in his categorical statements that sometimes resemble the theory of natural selection and social Darwinism. His view is very Eurocentric. Indigenous peoples do not necessarily perceive the influence of Western civilization as a step forward. Moreover, it is uncertain whether

---

[40] Martin Papillon, "The Rise (and Fall?) of Aboriginal Self-Government," in *Canadian Politics, 6th ed.,* ed. James Bickerton and Alain G. Gagnon (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 127.
[41] Ibid., 126.
[42] Ibid., 114.
[43] Flanagan, *First Nations*, 103.
[44] Ibid, 197–98.

the principles of market based economy and private ownership would function for the benefit of First Nations communities if their land was broken up into individual pieces as Flanagan claims in the part of his book on the success of the Euro-Canadian civilization.[45]

Most importantly, Flanagan does not take into account that collective rights are considered by First Nations as their inherent right given to them by the Creator. This rather holistic belief forms an inseparable part of First Nations' very existence. In other words, Flanagan's arguments and propositions assume Western superiority while denying the principle of equal rights. This puts him in the colonial camp of reasoning – a camp which has been rejected by Aboriginal peoples, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, as well as by the international community through the UNDRIP.

Alan Cairns refuses both the assimilationist paradigm advocated by Trudeau's White Paper and by Flanagan, and the more recent parallelism based on the idea of a completely distinct society of Aboriginal peoples within Canada, so prominent in the Report of the RCAP. The problem of Cairns' theory is that while he states that Native peoples should be integrated in Canadian society as "citizens plus," he does not explain how this would work in practice. He asserts that labels matter,[46] which is certainly true, but the feasibility of a theory based almost entirely on the importance of labeling raises questions. Moreover, regrettably and in contrast to Flanagan, Cairns does not further examine what concrete steps or legislative reforms should be done to achieve this goal in order to deal with actual Aboriginal socio-economic problems.

The analysis of the two opposing concepts of how Aboriginal self-determination and self-government should be addressed reveals problematic aspects that prevent their effective application. Flanagan's suggestions favor "undifferentiated citizenship" which is incompatible with the gist of Aboriginal peoples' rights to self-determination and self-government. By contrast, Cairns' concept of "citizens plus" does include a special status for Indigenous peoples; however, it only provides a theoretical, not practical way to streamline assimilationist paradigm and parallelism in practice.

---

[45] A parallel can be seen in what happened after the Native American land was unilaterally allotted to non-Native Americans by the US Government which is considered as an example of Michael Heller's "tragedy of the anticommons."

[46] Cairns, *Citizens Plus*, 7.

Bill C-45 and the Right to "Free, Prior, and Informed Consent"

Due to the pressing problems of Indigenous peoples, the large fiscal burden that they generate, and the pre-election commitment to streamline state financing, Stephen Harper and his party entered the 2006 election with a program of gradual amendment of legislation concerning Aboriginal peoples. This included a reform of the Indian Act, maximum financial efficiency of First Nations, and exploitation of natural resources on Indigenous territories.

The omnibus Bill C-45, passed into law on December 14, 2012, under the title Jobs and Growth Act, 2012, sparked a wave of protests that eventually led to the formation of Idle No More. First Nations, such as the Western Cree Tribal Council, opposed this legislation in particular because it affected their access to and control over fisheries, waterways, and land.[47]

Through Division XVIII of Bill C-45, the Navigable Waters Protection Act (NWPA) became the Navigation Protection Act (NPA), which removed a substantial number of lakes and streams from federal protection under the law. In total, only 3 oceans, 62 rivers, and 97 lakes listed under the so-called "Schedule 2" have remained protected.[48] However, Canada has some 32,000 lakes and 2.25 million rivers. While previously the NWPA protected virtually 100 % of the country's water bodies,[49] the NPA no longer protects 99.7 % of Canada's lakes and 99.9 % of Canada's rivers.[50]

The federal government justified the amendment as being necessary to "facilitate trade and commerce by balancing the efficient movement of maritime traffic with the need to construct works (e.g. bridges) that might obstruct navigation, in order to encourage economic development."[51] This legislation, which had not been discussed with First Nations, enabled the Harper Government to more easily carry out projects that threaten the environment, such as the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines Project – a construction of a twin pipeline carrying tar sand

---

[47] Western Cree Tribal Council Press Release to Bill C-45, official website of the Western Cree Tribal Council, http://www.westerncree.ca/pdf/PRESS%20RELEASE%20C-45.pdf.

[48] Hassan Arif, "How Harper's Neglect Suffocates Native Potential," *The Huffington Post Canada*, December 31, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/hassan-arif/idle-no-more-environment_b_2387782.html.

[49] Naomi Klein, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014), 381.

[50] Derek Inman, Stefaan Smis and Dorothée Cambou, "We Will Remain Idle No More: The Shortcomings of Canada's 'Duty to Consult' Indigenous Peoples," *Goettingen Journal of International Law* 5, No. 1 (2013): 256.

[51] Department of Finance Canada, Bill C-45 – 'Jobs and Growth Act, 2012' – Part 4, Ottawa, Canada, 2012, http://www.fin.gc.ca/pub/c45/4-eng.asp.

carbon-intensive oil from western provinces to the Pacific Coast for overseas markets. Moreover, the implementation of these projects represents an intervention in the environment in which First Nations live. These water bodies and the nature that surrounds them form part of First Nations' identity and participation in decision making about them falls under their right to self-determination.

The other two controversial parts of this legislation are Division IV and VIII. One of the divisions amends the Fisheries Act so that fisheries, which have always been a traditional activity and privilege of Indigenous peoples, not captured within the definition of "Aboriginal," "commercial" or "recreational" fisheries, will no longer be protected under the Fisheries Act. The problem is that the definition of "Aboriginal" fisheries does not include all First Nations fisheries, which reduces the number of persons who have the right to fish based on "peace and friendship treaties."[52]

The other division unilaterally amends the Indian Act in that it modifies the voting and approval procedures in relation to the proposed land designations. First Nations do not need a majority of eligible voters, but only a majority of voters gathered at a meeting or referendum, in order to decide whether reserve lands will be leased. Furthermore, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development can call a meeting or referendum to consider land surrender from the band's territory.[53] This may take control over land sales away from First Nations and result in a loss of Native land.

The Indian Act is the basic source of law for First Nations in Canada; thus, its amendment without proper consultation with their representatives highlights the Harper Government's little regard of Indigenous Canadians' right to self-determination and different perspective on the way of functioning of the Indigenous peoples' self-government. Moreover, the simplification of the voting procedure can facilitate access to land on reserves for non-Aboriginal outside operators. This can result in the land belonging to First Nations communities getting into the hands of non-Native entities, along with the profit from it, and thus actually worsen the economic situation of First Nations. Last but not least, it will also allow for ministerial interference in band decision making, which is a clear infringement of the First Nations' right to self-determination.

---

[52] Assembly of First Nations States Concerns on Bill C-45 to Senate Standing Committee, official website of the Assembly of First Nations, November 27, 2012, http://www.afn.ca/index.php/en/news-media/latest-news/assembly-of-first-nations-states-concerns-on-bill-c-45-to-senate-stand.

[53] House of Commons, A Second Act to Implement Certain Provisions of the Budget Tabled in Parliament on March 29, 2012 and Other Measures, 1st Session, 41st Parliament, December 14, 2012, 203–6, 226–28, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/2012_31.pdf.

In R. v. Sparrow (1990), the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) ruled on the constitutionality of federal fishing permits, and the banning of some methods of fishing. Fishing for salmon, which was affected by the regulations, played a key role in the cultural identity of the Musqueam First Nation of British Columbia. In the landmark decision, the SCC ruled in favor of the Musqueam First Nation. It argued that Section 35 (1) of the Constitution of Canada, 1982, protected practices that were integral to an Aboriginal community's distinctive culture.[54] Furthermore, it laid out that policies and legislation, implemented by the federal government, restricting the exercise of a recognized and affirmed Aboriginal right, were required to be adequately consulted with the involved Aboriginal community.[55] The government was now obligated to consult with First Nations about policies and legislation that directly affect them. This right to "free, prior, and informed consent" (FPIC) forms a part of the Aboriginal rights to self-determination and self-government.[56]

The concept of FPIC derives from the SCC's interpretation of the complex "fiduciary" relationship between the Crown and Canada's Aboriginal peoples, originating already with the Royal Proclamation of 1763. According to the Sparrow interpretation of the Section 35 (1), the Government is responsible for acting in a fiduciary way with respect to Indigenous peoples.[57] Trust must be the first consideration in determining whether a governmental legislation or action can be justified. And it can be justified *inter alia* on the condition that the affected Aboriginal groups had been consulted.[58]

The Harper Government's legislative proposals, particularly Bill C-45, are not congruent with Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination. As Michael Den Tandt aptly remarks, "No fundamental change in governance can or should happen without the consent of the governed." Hence, any prospective legislation replacing the Indian Act of 1876 ought to be written with the consent of and in consultation with First Nations if not by First Nations themselves.[59] Clearly, this has not been the Conservative Government's course of action.

---

[54] R v. Sparrow, Supreme Court of Canada, 1990, 1 S.C.R. 1075.

[55] Sonia Lawrence and Patrick Macklem, "From Consultation to Reconciliation: Aboriginal Rights and the Crown's Duty to Consult," *Canadian Bar Review* 79 (2000): 255.

[56] Inman, Smis and Cambou, "We Will Remain Idle No More," 266.

[57] "Fiduciary" is a person who holds a position of trust or confidence with respect to someone else. See Mary C. Hurley, The Crown's Fiduciary Relationship with Aboriginal Peoples. Law and Government Division of the Parliament of Canada, December 18, 2002, http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/LOP/ResearchPublications/prb0009-e.htm.

[58] R v. Sparrow.

[59] Michael Den Tandt, "Indian Act, Racist Relic of 1876, Should Be Abolished – And So Should Reserves," *Canada.com*, January 6, 2013, http://o.canada.com/2013/01/06/0107-col-dentandt/.

Idle No More

The Idle No More protest movement was launched in response to the Jobs and Growth Act of 2012 and the 43-day hunger strike of Chief Theresa Spence of the Attawapiskat First Nation, who had declared a state of emergency in the Attawapiskat community in northern Ontario in 2011 because of a housing crisis.[60]

INM is a grassroots non-profit movement that has no political affiliation. The founders of the movement do not have the same mandate or identical goals as Indian band councils or the Assembly of First Nations. There is no formal connection between the AFN and the movement, even though Shawn Atleo (at the time National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations) expressed support for INM, which had generated a "tremendous outpouring of energy, pride and determination by our peoples," according to him.[61] Thus, INM neither represents an official Aboriginal body, nor does it speak for all Native peoples.

On the other hand, the movement has over 6,000 followers on Twitter, it has obtained more than 135,000 "likes" on Facebook, and it is estimated that at a certain period its Facebook page had about million readers a week.[62] This "unprecedented mobilization" of Indigenous peoples has increased public and media pressure on the federal government, and even forced an official meeting between Prime Minister Harper and a delegation of roughly 100 First Nations leaders, coordinated by the Assembly of First Nations and held on January 11, 2013.[63] All these indicators suggest that the movement represents a powerful political voice of Indigenous peoples.

Idle No More promotes environmental protection, sustainable development, Indigenous sovereignty, and strives to educate both Native and non-Native people on these issues. It also calls for regular triangular meetings between First Nations leaders, the Government of Canada, and industrial companies in order to involve Aboriginal peoples in negotiations and decision making concerning legislation

---

[60] "Timeline: Idle No More's rise Movement created out of opposition to measures in federal budget," *CBC News*, October 4, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/timeline-idle-no-more/.

[61] Andrea Nicoll, "Idle No More Movement Sweeping the Nation," *The Oxbow Herald*, January 26, 2013, http://www.oxbowherald.sk.ca/News/Regional/2013-01-26/article-3164612/Idle-No-More-movement-sweeping-the-nation/1.

[62] "Idle No More," Twitter profile of Idle No More, https://twitter.com/idlenomore; and "Idle No More," Facebook profile of Idle No More, https://www.facebook.com/IdleNoMore Community. See also Joe Friesen, "What's behind the Explosion of Native Activism? Young People," *The Globe and Mail*, January 18, 2013, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/whats-behind-the-explosion-of-native-activism-young-people/article7552791/.

[63] Chris Hall, "Stephen Harper, First Nations and an Opportunity Lost," *CBC News*, January 11, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/m/touch/news/story/1.1308543.

affecting their communities.[64] More specifically, they "call for Canada, the provinces and the territories to repeal provisions of Bill C-45 […], abandon all pending legislation which does the same, deepen democracy in Canada through […] consultation on all legislation concerning collective rights and environmental protections […], affirm Aboriginal Title and Rights, as set out in Section 35 of Canada's constitution, […] and honor the spirit and intent of historic Treaties."[65]

This "Call for Change" reflects the particular demands of First Nations. First, it calls for consultations with Indigenous peoples on legislation that concerns them. This demand is based on the right to "free, prior, and informed consent" that Idle No More derives from the UNDRIP, and from the Canadian Supreme Court's rulings, such as R v. Sparrow.

Second, the "Call for Change" mentions collective rights. These form part of Indigenous peoples' identity with their holistic approach. It therefore seems unlikely that First Nations would yield these rights, and would embrace for example private property, as favored by conservative scholars like Thomas Flanagan. Third, it invokes rights protected by Section 35 (1) of the Constitution of Canada, 1982, which include the right to self-determination.

The supporters of INM stress the resource-oriented approach to land and environment of the Harper Government. They argue that legislative changes of the Conservative Government pursue predominantly priorities set out by the Conservatives such as the maximum financial efficiency and exploitation of natural resources. They consider protecting ethnic and cultural diversity less important.[66] For this reason, members of Idle No More call on all people "to join in a peaceful revolution, to honor Indigenous sovereignty, and to protect the land and water. INM has continued and will continue to help build sovereignty and […] to pressure government and industry to protect the environment."[67] Here the movement endorses environmental protection, which is, however, far down on the list of neoliberal priorities of the federal government. As Gabrielle Slowey explained, "Neoliberalism's ideal citizen is the individual who competes in the marketplace, is self-reliant, and does not act as a drain on the state. Thus, from a neoliberal

---

[64] Benjamin Shingler, "Idle No More: First Nations Activist Movement In Canada Revs Up For Week Of Rallies," *The Canadian Press*, December 16, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2012/12/16 /idle-no-more_n_2312001.html.

[65] "Calls for Change," official website of Idle No More, www.idlenomore.ca/calls_for_change.

[66] Russel Diabo, "Harper Launches Major First Nations Termination Plan: As Negotiating Tables Legitimize Canada's Colonialism," official website of Idle No More, June 16, 2013, www.idlenomore.ca /harper_launches_major_first_nations_termination_plan_as_negotiating_tables_legitimize _canada_s_colonialism.

[67] "Vision," official website of Idle No More, http://www.idlenomore.ca/vision.

perspective, the ideal First Nation is an independent First Nation that competes in the marketplace and is independent of the state. And from a Canadian neoliberal perspective, an ideal First Nation would be one that does not impede resource development activity."[68]

Slowey's argument also implies that the main difference between the demands of the Idle No More movement, and by extension of the entire community of Aboriginal peoples, to enforce their right to self-government, and the reforms of the Harper Government is not the state the two groups want to achieve, but rather the way of how they want achieve it.

Critics of the movement, such as Sadeq Rahimi and Mark Milke, liken Idle No More to the Arab Spring. They argue that the movement does not have a strong and qualified leader who would be able to discuss legislative changes with the government. More importantly, they deplore that supporters of Idle No More do not have a uniform opinion on how to reform the Indian Act and improve the plight of Aboriginal peoples. Furthermore, these critics of INM defend the Harper Government's legislation, asserting that it will not allow for reserve land to be sold off to non-Aboriginal buyers, but on the contrary, it will allow for First Nations to lease more land in order to create housing subdivisions and commercial complexes. Thus, Indian reserves and their residents will be able to benefit from the cash flow.[69]

The rhetoric of these critics of Idle No More is strikingly reminiscent of Flanagan's when they identify the rural nature of Aboriginal communities living on collectively owned land in the twenty-first century as a major problem.[70] This view is distorted, Eurocentric and urban. Arguing that Harper's legislation enabled First Nations to lease land for the construction of modern industrial complexes and shopping centers, points to the one-sidedness of such reasoning as it addresses only the narrowly defined economic aspects of the recent legislation.

In January 2013, Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan and several other government officials invited a delegation of First Nations chiefs to Ottawa to discuss the demands raised by Idle No More. Harper eventually attended the whole meeting, despite his original intention to attend only a part of it.[71]

---

[68] Gabrielle A. Slowey, *Navigating Neoliberalism: Self-Determination and the Mikisew Cree First Nation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 15.

[69] Sadeq Rahimi, "Canada Heading for Bloodshed, Warns Aboriginal Leader," *The World Post*, January 15, 2013, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sadeq-rahimi/canada-heading-for-bloods_b_2474733.html.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Hall, "Stephen Harper, First Nations."

Despite the promises that the meeting was only the beginning and would be followed by similar events, to date no meetings similar in scale have taken place. Furthermore, Stephen Harper stated that "people have the right in our country to demonstrate and express their points of view peacefully as long as they obey the law, but I think the Canadian population expects everyone will obey the law in holding such protests."[72] His statement gives the impression that the Aboriginal resistance expressed in Idle No More and the Indigenous resentment toward his policies did not significantly put him out of countenance.

Idle No More lost its momentum after a series of nonviolent actions that prompted the official meeting between representatives of the federal government and the delegation of First Nations chiefs. The round dances stopped, the rallies were disbanded and the media moved on to other topics.[73] However, some representatives of Indigenous peoples like Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Chief Jonathan Kimberly, scholars like John Ralston Saul, a prominent Canadian author, essayist and proponent of rights of Indigenous peoples, and even some federal officials believe that similar projects may follow Idle No More in the future.[74]

Saul is confident that the formation of the Idle No More movement means that there is a new elite of Indigenous peoples with college diplomas that is and will be gaining strength and increasing its influence. Most of the INM's activities such as flash mobs and teach-ins were peaceful. Saul argues that without a change in stances of non-Aboriginal Canadians who prevent Indigenous peoples from regaining their rights and returning to power this elite might instigate riots which could have worse consequences than those of the railroad blockades and demonstrations of INM.[75]

Idle No More was a backlash against the Conservative Government's legislation affecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, passed without consultation with Aboriginal peoples. Idle No More was able to mobilize thousands of people for

[72] "9 Questions about Idle No More," *CBC News,* January 5, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/9-questions-about-idle-no-more-1.1301843.

[73] Joe Friesen, "John Ralston Saul Calls for All Canadians to Be Idle No More," *The Globe and Mail*, October 31, 2014, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/john-ralston-saul-calls-for-all-canadians-to-be-idle-no-more/article21415062/.

[74] Tyler Clarke, "Idle No More Was Only the Beginning," *West Coast Native News*, December 16, 2014, http://westcoastnativenews.com/idle-no-more-was-only-the-beginning/; and Benjamin Shingler, "Emails Show Federal Officials Worried About Second Idle No More Movement," *The Canadian Press*, August 17, 2014, http://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/emails-show-federal-officials-worried-about-second-idle-no-more-movement-1.1963194.

[75] John Ralston Saul, "The Resurgence of Indigenous Power," commentary on The Comeback, thestar.com, official website of John Ralston Saul, http://www.johnralstonsaul.com/.

action.[76] Despite Harper's seemingly little interest in these events, the movement also prompted an official meeting between representatives of Native peoples and the government. The movement did not accomplish big goals as Bill C-45 is still applicable. It lost momentum in a relatively short period of time; however, the fact that Aboriginal issues got into the forefront of public and media interest was a success on which Indigenous peoples can built in the future.

Conclusion

Despite the extensive financial support that they receive from the State, First Nations are still very poor. The Indian Act of 1876, along with the Constitution of Canada, 1982, has provided for a special status of First Nations within Canada and guaranteed the preservation of their distinctiveness, in particular through their collective rights, for almost 140 years. On the other hand, it has effectively isolated First Nations in the dysfunctional system of reserves and a detrimental dependence on social welfare. Thus, there is a consensus that reform and an eventual replacement of the Indian Act of 1876 are needed. However, the Harper Government and First Nations have different ideas of what direction this legislative change should take.

As is evident from the demands of the Idle No More protest movement, and from the official statements of the AFN, First Nations communities believe that the government has to introduce new legislation in which the Aboriginal rights to self-determination will be guaranteed before the Indian Act can be replaced. However, there are very different conceptual approaches of how to treat the question of self-determination and self-government of Indigenous peoples.

First Nations base their right to self-determination on several assumptions. First, they believe it is one of the rights that are legally guaranteed to Aboriginal peoples by Section 35 (1) of the Constitution of Canada, 1982, and by the UNDRIP endorsed by Canada in 2010. Second, First Nations claim their right to self-government, which represents an integral part of self-determination. One of the possible ways in which this can be put into practice is through self-government agreements. More than twenty self-government agreements have already been concluded between First Nations bands and the federal government.

As of now, the long-term effectiveness of these agreements is impossible to know. The problem is that the process of submission and negotiation of the SGA is lengthy and complex. Furthermore, important policy areas remain under federal

---

[76] "Cree Walkers Meet Minister at End of Idle No More Trek," *CBC News*, March 25, 2014, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/cree-walkers-meet-minister-at-end-of-idle-no-more-trek-1.1392239.

jurisdiction exclusively. However, both have potential. They meet the First Nations' claim for self-government and also transfer responsibility for the functioning of these Native communities into the hands of their own members, and thus ease the burden of the federal government.

The catch lies in the fact that the Conservative Government has been moving away from the term "self-government" to "governance" which implies that it has been replacing negotiations of self-government agreements, understood despite all their shortcomings as a practical assertion of Aboriginal inherent rights, with "sector-specific agreements."[77] This shows how different the perspectives of the Harper Government and Canadian Aboriginal peoples on the transformation of Indigenous-state relations, and the ways to enforce Aboriginal self-government, are.

Third, First Nations base their right to self-determination on the interpretation of the "fiduciary" relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples and the doctrine of "free, prior, and informed consent." According to recent rulings of the Supreme Court of Canada, the fiduciary relationship is enshrined in Section 35 (1) of the Constitution of Canada, 1982. Such an interpretation, which implies the Aboriginal right to "free, prior, and informed consent" of Aboriginal peoples about their own affairs, should in practice ensure participation of First Nations in the preparation of legislative changes that directly affect them. However, the Harper Government has simply disregarded this legal doctrine – in effect violating the law of the land that its members swore to uphold.

Since 2006, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has personally met with representatives of Indigenous peoples only a few times. Moreover, concerning most of the legislative proposals, representatives of Indigenous peoples were not consulted. Bill C-45 is the most visible example of the Conservative Government's circumvention of First Nations' consent when creating policies regarding their communities. Furthermore, the emergence of the Idle No More protest movement in response to the enactment of Bill C-45 shows how much Harper's policy differs from Aboriginal peoples' perspective.

The Harper Government prefers reforms of the Indian Act in order to achieve economic sustainability of the First Nations communities managing their own affairs. Harper's policies are based on a similar approach to the one proposed by Thomas Flanagan, who was Harper's advisor on Aboriginal issues. They believe that, instead of living on state aid, which annually forms a considerable part of the government's budget, Indigenous peoples should adopt a market based economy with all its aspects. In their opinion, it is necessary to eliminate collective

---

[77] Papillon, "The Rise (and Fall?)," 126.

ownership on reserves and introduce private ownership.[78] Indigenous communities should also be financed from taxes collected from their own people. Finally, Aboriginal land, which is so valued and protected by First Nations, should be opened up for industrial companies, especially for the extraction and transportation of oil.

In conclusion, the visions that the Canadian First Nations and the Conservative Government have for the future legislative anchoring of First Nations, and more generally for all Aboriginal peoples in Canada, do not share enough elements to find common ground. Although there is a consensus that the reform of the Indian Act is needed, and that Native peoples should be responsible for their own affairs, views on the way of achieving this differ. While one side speaks about collective rights, the right to free, prior, and informed consent, sustainable development, and the distinctiveness of Indigenous peoples, the other side stresses the importance of a market based economy focusing on self-sufficiency, private ownership, and further natural resource exploitation requiring a substantial decrease in government protection.

The reform of the Indian Act of 1876 and the improvement of the dismal situation of First Nations in Canada can be successfully carried out only under the condition that the two sides cooperate. Such cooperation, however, seems difficult to carry out due to their conflicting views on the matter. In addition, for such cooperation it would be necessary for the Conservative Government to show signs of efforts to involve First Nations in negotiations on policies that affect them – which it has not yet shown.

This basic problem of the future status of First Nations in Canada in relation to the Canadian government was perfectly expressed by Derek Inman, Stefaan Smis, and Dorothée Cambou: "In an effort to accommodate Aboriginal peoples, to reconcile past injustices, and to respect the honor of the Crown, the Canadian government should have at least consulted with the Aboriginal peoples prior to rushing through Bill C-38 and Bill C-45. Maybe this is why the Aboriginal peoples of Canada stood up and refused to be *Idle No More*."[79]

Biographical Note

Kristýna Onderková is a graduate of Charles University in Prague. She works as a paralegal in one of leading Prague law firms and specializes in Canadian law and politics.
E-mail: onderkova.k@gmail.com

---

[78] Flanagan, *First Nations*, 198.
[79] Cambou, Inman, and Smis, "We Will Remain Idle No More," 285.

REVIEWS

After the fall of communism, a widespread belief reigned that the planned economy was not worth studying. This is particularly the case if one applies the live-and-let-die principle, a principle that gained absolute dominance after the fall of communism in 1989/1991. Nevertheless, as faith in the unregulated market vanished, most prominently so with the world financial crisis of 2008, interest in other economic systems has returned to the fore.

Michael Ellman is Professor Emeritus of Economy and Business at the University of Amsterdam. He is a well-known expert in the field with a long record of publications on the problems of socialist economies and their subsequent transition to the market system, including *Planning Problems in the USSR* (1973) or *The Destruction of the Soviet Economic System* (ed. with Vladimir Kontorovich, 1998), to mention just a few. *Socialist Planning* is the third, largely updated and expanded edition of his book that was first published in 1979. As such, it represents a sort of coronation of his research activities. The book's core argument – that socialism was wrong in its efforts to replace market with state – is based on an enormously rich number of examples and empirical evidence.

Ellman's book is an excellent example of a comprehensive analysis of the socialist planning system and its consequences. It discusses diverse aspects of socialist planning, its weaknesses and motivations. The author explores different features of planning, from defense industry, agriculture, employment to consumption. Nonetheless, the author does not limit himself only to various planning theories. Rather, he confronts the plans with real developments in real economies. In most cases, the developments proved to be going in different directions than the authors of the plan had expected.

Ellman challenges the very idea of a scientific nature of planned economy. Initially, the plan was only kind of a goal and early-Bolshevik leaders had only vague ideas, to say the least, as to how to organize the economy in a truly Marxist manner. Later, their ideas were predominantly built on theoretical assumptions that were unable to cope with real life conditions. As a result, the system had to accommodate itself to such conditions and, moreover, it heavily relied on improvisation. In addition, dubious sources for economic decisions were likewise sometimes used. To illustrate the point in mind, one could mention that Stalin derived his "knowledge" of agriculture from Soviet films (p. 43). Also Mao Zedong's campaigns, such as the Great Leap Forward or the famous anti-sparrow campaign, were conducted without any regard to reality. No surprise, then, that they eventually turned into complete disasters. Indeed, as there was no opposition, there was no break for such harmful ideas in all of the socialist countries under scrutiny.

Socialist planning, in Ellman's view, is burdened by the contrast between the plan, which was supposed to modify the reality in the desired manner, and the actual reality itself. Although the term "planned economy" is widely used, Ellman shows its impreciseness. Plans are designed on a yearly basis and they have to be constantly altered. Instead of a plan as an indicator, the system in its classical form was based on commands stemming from the

center to the lower parts of the hierarchy. However, factories created their own strategies in order to ignore such commands from above and followed their own interests.

The author goes on and examines the problem of evaluating socialist planning through the *sine ira et studeo* approach. Despite generally negative conclusions about the planning system in different socialist countries, Ellman aims at understanding its features, not at judging it in one way or another. In some cases, be it war economy or the effects of consumption, he even gives some credit to planning. In the latter case, as he stated, socialist economies represented a major shift in societies. Socialist economies often gave a stronger voice to groups that had been previously suppressed, and provided them with greater equality. Yet, as Ellman further points out, the very logic that a socialist system automatically means more equality does not work in practice. Take the example of Sweden, for instance, a non-communist country that is far more equalist than any of the socialist countries.

Ellman proceeds systematically through all of the aspects of planning during the socialist period. Each chapter contains an in-depth explanation of the theoretical debate about the topic and its main problems. Yet, Ellman's chapters are not comprehensive studies of each topic. They are introductions that are paired with suggested readings. This is particularly helpful for further studies in the comparative economic systems.

In the first chapter, Ellman outlines the development of the planning system in Russia and the Soviet Union. He analyzes the first steps taken towards the classical system of planned economy with a particular emphasis on the discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of planning, with well-known accounts of Ludwig von Mises and others. As Ellman points out, the roots of the planning system cannot be found in developed capitalist countries, as Marx's theory argued, but in the least developed states. Indeed, according to Ellman, planning itself was well suited for catch-up economies, as it was able to allocate resources to the necessary fields. Moreover, any country, be it socialist or capitalist, switches to planning when at war. Indeed, some countries, such as the Netherlands for instance, even made use of a certain planning system after the Second World War. However, as Ellman put it, the quality of their planning was fundamentally different from the one that prevailed in socialist countries (p. 18).

In his account of what he entitled the "classical system," Ellman underlines Oscar Lange's argument that planned economy emerged as a result of war economy. Early Bolsheviks faced foreign intervention, and Stalin was driven predominantly by the need to overcome Russian/Soviet backwardness in the military sphere. Consequently, the planning system with its rationing, forced labor and neglect of consumption worked well for Stalin's purposes. Yet, paradoxically, much of the processes of planned economy were taken from capitalist firms. Ellman provides the example of a Stalingrad tractor factory, built completely on the western model. However, the socialist version was full of wasting, inefficiencies and, moreover, based on false information. As a result, the need for reform was strongly felt not only in the Soviet Union, but later also throughout the entire Soviet Bloc. The coercive model no longer worked and the shift towards a consumerist approach proved to be a necessity.

Ellman also explains reform processes in the Soviet Bloc, covering the period from the early post-Stalin reforms to Gorbachev's reforms adopted in the 1980s. What is particularly valuable is the account of the theoretical debate surrounding these with an emphasis put on Polish authors such as Oskar Lange or Wlodzimierz Brus. Nevertheless, neither of the reforms in any of the countries under scrutiny helped to revive the economies in full. The initial design, combining advantages of the plan (effectiveness in allocating capital, overcoming of the fluctuations of market, etc.) and advantages of the market (consumer goods supplies, motivation, etc.) did not materialize. On the contrary, instead of this, disadvantages of the combination emerged (pp. 51–53).

The following chapters deal with the problem of sectoral planning. Ellman begins, in accordance with the war structure of the socialist economies, with planning in the arms industry. In this sphere, the Soviet Union was able to compete with other powers. Indeed, during the war, its experience with planning helped to target all resources to the so needed arms production. After the war, possessing atomic bomb became a priority for the Soviets. Beria, the most effective manager of the system, took control, making it easier for the Soviet Union to create the bomb after the end of the war. Beria made use of espionage, forced labor and other extraordinary means, but he managed to reach the goal he was devoted to. Yet, such successes were dearly paid. The Soviet Union spent enormous sums of money on its military, be it the army, navy or air force. As Ellman rightly points out, the expenditures are only hard to evaluate, as part of the products, such as tractors, were built in accordance with the possibility to transform them into military vehicles; heavier and bigger than their Western counterparts, they were, in fact, only of limited use for Soviet agriculture.

Naturally, absolute priority put on Soviet defense industry deeply influenced investment in other fields. Even the strategic decision to place emphasis on heavy industry was partly caused by defense needs. For instance, Magnitogorsk plants were built far in the East in order to be out of reach of any potential enemy. Nevertheless, this caused problems with transport costs or how to attract employees to these places. However, the stress put on heavy industry had also a theoretical reasoning in the works of the Soviet economist Grigory Feldman. Contrary to the industrialization experience from other countries, he stated that investment into the production goods is far more effective than into consumer goods. As Ellman states, such conclusions proved to be wrong as they could function only in an environment of an economy fully separated from the other world.

Ellman continues with analyzing problems connected to agriculture. Based on Marxist ideas, socialist countries in their classical model decided to employ the so-called economy of scale concept. However, the results, as Ellman demonstrates, were less than mediocre in all of the countries under scrutiny. Instead of the economy of scale, enormous wasting and ineffectiveness further arose. As a result, the system of large kolkhozes was replaced by the propagation of smaller units. After collectivization, agricultural produce in countries from China to Hungary increased. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the problems of socialist agriculture were solved once and for all, as the rationing system in the USSR showed in the 1980s.

The Soviet system was excellent in reaching and sustaining full employment, but weak in work incentives. Workers knew they could not lose their jobs, salaries were low and there was nothing to buy in the shops. However, this does not mean that full or complete equality existed. In fact, the contrary proves to be the case. As Ellman highlights, the difference between a capitalist and a socialist country does not lie in the non-existence of differences in wealth, but in the absence of the ultra-rich in the latter. He provides examples of other weaknesses of the classical model of planned economy in the social sphere, from the quality of healthcare and education, working conditions and many others. Indeed, he even questions the profitability of the existing labor camps, pointing out its enormous inefficiencies.

Consumption represented a great weakness from the very beginning of the existence of the classical model. Socialist economies were called shortage economies due to the notorious lack of consumer goods. Nevertheless, this actually came to the surface only once the classical model was abandoned and the countries in question turned towards consumerism. With this in mind, one can likewise put forward that one of the main problems of socialist economies lie in the very pricing of consumer goods. Interestingly enough, prices did not reflect the scarcity of goods and, moreover, their change, in one way or another, represented socially and politically sensitive issues. As a result, such imbalances led to the creation of the shadow market. Solutions, such as increasing production, introducing rationing, allowing the existence of private enterprises or importing goods from abroad, bore serious problems. Furthermore, political constraints still worked against them.

International trade was relatively unimportant under the classical socialist economy model. Its war characteristics put stress on relative self-sufficiency. Only after Stalin's death, the socialist/communist states actually proceeded to more active cooperation. Bearing this in mind, Ellman enumerates five types of approaches of socialist economies, from full autarky to integration. However, in each case, Ellman shows weaknesses of the respective approach, be it "selfishness" of the states or simple impossibility to combine their countries' plans. In general, socialist cooperation never materialized in full.

The final chapter evaluates socialist planning in an international perspective. As Ellman states, the main mistake of the planners was not the role of the state in the economy, but their effort to completely remove the market from the economy as a whole. Socialists aimed at modernization, but in reality their approach caused the opposite. Despite the early successes in industrialization of previously poor countries, the countries remained captured in the heavy industry trap in the very same time period when capitalist countries started making use of modern technologies. Moreover, they were not able to cope with questions such as ecology.

A possible weakness of the book lies in that it does not cover all of the socialist countries equally. Particular attention is devoted to two countries, the Soviet Union and China, whereas others are dealt with less systematically. So, for instance, in the third chapter, Ellman analyzes examples of reforms in chosen countries. However, the choice of the countries (the Soviet Union, China, Hungary, Yugoslavia, the GDR) and the exclusion of some others (most notably, Czechoslovakia) does not seem justified, especially bearing in mind

the myth of the successfulness of Czechoslovak reforms interrupted by the Soviet invasion of 1968 or their role as inspiration for Gorbachev's perestroika. This is not to say that Ellman's conclusions are unconvincing or that the book itself lacks a sufficient research basis. Yet, brief descriptions of the economies of the missing states would definitely help to fill the unnecessary gap.

To conclude, *Socialist Planning* is an extremely readable and enriching book for anybody who is interested in the problem of planning in its widest perspective. Indeed, it is an excellent insight into planned economies under socialism. Clarity of the explanations of even the most complex theoretical frameworks of socialist planning makes it accessible not only for economists, but even for an unexperienced reader. In addition, Ellman's book should be understood as a kind of a warning against "grand" concepts and campaigns. They, as Ellman convincingly proved, may lead to disasters.

Karel Svoboda

Bill Press, **The Obama Hate Machine: The Lies, Distortions, and Personal Attacks on the President – And Who Is Behind Them**. New York: Thomas Dunne Books and St. Martin's Press, 2012. 320 pages. ISBN 978-1250031020

The election of Barack Hussein Obama in the November of 2008 was a watershed moment in American history. Many who watched this enigmatic man ascend to the highest office of the land anticipated a new era, both politically and culturally, looking towards a post-racial America and the return of civility to the culture of poisoned politics in Washington D.C. Despite these well-intentioned and naively idealist expectations, the American people and their newly elected President – the first African-American to achieve that distinction – found themselves in the all-too-familiar milieu of culture wars, political dysfunction and latent racism. His ascendancy to the world's most powerful office should have signaled a sea-change in American political discourse. And in the eyes of author and liberal political commentator, Bill Press, it did, however, not as most of us anticipated. In his most recent effort, *The Obama Hate Machine: The Lies, Distortions, and Personal Attacks on the President – And Who Is Behind Them*, Press maintains that the election of Barack Hussein Obama as the Forty-Fourth President of the United States of America heralded a new and unprecedented moment in American Presidential history where we witnessed relentless assault of "personal attacks and a litany of hate uglier than those directed against any other president in modern times."[1] More importantly, Press argues that this so-called "hate machine" was funded, orchestrated and maintained through the directive of the now infamous Koch Brothers in collusion with Republican Congressional members and

---

[1] Bill Press. *The Obama Hate Machine: The Lies, Distortions, and Personal Attacks on the President – And Who Is Behind Them* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books and St. Martin's Press, 2012), 2.

their leadership alongside an all-too-willing and compliant media that collectively worked towards the destruction of the man in the Oval Office solely for their personal benefit.

Bill Press was born William H. Press on April 8, 1940, in Wilmington, Delaware, and has established himself a successful American politically liberal talk-radio host, television commentator and author. Starting his careers in Los Angeles, California, Press honed his rhetorical political skills among local national affiliates within the city before moving on to the more visible cable news punditry shows on cable television such as *CNN* and *MSNBC*'s Crossfire, Spine Room and Buchanan and Press shows. Today he regularly appears as a paid political commentator on both stations as well as his own "The Bill Press Show" on *Free Speech TV* and his eponymously named website that has become a popular destination for liberal minded advocacy. Prior to and during his intermittent broadcasting career, Press served as the chief of staff for Republican California State Senator Peter Behr from 1971 to 1973, as Director of the California Office of Planning and Research under Governor Jerry Brown, a Democrat, from 1975 to 1979. He also served from 1993 to 1996 as the Chairman of the Democratic Party of California.[2]

Press, a vocal mouth piece of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, has penned numerous texts attacking the right and Republican officeholders under such overtly partisan titles such as *Bush Must Go! The Top Ten Reasons Why Bush Doesn't Deserve a Second Term* (2004), *How the Republicans Stole Christmas: The Republican Party's Declared Monopoly on Religion and What Democrats Can Do to Take it Back,* its sister title *How the Republicans Stole Christmas: Why the Religious Right is Wrong about Faith & Politics and What We Can Do to Make it Right* (2005), *Trainwreck: The End of the Conservative Revolution (And Not a Moment Too Soon)* (2008) and *Toxic Talk: How the Radical Right Has Poisoned America's Airwaves* in 2010. His most recent endeavor follows the same format of anti-Republican and anti-Conservative lambast and excessively verbose subtitles.[3]

It goes without saying that two distinctly opposing views of President Barack Hussein Obama emerged during his campaign for President and continue to exist to this day in America. The political and cultural left sees the President as the culmination and successful outcome of the nation's great multicultural experiment and hailed him as the start of a post-racial reality that much of the country yearned for, while the political and cultural right has defined him as something distinctly different and wholly un-American. Author Alan Greenblatt argued in a May 13, 2014 *NPR* article "Race Alone Doesn't Explain Hatred of Obama, But It's Part of the Mix" that it's not just race but that for many on the right it's what Obama represents as a child of mixed parentage with an African Muslim father who was outspokenly anti-colonial in his politics and a white Midwestern Christian mother that embraced the "countercultural left." They gave their son an African first name and a Muslim middle name, raised him in a multicultural global environment that eventually led him to settle in the diverse and primarily democratic landscape of Chicago, giving rise

---

2   Corey Dietz, "A Profile of Radio Personality Bill Press" on *About.com*, http://radio.about.com/od/radiotalkshowhosts/p/A-Profile-Of-Radio-Personality-Bill-Press.htm.

3   "Bill Press," Tribune Media Services, http://www.tmsfeatures.com/bio/bill-press/.

to our first multicultural urban president. In addition to this diversity that is abhorred by certain segments of conservative America, Obama represented the antithesis of the Republican Party, its political platform and the majority view of most of its members – rural, white, Protestants who "held tightly to their guns" and lamented the changing landscape of American culture.[4]

The first chapter of Press's defensive pro-Obama tome, "Presidents Under Fire," examines how the tradition of disrespecting and maligning the President has not only remained a constant in American political discourse but dates back to the time of our founding-fathers. It appears that the blood sport of political character assassination is as old as the nation and a cultural relic of Revolutionary politics that justified America's independence from the British Crown. Much in the same manner as today's politicians, the founding generation employed character debasement as a means of achieving policy goals opposed by their respective presidents. Washington's belief in avoiding foreign entanglements was not only part of his farewell address to the nation but part of his presidential policy that was vehemently opposed by Thomas Jefferson who openly supported France in their war against Britain. Jefferson supported a Republican press that not only actively spread rumors about the President Washington that were sexual in nature and described Washington's farewell as "the loathings of a sick mind."[5] Press highlights throughout the chapter the absolute disdain that contemporaries from other parties had for their respective presidents. And it is here where the central premise of Press's effort rings a bit hollow in that the maligning of Presidents appeared a near constant throughout the antebellum era of American politics – well-known among scholars of Abraham Lincoln who was labeled a "knuckle-dragging, knocked-kneed Gorilla" – throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century to the present. In fact Press himself traces the trend from Washington to Adams to Jefferson, then to Lincoln and beyond.

So is the Obama Hate Machine unique in contemporary politics as the author provides ample examples of similar rhetoric leveled against numerous presidents where we see charges of Washington as a traitor, Adams as a monarchist, Jefferson as a sexual deviant and morally corrupt man while Abraham Lincoln was labeled a gorilla charged with grave executive usurpation? We see how Franklin Delano Roosevelt was tagged as a socialist and communist through the efforts of his primary adversary, the three Dupont Brothers who ran the corporate giant and served as a similar foil alongside their Liberty League to FDR as the Koch Brothers and the Tea Party are to Obama. FDR equally contended with the new media of Talk Radio that emerged alongside his presidency stating that he "consorted with the enemies of civilization, […] deceived the citizens of the United States, […] transcended the bounds of his executive position."[6] Accusations sounding all too familiar in

---

[4] Alan Greenblatt, "Race Alone Doesn't Explain Hatred of Obama, But It's Part of the Mix," *NPR.org*, http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/05/13/311908835/race-alone-doesnt-explain-hatred-of-obama-but-its-part-of-the-mix.

[5] Press, *The Obama Hate Machine*, 18.

[6] Ibid., 40.

today's world. Press also asserts that the Tea Party is merely a creation of Koch Industries much in the same vein as the Liberty League was created and funded by the Duponts.[7] Press shows how these initial pillars of opposition – press media, politicians, big business and talk radio – were initially combined against FDR and later utilized against proceeding presidents with great effect, in particular in the Republican effort against Clinton that began in an effort to prevent the moderate candidate from gaining the democratic nomination against the incumbent George Herbert Walker Bush. Press states that under the guidance of Lee Atwater, the chairman of the Republic National Committee, the effort against Clinton began in earnest during the Democratic primaries to allow more liberal candidates to gain the nomination and run against Bush. However, after his victory in the primary and subsequent general election, the RNC realized they could not stop his agenda so they looked to smear his character to cripple his progress culminating in Paula Jones sex scandal, White Water, Trooper Gate, Monica Lewinsky and finally impeachment. This resume alone proved that partisan politics and the destruction of candidates and sitting presidents is not novel but deeply embedded into the political DNA of America since its founding.[8]

In the following two chapters, Press explores the process of "Othering" Barack Hussein Obama as first a candidate and then as President. The process of "Othering" became the central tool for rallying the "disappointment, disapproval and disdain" that the right held for Obama. The right has routinely and consistently labeled him as an anti-Christian, an anti-Capitalist, and simply anti-American in his heart and soul. Press points out that the right latched onto the logic that "because he had a Muslim father, he obviously was a Muslim. Because he had gone to school in Indonesia, he must have attended a madrassa and been taught to hate America."[9] This logic continued as his work as a community organizer in poor black neighborhoods made him a socialist and a black nationalist and that his attendance at Trinity United Church of God and his acquaintance with Bill Ayers made justified Obama being called either a "black separatist" or "terrorist sympathizer" respectively. More appalling, the right tended to utilize these various and conflicting labels collectively and interchangeably so that Obama was seen as both a Nazi and a Socialist, a Muslim and a Christian Separatist, and most viciously an anti-American supporter of terrorism intent on the destruction of the nation. It is here where the mere absurdity of these accusations should have lost any salience among conservative Americans. But as Press aptly points out, they did not. More disturbingly, the right continued to parrot the now all-too-common talking points that the Koch Brothers, Republican politicians and the conservative press reinforced over and over again.

Although poignant, the third chapter, "The I Hate Obama Book Club," is arguably the book's weakest as the author simply offers a cursory and biased summary of books published by conservative authors attacking Obama's administration, policies and ideological tendencies. Press's efforts focus on such titles as *The Manchurian President: Barack*

---

7 Ibid., 35–38, 198.
8 Ibid., 42–45.
9 Ibid., 51–53.

Obama's Ties to Communists, Socialists and Other Anti-American Extremists, the aptly titled, *To Save America: Stopping Obama's Secular Socialist Machine*, and *Barack Obama's Plan to Socialize America and Destroy Capitalism,* just to name a few of the catchier titles among the growing field of Obama hate literature. Press disturbingly observes that "By year three of his presidency, a staggering 67 books, at least had been published that demonized Barack Obama – far more than either Bill Clinton or George W. Bush ever had to contend with – and the number keeps growing."[10] By the same time in Clinton's presidency, only eleven anti-Clinton books were published while Bush contended with only five anti-Bush tomes during the same period. Press goes on to dedicate a few cursory paragraphs of summary and disdain to more than sixty of the derogatory titles while also addressing the half dozen by more liberal and leftist authors deploring Obama's failure as a liberal democrat and his failure to usher in the leftist revolution that they all foresaw with his election.

It is within the final two chapters that we truly get to the core of Press's thesis and the role of the industrial Koch Brothers and the media machine that, he contends, they directly created. In Chapter 5, simply titled "The Brothers," Press examines the direct role that Charles and David Koch have played in the creation, promotion and continuation of the Obama Hate Machine. His account begins with the infamous secret media of "conservative fat cats" in Palm Springs in January 2011 where the brothers gathered their billionaire industrialist and corporate minions to discuss their collective strategy and pool their boundless resources to stop the anti-corporate/anti-capitalist agenda of the President Obama. The efforts of what Press deftly has coined the "Kochtopus" first came to light on August 30, 2010, in *The New Yorker* investigative report by Jane Mayer titled "Covert Operations: The Billionaire Brothers Who Are Waging a War Against Obama." Press argues that Mayer's article clearly bothered the brothers who subsequently hired investigators to "dig up dirt on Mayer and accuse her of plagiarism."[11] Press states that this tactic of confrontation, false claims and intimidation soon became par for the course and was quickly employed across the entire apparatus of the machine – by politicians, the press and by the numerous think tanks and non-profits that were created and employed to promote Koch's pro-corporate/pro-industrial agenda.

After tracing the Koch family tree back to their father Fred who made his fortune developing the oil industry for the Stalinist regime, Press moves on to discuss the contradictory anti-Obama-ism of the Koch's who have seen record profits under the openly pro-business president. Press traces their history of supporting their pro-business, libertarian politics in an era void of the John Birch society that forced the Koch Brothers to "chart their own course […] as libertarians advocating the principles of smaller government, less regulation, lower taxes and greater reliance on the free market."[12] After a failed bid on the Libertarian Party ticket in 1984 where the brothers invested over two million of their own money, Charles and David turned to the development of foundations and non-profits to

---

[10] Ibid., 137–38.

[11] Ibid., 178.

[12] Ibid., 184.

advance their cause. Through such organizations as the Center for Public Integrity, Citizens for a Sound Economy, FreedomWorks, and countless other organizations, the Koch's funneled tens of millions of dollars into campaign activities from 1984 to the present. Their anti-regulation/anti-environment platform even drew the ire of the Clinton era Justice Department and incurred a thirty-five million dollar fine for corporate malfeasance in their oil industry concerning repeated pollution and an estimated three million gallons of oil into American waterways.[13] Such episodes only served to steel the Koch Brothers' resolve to use all of their resources to reshape government to best suit their needs and interests. By the time of Obama's election, the Kochtopus was in full swing as they funneled more and more funds into small-government conservative candidates, think-tanks, and according to Press, the Tea Party movement that he states from its inception was an "Astroturf movement, created and fed from the top down by right-wing political activists and major donors with their own extreme, anti-Obama agenda – and led, of course, by two organizations and two brothers. Without them, the Tea Party would not exist."[14]

In the final chapter, "The Role of the Media," Press argues that structural, institutional and technological changes within the world of contemporary media compared to the halcyon days of Cronkite-past directly contributed to the creation of the Obama Hate Machine as the profession was no longer tethered to its original mission of objective observation and reporting of the world. He understandably asks the questions of what specifically happened that allowed "journalism to fall off its golden pedestal" and for the profession to transition from "Walter Cronkite to Glenn Beck." Press maintains that fundamental changes in technology and increased competition among traditional formats coupled with the emergence of new avenues, media outlets and the establishment of the twenty-four hour news cycle among the ever-evolving cable networks forced this shift from objectivity to hyper-partisanship and hackery. Another contributing factor to this shift was the intense consolidation of newspapers, magazines and networks in response to the increasingly competitive marketplace for 24/7 news programs and content. Collectively, these trends contribute to the growing problem in part by "dumbing down of America politics" while further dividing the nation by creating the myth among conservative of the all-powerful "Liberal Media" and its desire to contribute to Obama's radical revolution and destruction of the nation. In spite of his assessment of the forces of change and the destructive potential, Press remains a bit of an apologist for Liberals without holding them to the same level of contempt for their contributions to the fall of media in America. Anyone who watches a handful of programs on *CNN* and *MSNBC* can easily see that the majority of programming is geared towards the glorification of non-news and partisan politics.

Overall, Bill Press has written a convincing and engaging account of the collective efforts of the political right, right-wing media and corporate America – led by the Koch Brothers – to wage a relentless and callous war not only against the agenda of President

---

[13] Ibid., 188.
[14] Ibid., 198.

Obama, but more interestingly and disturbingly against his character and humanity. Despite this falling in line with the age-old American tradition of vilifying and demonizing the office of the President of the United States since the time of the Founding Fathers and its first occupant, no single American President has faced such an incessant and unrelenting effort of destroying both the man and the office he holds. The fact that Press directly witnessed and actively opposed this struggle gives us insight into his passion to destroy the "Hate Machine." However, the truth of the matter is irrelevant to those engaged in this effort and all too obvious to the rest of us who have seen through their collective bigotry. Although Press successfully highlights the role of the Koch Brothers corporate anti-regulatory ideology and their manipulation of Congress in navigating the "Hate Machine," he fails to identify and condemn the primacy of race as the catalyst for the broad grassroots support that directly fuels the machine and makes it so effective. Despite this fact and the relentless campaign waged by the "Hate Machine", Barack Hussein Obama has been successfully elected twice and the success of his efforts will be determined by future generations, not those who tried tirelessly to stop him.

Dejan Kralj

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

1. Manuscript Submission

The journal Studia Territorialia AUC publishes original scholarly manuscripts that have not been published anywhere else, are not currently awaiting publication in other journals, and are not being considered for publication by another journal. Manuscripts are accepted in the English, Czech, and German languages. In the case of English-language manuscripts, American English is preferred, but British English is also acceptable so long as the quality of the writing is good and spelling is consistent. Insofar as style is concerned, authors should consult either the Chicago Manual of Style or the Oxford Style Manual.

Manuscripts for consideration are to be sent to the editorial board via the e-mail address stuter@fsv.cuni.cz in a standard format (.doc or .rtf). All correspondence between the author and the editorial board will take place via e-mail.

Manuscripts considered for publication shall be sent to external anonymous reviewers. The period between the submission of manuscripts and their return to respective authors for authorization, resubmission of the revised manuscripts based on reviewers' comments, or with an outright rejection will not exceed three months. The editorial board reserves the right to edit the article in accordance with its own editorial standards or to reject the article with no obligation to provide a reason.

Manuscripts requiring excessive editing due to failure to respect the journal's editorial guidelines or poor presentation or language will be returned to the respective authors.

2. Copyright

The copyright of each journal issue rests with the publisher Karolinum (Charles University Press). Authors of accepted articles will be required to conclude a standard copyright transfer agreement with the publisher before publication.

3. Editorial Guidelines

An article should normally be between 25 and 40 pages in length, whereas a book review would ideally be 5 to 10 pages in length. Longer texts may also be considered if the subject matter warrants such treatment. All articles, regardless of language, must contain an English-language abstract between 100 and 150 words in length as well as four to six keywords.

A submitted manuscript must contain the following items: title page, abstract, keywords, main text, and addenda (if there are any). In a covering letter, the author must disclose his or her full name, institutional affiliation, a brief biographical note in the language of the manuscript, an address to which author's copies are to be sent, and contact information. Articles by more than one author must include a single contact person for purposes of correspondence.

Names from other alphabets must be shown in the Latin alphabet. A transliteration table valid for the given language must be consulted when transliterating bibliographical items in footnotes (Library of Congress, Oxford Dictionary, ČSN). Standard transcription should be used for foreign names in the main text.

4. Reference Style

Authors should adhere to the classical reference style. References should be presented in the form of footnotes. Bibliographical information from consulted works is included in the footnotes themselves, not in a separate bibliography.

5. Reference Examples

Books

One Author or Editor

Richard Sakwa, *Postcommunism: Concepts in the Social Sciences* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999), 51–58.

Two Authors or Editors

Roy Allison and Christoph Bluth, eds., *Security Dilemmas in Russia and Eurasia* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1998).

Three Authors or Editors

Martha Brill Olcott, Anders Åslund, and Sherman W. Garnett, *Getting it Wrong: Regional Cooperation and the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999), 105–8.

More than Three Authors or Editors

Viktor N. Rudenko et al., eds., *Politicheskaia nauka i gosudarstvennaia vlasť v Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Novykh Nezavisimykh Gosudarstvakh* (Ekaterinburg: Uraľskoe otdelenie Rossiskoi Akademii Nauk, 2004).

Chapter or Other Part of a Book

Branislav Makyta, "Energetický dialóg EÚ a RF," in *Energie pro Evropu: energetická spolupráce Ruska a zemí postsovětského prostoru s Evropskou unií,* ed. Bohuslav Litera et al. (Praha: Eurolex Bohemia, 2006), 50–72.

Introduction, Foreword, or Similar Part of a Book
    Anatol Lieven, Preface to *An Endless War: The Russian-Chechen Conflict in Perspective*, by Emil Souleimanov (Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag, 2007), 13–15.

Electronically-Published Books
    Catherine Guicherd, *The Enlarged EU's Eastern Border: Integrating Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova in the European Project*, SWP-Studien 2000/S 20 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2002), 31–32, http://swp-berlin.org/common/get_document.php?asset_id=319 (accessed October 2, 2008).

Repeated Citation
    Makyta, "Energetický dialóg," 66.

Consecutive Citation
    Ibid., 66–69.

Journals
Article in a Print Journal
    Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership," *Foreign Affairs* 73, No. 2 (March/April 1994): 67–82.

Article in an Online Journal
    Farkhad Tolipov, "Uzbekistan and Russia: Alliance against a Mythic Threat?" *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst* 7, No. 1 (January 11, 2006): 3–5, www.cacianalyst.org/files/20060111Analyst.pdf (accessed October 2, 2008).

Item in an Online Database
    Halford J. Mackinder, "Modern Geography, German and English," *The Geographical Journal* 6, No. 4 (1895): 367–79, http://www.jstor.org (accessed October 2, 2008).

Book Review
    Cameron Ross, Review of *Political Parties in the Regions of Russia: Democracy Unclaimed*, by Grigorii V. Golosov, *Slavic Review* 63, No. 4 (Winter 2004): 898–99.

Newspapers and Magazines
    Svante Cornell, "The War That Russia Wants," *The Guardian*, August 8, 2008.

Theses and Doctoral Dissertations
    Jeff Sahadeo, "Creating a Russian Colonial Community: City, Nation, Empire in Tashkent, 1865–1923" (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois, 2000), 96–108, 116.

Presentations at Symposia, Meetings or Conferences

Jonathan Wheatley, "Democratization in Georgia since 2003: Revolution or Repackaging?" (Paper presented at the Third International Workshop for Young Scholars, Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan, July 5, 2006).

Archives and Manuscript Collections

Sh. Z. Eliava and G. I. Broido to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, V. I. Lenin, L. D. Trotsky and L. B. Krasin, telegram, Tashkent, December 27, 1919, file 588, fol. 13, container 4-39-43, Chicherin Papers, Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow.

Interviews

Published and Broadcast Interviews

Paris Hilton, Interview with Larry King, *Larry King Live,* CNN, June 28, 2007.

Unpublished Interview

Petr Šochman (EC Directorate General for Competition), interview with author, September 24, 2008.

Unattributed Interview

Interview with a Border Guard officer, August 28, 1998.

Website

"Growth of Welfare of Kazakhstan's Citizens is the Primary Goal of State Policy. Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan H. E. Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev to the People of Kazakhstan," Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, http://www.akorda.kz/www/www_akorda_kz.nsf/sections?OpenForm&id_doc=0793D9432423DDE5062573EC0048005B&lang=en&L1=L2&L2=L2-22 (accessed October 2, 2008).

Personal Communication

Hans-Uwe Stahlmann, E-mail message to author, December 29, 2007.

Adapted from *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003), 593–754.