Roundtable on the Future of Democracy:
Challenges & Opportunities
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Future of Democracy:
Challenges & Prospects

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Abstract

Unprecedented speed, interconnectivity, complexity and uncertainty are impacting all spheres of global society today, presenting challenges that were not foreseen even a few years ago. The end of the Cold War was interpreted by many as the final victory for democracy and capitalism over authoritarian socialism. A quarter century after the sudden collapse of communism and the emergence of a new democratic consensus, liberal democracy itself is under threat. Former bastions of democracy are exhibiting a level of populism and polarization previously associated only with nascent, tenuous democracies in countries with low levels of education and economic development. The shared vision that constituted the foundation for the democratic consensus is breaking down. Doubts, fears and insecurity have shaken faith in the institutions of governance and the confidence of youth in a better future. Nations are closing their borders, retreating from global cooperation, and casting the blame on minorities and foreigners in a manner reminiscent of an earlier century. Participants in the WAAS Roundtable on the Future of Democracy at Dubrovnik on April 3-5, 2018 recognized that this shift in direction is the result of a complex nexus of forces that have been shaping the future for decades. The group shared valuable insights into our present dilemma while maintaining the diversity of perspective essential for understanding a complex, multidimensional global phenomenon still in the process of unfolding. The discussion identified numerous practical steps that can be taken to moderate extreme aberrations resulting from the misuse of social power. It also recognized that fundamental changes are needed to develop more effective systems of governance capable of fully supporting the aspirations of humanity, maximizing the equity and effectiveness of social institutions and the future evolution of global society.

1. The Context

Colossal political, economic and social changes followed the sudden end of the Cold War and the associated ideological competition. These include the collapse of the Soviet Empire and Warsaw Pact, the rapid expansion of NATO, the establishment of the European Union and Eurozone, the dramatic expansion of world trade after the founding of the WTO, the birth of

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the World Wide Web as the first truly global social institution, the rise of global civil society, the globalization of multinational corporations and financial markets, the financialization of economies, the resulting global impact of the 2008 financial crisis, the intensification of multicultural contacts in a shrinking world of intensified cross-border communication and immigration, rising expectations of an increasingly educated young population, accelerated technological development and application threatening existing job security and future job creation, rising levels of economic inequality and concentration of wealth, increasing influence of money and economy on national policy and international relations, the recent emergence of China and India as economic powerhouses, the recent proliferation of nuclear powers and reliance on nuclear weapons reversing the dramatic breakthrough in nuclear arms control in the early 1990s. These changes are themselves both the causes and results of rapid and radical change.

This remarkable confluence of diverse factors has shaken conventional theories and beliefs, generated widespread confusion, and raised fundamental questions about the future of humanity. Concerns about the future have not reached this intensity since the end of World War II led to the founding of the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions. In combination, they signal disillusionment with the prevailing intellectual paradigm that has dominated global thought for the past few decades, but without clearly signaling the characteristics of the new paradigm that is yet to emerge and replace it. As in the past, one result has been a reversion to earlier dogmas and discredited doctrines in search of greater certainty. Competitive and aggressive nationalism, isolationism, mutual suspicion and xenophobia are rearing their heads. Prevailing philosophies, institutions and policies have been discredited. But a new shared vision of pathways to a more peaceful, prosperous and sustainable human community has yet to emerge.

The end of the Cold War was viewed by many as the unilateral defeat of authoritarian communism and the final supremacy of liberal democratic capitalism. Few perceived that the victory was to be so short-lived. For in their extreme forms, these two ideologies were mutually reinforcing. The threat of global communism was a factor that kept advocates of western capitalist democracies aware of the need to maintain its legitimacy by ensuring that its citizens were wealthier and enjoyed greater liberty than those in competing communist countries. Each extolled values and social realities that the other ignored. In the aftermath of WWII, European thinkers concerned by the ominous threat of fascism and communism founded the Mont Pelerin Society to extol economic liberalism as the ultimate safeguard and antidote to authoritarianism. They acted on the premise that so long as the acquisition and possession of property are free and unrestrained, human freedom will be preserved. Ironically, today unbridled economic liberalism has become a principal threat to liberal democracy. Dismantling the constraints previously imposed by social democratic policies to shield Western Europe and North America from the lure of communism, a more aggressive form of neoliberalism emerged to tear down the fetters that protected the economic rights of the working class and freed corporations to wholeheartedly pursue shareholder value, unmindful of the essential responsibility of business to serve the wider interests of the whole society.

Globalization added fuel to the fire of market fundamentalism. Freed from the constraints imposed by nation-states, stateless multinational corporations took refuge in offshore tax havens and compelled nations to compete with one another for investment, jobs and foreign exchange earnings. The surplus profits accruing to the wealthy multiplied global financial assets from a mere $12 trillion in 1980 to in excess of $150 trillion by 2015. A small and declining percentage of this accumulated capital is being reinvested in the real economy to create jobs and meet human needs. The remainder is circling the globe in search of speculative returns giving rise to a Global Casino.

This complex array of disparate facts is an expression of a nexus of powerful forces compelling us to rethink and reshape our conception of the future. The changes impacting the world today are impacting on every existing social institution. Democracy too is inevitably influenced and modified, both positively and negatively, by the advent and action of every further development of social force or power resulting from developments of technology and social organization, law and human rights, science and education, travel and transport, communication and media, entertainment and enjoyment.

2. Future Prospects

Answers to the current dilemma lie in the future, not in the past. The lines of future social development are being drawn by irresistible evolutionary forces working behind the confusion and disillusionment generated by recent events. The future is on a fractal trajectory to increasing affirmation of fundamental human rights for all—political, economic and social—that can be traced back for centuries, in spite of frequent detours and reversals. Current and emerging challenges present humanity with the inevitable necessity of developing more effective institutions for global governance. The democratic revolution launched in the late 18th century and aided by successive technological revolutions continues to press inexorably for devolution of greater freedom of choice and authority to communities and individuals.

The demands of rapid social evolution fuel global demand for universal access to more and better quality education. At the same time they make evident that education as practiced today is part of the problem. A different type education is needed that shifts the focus from traditional silo-based academic disciplines to multi and transdisciplinary perspectives and focus on development of independent thinking, values, character, social skills and life-long learning—essential prerequisites to prepare youth for the complexities of the future. The untold ravages caused by humanity's propensity to subordinate itself to the inventions and instruments it creates for its advancement compel us to consider impacts in advance and, to impose where appropriate rational constraints on the application of technology, use of money and power of economy. Self-mastery of these creative powers is essential for promoting human welfare and future well-being.

Underlying all these forces is the inexorable march toward universal human values. Values are not merely pious intentions, utopian ideals or political slogans. They represent the quintessence of the collective wisdom of humanity regarding the essential conditions for continuous and sustainable human accomplishment, welfare and well-being. Technologies,

institutions and life styles may change almost beyond recognition over centuries but the evolution of values stays on course, regardless of the duration and intensity of temporary reversals. It is true that the USA had to fight a catastrophic and nearly fatal Civil War in order to affirm the values of freedom and equality enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. But it is also true that the movement toward the abolition of slavery and recognition of human rights began centuries earlier and was sweeping the world even at the time civil war was raging in America on the pretext of preserving a barbarous form of extreme inequality. Atavisms may die hard, but they die all the same. The battle for women's rights playing out today in the workplace and parliamentary elections had its origins two centuries ago and will persist until all relics of discrimination are abolished. So, both the historical record and developments in the 21st century strongly support the conclusion that the full gamut of political, social and economic rights embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the constitutions of nations, and by implication in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals recently affirmed by 200 nations of the world will continue to press for full legitimacy and realization.

The challenges confronting humanity compel us to accelerate progress along these and other lines of social evolution, rather than retreat to flawed ideas and failed strategies of the past. Practical solutions do exist to many of the deficiencies presently undermining democratic practices today. Proven remedies are available for curtailing or even eliminating the direct role of money in electoral politics, increasing transparency of campaign financing, closing the revolving door of influence connecting business and government, reducing electoral fraud, increasing transparency, devolving decision-making to the local level, raising people's participation, redirecting financial capital from speculation to meet real economic needs and create new jobs, making politicians more accountable to the electorate for truthfulness in word and faithful implementation of the policies for which they are elected.

Even if all these proven remedies could be fully implemented, fundamental flaws will persist due to the inherent inadequacies of the present system that we call 'democratic', but which has always favored some elites and special interests over the welfare of the majority. The stresses resulting from globalization, rapid technological development and rising levels of economic power will not be resolved until a new consensus arises concerning a new, more inclusive, human-centered paradigm better suited to promote the welfare and well-being of all humanity. It is the responsibility of thinking humanity to direct our attention beyond short-term incremental panaceas to frame the outlines and content of that new social consensus.

3. Social Power, Accomplishment and Evolution

At the root of all these complex interconnected evolutionary developments lie the algorithms of Social Power. All power is the result of a social process through which human beings develop ever more organized, complex and integrated relationships with one another. Power has always determined the course of human history. The military power of Alexander the Great and Napoleonic France, the economic power unleashed by the first agrarian revolution in the Levant 10,000 years ago and the First Industrial Revolution in Europe during the 19th century, the unparalleled organizational capacities of ancient Rome

and China or the modern British Empire, the power of rapidly accelerating communication and transportation technologies which characterize the Information Age and the nascent 4th Industrial Revolution, the power of knowledge and the scientific culture of critical thinking that have multiplied exponentially since the Reformation and the Enlightenment, the power of universal education and health care, and the unprecedented political power unleashed by democratic forms of governance over the last half century—all these represent interconnected and interdependent dimensions of social power. For we mean by this term the power that issues from constructive human relations. This capacity of the society for mutually beneficial cooperation exponentially enhances the power available to individuals and the social groups to which they belong to accomplish whatever goals they aspire for. For all power is power for accomplishment and all forms of power contribute to the overall capacity of individuals and social groups to accomplish the goals they set for themselves.

"The greater the distribution of all forms of social power to the population at large, the greater the overall power of the society for accomplishment, development and sustainability."

Democracy is a political system designed to more widely distribute all forms of social power through increasing individual freedom of thought and action, greater equality of access and opportunity, greater knowledge and choice. Diffusion of power reduces or prevents the concentration of power in the hands of a few. Active participation of the population in its own self-government by exercise of the popular will, either directly or through representatives, is the means adopted to broaden the distribution of power. Peace, the right of self-determination, physical security and economic welfare are its fundamental pillars. Political power is inseparable from economic power, since the survival and development of any society depends on its capacity to continuously enhance its capacity for production, distribution and individual welfare. Therefore, the right to property, access to education and right to enjoyment are fundamental. Laws protecting private property, the invention of double-entry bookkeeping, the printing press, newspaper, education, steam engine, railways, telegraph, telephone, automobile, radio, television, antibiotics, airplane, modern science, tourism, access to information, mobile phone and internet have simultaneously enhanced the overall power of society and the wider distribution of power to its individual members.

Never before has human society possessed so much power for good or for evil. Never before has power been so widely distributed among the people and nations of the world. At the same time never before have so few possessed such a vastly unequal proportion of humanity's total capacity for accomplishment. The history of humanity traces the continuous discovery and development of new and greater forms of social power. So too, it traces the irresistible and inevitable tendency of individuals and groups to seek to garner and direct that power for their own personal benefit and domination over the rest, resulting in an endless series of power struggles, mutually destructive wars, violent revolutions and peaceful evolutionary transitions.

But history also clearly reveals behind all the struggles, victories and retreats one irrefutable fact. The greater the distribution of all forms of social power to the population at large, the greater the overall power of the society for accomplishment, development and sustainability. The power of any language for communication is limited by the size of the population that knows it. The power of education is limited by the number of people who possess it. The utility of telephone and internet are a function of the number of people who have access to them—the greater the number, the greater their value. So too, the power of money is a function of the extent to which it is distributed to all. A nation of super rich elites is still impoverished in the measure it has citizens who lack basic necessities and economic security. None can be fully secure until all are. A world of nuclear superpowers spurs the rise of acts of terrorism by individuals who have nothing to lose because they possess nothing. War between nations only ceased in Europe when nations could no longer afford the catastrophic destruction wrought by warfare. Napoleon discovered that a nation of free citizens willing to fight to preserve their freedom was infinitely more powerful than an army of mercenaries. Hitler vastly underestimated the power of England to resist invasion because he failed to realize the measure of its citizens' determination to preserve their freedom.

> *"Though all forms of social power are fundamental to human life and interconvertible, the power for self-governance stands out as absolutely critical to the effectiveness of human society—local, national and global."*

For the first time in history, humanity now possesses more than sufficient power to meet the basic needs and fulfill the higher aspirations of all human beings. Yet today we confront a paradox of unprecedented capacity for accomplishment coexisting side by side with persistent hunger, poverty, insecurity, unmet needs and existential threats. For all our remarkable achievements, something fundamental seems to be lacking. For all our power, humanity finds itself powerless to manage, regulate and master the multitude of powers it has created and developed.

In our quest to understand, explain and address this flawed equation between the potential capacities humanity has collectively developed and the actual achievements it collectively enjoys, we find ourselves continuously brought back to the issue of governance. Though all forms of social power are fundamental to human life and interconvertible, the power for self-governance stands out as absolutely critical to the effectiveness of human society— local, national and global. Political power guided by universal human values is the leaven for effectively combining and kneading together all the others into a vibrant living organism.

Just two decades ago it appeared that we were nearing mastery of this most elusive and intractable form of social power—the power of governance. After centuries of experimentation with military rule, feudalism, theocracy, aristocracy, monarchy, colonialism, imperialism, communism, fascism and other varieties of authoritarianism,

consensus seemed to be emerging that democracy represents the best solution, however imperfect, to the challenges of self-governance and world-governance and to the full development and harnessing of the power of human society to promote individual and collective security, welfare, and well-being.

> *"The very notion that the maximum welfare of all could be achieved by a system in which each individual seeks to maximize their own individual self-interest regardless of its impact on others is about as rational as the assumption of efficient market theory that each individual makes rational decisions in pursuit of their own economic self-interest."*

Recent developments already referred to cast a shadow on that elusive or illusory goal. Today we view democracy—even in the liberal bastions in which it seemed so deeply entrenched and invincible—as not only incomplete and imperfect, but even at risk and in peril. Nations which whole-heartedly embraced the principles of liberal democracy as panacea for all social ills are now retreating from that conviction and commitment. Nations which preached the virtues of democracy to the world and spread its seeds far and wide seem to be losing faith and commitment to their own political heritage. Populism and polarization are replacing a unifying identity and shared values. Respect for democratic values, culture and institutions is being tarnished and slandered by vulgar speech, blatant disregard for truth, gross manipulation of the powers of law and government to serve the interests of elites, subordination of political power to money, plutocracy and state capture, rampant assertion of tyranny by minorities and majorities proclaiming electoral victory as a license to pursue narrow parochial agendas rather than the will of the collective.[1]

Does all this herald the decline of a once perfect but now deteriorating system? Or does it signal that we are approaching the point where democracy itself must evolve, as economy and every other aspect of society has evolved, to reflect the emerging values and harness the emerging powers of society in the 21st century? Like the crisis that overwhelmed authoritarianism a quarter century ago and colonial imperialism a half century earlier, is the crisis of democracy a sign of decline or an invitation and call for further advance? Is democracy an imperfect work in progress or an aging and soon to be obsolete stage in the evolution of something else?

4. Institutions and Culture

In retrospect, it is clear that our use and abuse of the term democracy are nothing new. Only now we are more sensitive and conscious of the hypocrisy that has always cloaked the rule by privileged elites and special interest groups by terms such as government by and for the people, peoples' democracy, and what not. After all, the very proclamation of freedom and equality embodied in the Declaration of Independence two centuries ago was for a long time

thereafter applied in practice only to white males with landed property. So, to speak of the demise of democracy is as inadequate as it is to speak of its perfection. It was never more than an elusive ideal to aspire for and seek to approach ever more closely, never a realized fact.

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The very notion that the maximum welfare of all could be achieved by a system in which each individual seeks to maximize their own individual self-interest regardless of its impact on others is about as rational as the assumption of efficient market theory that each individual makes rational decisions in pursuit of their own economic self-interest. The constitutional constraints imposed on individual freedom by protection for the rights of other individuals and for the rights of the collective are distorted by polarizing populism into a competitive battle to see whose claim to rights will gain a temporary upper hand. But the selfishness of all may be no more rational or virtuous than the selfishness of a single monarch or autocrat, especially when that all is merely the all of a single class, community, race, religious group, nation or group of nations. It is simply more balanced and constrained in its expression by countervailing forces. Is this really the best we can do?

Many of the problems associated with the practice of democracy have arisen from a misconception of what it actually is. As Francis Fukuyama reminds us, modern democracy evolved in combination with two other social institutions—the nation state and rule of law, the capacity to preserve secure national boundaries and the capacity to regulate activities within those boundaries according to impersonal principles and administrative processes.[2] Democracy flourished in the past only under conditions where populations were able to exercise the freedom for self-determinism and the effective power for self-governance. Efforts to introduce or impose democratic forms of government on populations which had not yet developed the capacity for self-defense, self-governance and rule of law have always been doomed to failure or a very long period of gestation until these two other conditions could be met.

Moreover, the very notion of democracy as a particular variety of political institutions and political processes which include a constitution, popular election of leaders, checks and balances on legislative and executive power, an independent judiciary and a free press is flawed because it is incomplete. These represent only the hardware or objective aspect of democracy. As Fareed Zakaria pointed out, these institutions are themselves the product and external trappings of an underlying subjective dimension—a liberal democratic culture founded on commitment to the inalienable rights and value of the individual and a unifying national identity founded on those rights and values—regardless of how diverse and heterogeneous that population may be. A culture of liberalism has always been the software of tolerance and inclusiveness, the spring of energy and the foundation of strength on which

the institutions of democratic governance developed and depended for their effectiveness. Only in the measure that the population accepts these values can democracy take root and thrive. No mechanism can take their place. Efforts to transfer or impose democracy on populations which had not previously developed or accepted its cultural basis have always been doomed to failure.

The inseparability of political institutions and social culture is increasingly apparent, not only in the reversion of nascent democracies to authoritarianism but also in the degeneration of democratic practices in the former bastions of freedom. For both the hardware and the software, the institutions and culture, are vulnerable to attack and deterioration. Like all forms of organization, institutions tend to become rigid and ossified over time. The very act of organizing any activity imposes constraints on its plasticity and its future development. Like any other structure, a rule once made tends to ignore exceptions and resist modification. Authority once given seeks to preserve its power. Organizational efficiency inevitably degenerates into habitual repetition and inflexibility. But what is true of the hardware of democracy can also be true of its software. Culture too is a form of organization—subtle and psychological—which tends to become attached to forms appropriate to the age in which it develops. The spontaneity of spiritual experience becomes ossified as religious doctrine and orthodox ritualistic practices, the insight of inspiring new ideas becomes codified and entrenched as dogma, and the idealistic values enshrined in word and symbol are negated by literal interpretation and rigid application. The right to bear arms enshrined in the US Bill of Rights was intended to protect a nascent population of American colonists against foreign or domestic oppression by military forces, at a time when arms referred to flintlock muskets with an effective range of 100 meters capable of firing one round per minute. Today it is being applied to justify the possession of automatic weapons that can fire 600 to 1000 rounds per minute with an effective range that is 5 to 10 times greater. Thus, a symbol of individual freedom has been transformed into an ominous threat to public safety. In a similar manner, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence has been transformed into a doctrine of mutually assured destruction, giving new life to the nuclear arms race 30 years after the end of the Cold War.

Life evolves and every living thing must either evolve with it, die and disappear, or become an anachronism and roadblock to further evolutionary advance. Much of what we revere as democracy today is an ossified relic that has lost its utility. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the field of economics, where money and property command the inalienable freedom and protection originally intended to protect human beings. Today corporations in America have the legal right to influence elections, regardless of whether they are owned by American citizens or foreign states, regardless of whether they seek to promote the welfare of their employees and society or to maximize the gains of their shareholders at the expense of all others. Today the freedom of speech intended to promote protection of the individual from oppression by a foreign or tyrannical government has degenerated into the freedom of political leaders to lie and slander, insinuate and obfuscate, incite to anger and hatred the very people it was intended to protect. Political and social culture is as essential to the operations of democracy as the institutions designed to protect universal human values. That culture too must evolve with the times or risk degenerating into cancer.

5. Populism and Pluralism

One of the greatest threats to democracy today issues from the resurgence of populism. Populism is a social-psychological phenomenon that undermines the pluralism on which democracy depends. The right of the people to struggle against entrenched powers and privileged elites was once regarded as a sign of democratic vibrancy. Today populist appeals are being applied as a divisive force to generate confusion, prevent intelligent debate, fuel disharmony, polarize heterogeneous populations, weaken social cohesion, obscure a shared vision and undermine the sense of unity and common identity on which nation-states are founded.

"The control of the media by authoritarian governments, the take-over of the press by oligarchs, infiltration of social networks by disruptive foreign influences, and conscious misuse of media as an instrument for falsification by political parties cannot be easily remedied, as long as the public is willing to be misled."

A culture of free inquiry, questioning and critical thinking is central to democracy and the wider distribution of social power. Trust in democratic leadership and institutions is founded on that freedom. Effective human relationships are associated with the promotion of the human and professional, scientific, artistic and spiritual potentialities. Populism undermines the trust generated by constructive human relations and tends to replace these qualities with simplistic slogans, cloistered virtues, empty platitudes, suspicion and incriminations.[3,4] These divisive trends are further aggravated and intensified by the conscious falsification of electoral promises by populist candidates and the misrepresentation of facts by biased mainstream media outlets and surrogate purveyors of fake news. They constitute as much a violation of the principles of free speech as efforts of central authorities to suppress public expression.

Rising expectations are a powerful instrument for social development. They release the energy of the population for new endeavors and higher forms of accomplishment. But in times when social expectations rise far faster and higher than the opportunities to fulfill them, they can result in increasing levels of frustration, discontent and disillusionment that readily respond to populist appeals. So too, rising levels of uncertainty and insecurity regarding the future increase the appeal and susceptibility of populist slogans and remedies. Resentment toward the privileges of entrenched elites, hostility toward identifiable groups as scapegoats, groundless accusations and conspiracy theories find a receptive and responsive audience. Assigning blame to others for the people's failures or sufferings has been the path to leadership followed by many a demagogue.

The accelerating speed of change, increasing complexity and growing uncertainty regarding the future in recent times present fertile soil for populism to seed and sprout

luxuriant but pernicious weeds of discontent. The dramatic changes since 1990 referred to earlier have added fuel to populist tendencies. The anticipated impact of the 4th industrial revolution on employment and job security has aggravated fears of unemployment and a future without sufficient work opportunities for the next generation of youth everywhere. The shift of entire industries overseas, the change to new energy sources, the suffering generated by the 2008 financial crisis, the shift of economic power to Asia, concern regarding a military resurgent Russia and more assertive China, reports of rising inequality and the increasingly global competition and the flood of immigrants entering Europe from the Levant have all become additional fuel for a pernicious form of populism.

Populism exists in every democracy in the form of fringe movements led by those who are excluded, disillusioned or opposed to the established order. But so long as mainstream society remains wedded to a central vision, its impact will remain minimal or can prepare the ground for constructive future developments, as the anti-establishment youth protests of the 1960s in support of the environmental movement, women's liberation and equal rights for African-Americans paved the way for mainstream evolutionary changes in subsequent decades. But populism can also become a tool wielded by seasoned politicians to undermine pluralism. Here the objective is not social progress but rather opposition to it by entrenched interests. Like the Fascist appeal of anti-Semitism in pre-war Germany, the gun lobby in the USA and anti-immigrant fervor in Europe are efforts intended to divide the population in order to carve out a section of adherents for political support, based on spurious or self-interested motives opposed to the welfare of the nation and the well-being of the entire population. The turmoil and confusion resulting from such movements dissolve the bonds of inclusiveness, tolerance, cooperation and shared vision on which societies depend for their integrity and future development.

There are no sure short-term remedies to the threat of populism. The control of the media by authoritarian governments, the take-over of the press by oligarchs, infiltration of social networks by disruptive foreign influences, and conscious misuse of media as an instrument for falsification by political parties cannot be easily remedied, as long as the public is willing to be misled. Imposition of stricter regulation of electoral campaigns can moderate the tendency toward extremism. It is ironic that American law strictly prohibits and punishes perjury under oath in the courtroom, while permitting candidates for the highest political offices in the country to make wild accusations and false promises without any accountability under law. Laws regarding election conduct exist, but are rarely enforced. The right to free speech becomes a shield that undermines the very power of free speech by obfuscating truth with an impenetrable barrier of conscious falsehood and confusion. Rising levels of general education can shield the more educated from susceptibility to its more extreme forms. But recent events in Europe and North America show that education alone or in its present form may not offer sufficient protection.

The only assured protection against populism is neither unlimited free speech, rigorous enforcement of electoral conduct nor universal education. Resistance and immunity to populism in democracy can only be achieved by building truly inclusive and equitable societies in which rights and social power are extended universally. Without addressing the

underlying causes of populism—economic insecurity and social inequality—populist calls will always find both powerful sponsors and willing audience.

> *"A century after their discovery, Relativity Theory and Quantum Mechanics are still searching for an integrating principle that may necessitate a complete reformulation of our fundamental view of reality."*

6. Towards Integration

Those who seek simple institutional solutions are bound to be disappointed and bewildered by the complexity of the issues. But viewing recent developments in an evolutionary perspective we realize that the current confusion and turmoil signify the possibility and opportunity for transformation of the still imperfect algorithms of governance. Much of the difficulty we confront in understanding and remedying current problems arises from the fragmented conceptual system imposed on our perception of social reality due in part to the fragmentation of the social sciences. The arbitrary division of society into separate, independent fields of activity and theories of knowledge at a time of unprecedented interconnectivity, convergence and complexity is deeply flawed, as is the artificial division of the human organism into separate and distinct physiological systems. However theoretically convenient for study and practically useful for treatment of some types of disorders, the reductionist view of the organic unity of the human body and society represents a gross distortion of reality. There is no such thing as a metabolic system separate and distinct from the respiratory, circulatory, nervous, muscular, lymphatic and skeletal systems on which it depends for its functioning and with which it is inseparably integrated. It may be useful for treating some specialized diseases, so long as the practitioner never loses sight of the distortion it imposes on our view of reality. But it does not present us with an integrated organic understanding of human health as a positive property of the organism, any more than knowledge of warfare offers a knowledge of the full conditions and best strategies for promotion of lasting peace in society. And when we add to physiology the impact of conscious and subconscious psychological factors, external social conditions, and environmental factors on health, the limitations of disciplinary reductionism become even more apparent.

Disciplinary fragmentation and reductionism have their limits. This is even more blatantly apparent in the social sciences than in the natural where conceptual and disciplinary integration is far more advanced. Today it seems difficult to comprehend how prevailing mainstream economic theories could have for so long excluded the interaction and interdependence between environmental and economic factors on human welfare and well-being, until the consequences of that intellectual exclusiveness threaten to wreak havoc on the entire economic, social and ecological system of the planet. The separation of the social sciences into specialized disciplines is a convenient and effective means of exploring the intricacies and infinitesimal details of human behavior, just as the microscope enables us to

zoom in to discover hidden structures and processes imperceptible to the human eye. But to mistake the microscopic view as ultimate reality is no more truer than to ignore it—for the behavior of a subatomic particle, atom, molecule, cell, organ and physiological system only becomes fully intelligible when viewed in the wider context and fully integrated with the macrolevel functioning of the whole organism, social collectives and the environments in which these microlevel functions exist. True knowledge must be an integral knowledge of the infinite whole, not merely a piecemeal, patchwork glimpse of many of its fascinating infinitesimal component parts. Microscopy is incomplete without telescopy. A geocentric view of the universe which sees the sun circling the earth may serve a practical and even a religious utility, but it will always be subject to limitations and error as Copernicus realized nearly 500 years ago. Nor are the two sufficient when regarded as separate and independent dimensions. A century after their discovery, Relativity Theory and Quantum Mechanics are still searching for an integrating principle that may necessitate a complete reformulation of our fundamental view of reality.

We need not wait until then to realize the limitations and errors arising from a disciplinary approach to social sciences. It generates errors that are much more catastrophic than the 0.002% inaccuracy in the length of an earth day corrected by migration from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. In the social sciences partial, fragmented theories that view political, economic, social, psychological and cultural factors in isolation can lead to absurd and even monstrous consequences—the divine right of kings, feudalism, slavery, national sovereignty, imperialism, colonialism, fascism, dictatorship of the proletariat, the Great Crash and the Great Depression, the two World Wars, the veto power, ethnic cleansing, the nuclear arms race, the Cold War, the 2008 Financial Crisis, the myth of shareholder value, two Nobel prizes in economics for the algorithms that underpin computerized trading, to name but a few.

The division of the original discipline of Political Economy into two separate and increasingly independent fields of study is one instance of mental illusionism and reductionism run amuck. Economy and economics only exist within a framework of human rights, values, institutions for governance, laws and mechanisms for their enforcement, social culture and human relationships which constitute the foundation and framework for all economic activity. Outside this context, we have only the economy of warfare, conquest, piracy and the mafia.

Politics is as inseparable from economy as it is from technology, social organization, science, human psychology, cultural values and ecology. Thus, a theoretical and practical understanding of democracy requires a holistic perception of all the interactions and interdependencies that influence and determine the functioning of democratic institutions in specific periods, places and under particular circumstances. As democracy was transformed by the newspaper, railroad, telephone, automobile, radio, and television, it is now being shaped by the internet, the globalization of society and economy, financialization, the corporatization of the media, immigration, multiculturalism, the mobile phone, Facebook, Twitter, Fox News, the National Enquirer, and religious fundamentalism. With equal surety it will be further reshaped in future by the rapidly approaching 4th Industrial Revolution, blockchain and cryptocurrencies.

These observations are obvious and self-evident, but they are often lost sight of in our efforts to comprehend the bewildering nature of recent events. Those who emerged with high expectations from the terrors of the Cold War or were raised on the doctrinal superiority of a particular political, economic or religious dogma may be deeply disillusioned and disappointed by a shattering loss of confidence and faith. But for those conscious of the imperfections and injustices inherent in all past experience, no matter how glorified and romanticized by false comparisons and wishful thinking, the arrival of humanity at a cross roads of consciousness in which it recognizes the deficiencies of all existing systems and the urgent need to realize more fully in practice the highest values enshrined in our most sublime literature, both sacred and secular, this moment presents an unprecedented opportunity—an Hour of God—to transcend the limitations of the past and evolve a new and better world for all to live in.

> *"Mind thrives in freedom— freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom to aspire and choose, and free access to knowledge."*

As the immense destruction and suffering wrought by two world wars and the Great Depression gave birth to the United Nations and emergence of modern democratic institutions and the modern welfare state, a new vision and a new paradigm are needed to address the blatant injustices and insufficiencies of the present dispensation. A reversion to economic imperialism, whether by nations, corporates or wealthy elites, is no remedy for the current ills of the world. A retreat into aggressive nationalism or isolationism is no path to the future. A revitalization of the nuclear arms race is no solution to the challenges of global security. A denial of fact or responsibility is no answer to existential ecological threats. These responses are merely the feeble helpless reactions of those who are blind to the painful lessons of the past and the extraordinary opportunities staring humanity in the face. It is time to move on, to move forward, to a new vision and a new paradigm.

7. Lines of Future Evolution

To state that we must move forward would be an empty platitude void of utility parading as sage advice were we able to say nothing more about the direction, complexion and essential dimensions of the future toward which we must move and are moving. But there is more we can say with considerable certainty, greater in both its wisdom and practical utility than most of the prevailing diagnosis and prognosis for present ills.

7.1. Evolution of Mentality

The dimensions and lines of humanity's future evolution are known, even if the method, process, timing and stages of its progression remain to be discovered or fully understood. First, is the progressive evolution of humanity from physicality to mentality, from action defined by past experience to that guided by emerging mental knowledge, from the power of force to the power of ideas, from the battlefield to the negotiation table, from physical compulsion to human rights, from divine right to the ballot box. Our ancient past was a period in which physical prowess, subordination to established authority, tradition and

seniority ruled. Physical causality is determined by what has occurred in the past. The stone rolls because it is pushed or thrown. The force precedes the event.

Our emerging future is governed by the growing influence and domination of mind over matter and of the future over the past and present. The development of reason and logic in ancient India and Greece, creativity and imagination in Renaissance Italy, mechanical invention during the Industrial Revolution, scientific discovery and technological innovation during the 20th century, and the accompanying social and organizational resourcefulness that accompanied each of these phases are hallmarks of the ever growing and accelerating shift from reliance on the powers of the physical to the powers of mind. The application of mind to matter has transformed sand into silicon chips and created an endless plethora of ever more powerful technologies. The application of mind to production took us from the stage of simple tool-making hunter gatherers in the forest to sedentary rural agriculturalists, urban-dwelling craftsmen and merchants, national manufacturers and global service providers. The application of mind to society and human relationships has taken us from the family and feudal community to the modern nation state, from the workshop to the multinational corporation, from the moneylender to the global financial network.

This progression gave birth to language, money and the Internet. It has extended our conception of resources from land, labor and trade to social organization, law, technology, science, money, information and the value of the human being as the ultimate resource that lends value to all other resources. By this progression, humanity is in the process of emerging from an age of scarcity into an age of material abundance, where all real human needs can be met and there is no longer any excuse for deprivation and denial, if only we are willing to forego extravagant wastefulness and mindless greed. Mind transforms causality from a force of the past exerting inexorable, predetermined consequences on the present and future into a force of the future presenting countless choices, creating alternative pathways and transforming even the most threatening challenges into opportunities for evolutionary advancement.

Mind thrives in freedom—freedom of speech, freedom of thought, freedom to aspire and choose, and free access to knowledge. These are the psychological endowments by which democracy grows. Mind liberates humanity from helpless dependency and subservience to the compulsions of past habit and tradition. It harnesses the powers of imagination, aspiration, expectation and anticipation to transform the visible, tangible, status quo into something quite different. From fatalistic, finite predetermination mind transforms life into a field for unlimited freedom for creative self-determination.

7.2. Emerging Individuality

The second inevitable line of evolution is from the collective to individual identity. Man is a gregarious social animal that survives and develops through association and cooperation with other human beings. The first necessity of that survival was always loyalty, subordination and obedience of each individual member to the group. Early attempts to develop larger social units could brook no deviation or dissent from the ideas, beliefs and hierarchy of authority necessary to ensure the strength and coherence of the collective. History traces the

gradual individualization of consciousness from conformity, subordination and subjection to the group. Ancient Greece cherished the power of independent thinking and freedom of moral choice, provided they did not transgress certain limits as in the case of Socrates. Renaissance Italy extolled the creativity and virtuosity of the artist. The Reformation freed the individual to read and interpret scriptures. The Enlightenment liberated the philosophical thinker, bold explorer, investigative scientist and social idealist from blind adherence to established doctrine and practice. The free-thinking individual became the political, social and economic revolutionary. Subordination to the collective very gradually and reluctantly gave way to respect for and even nurturing of individual distinctness. The 20th century has been called the century of the common man. The talented individual could rise politically, socially and economically. Society elevated the status of the explorer, entrepreneur, and genius. It extended the right to vote to the commoner. It sought to universalize education. It broke down barriers of social, religious and ethnic discrimination to abolish discrimination and promote the development of every citizen.

Yet, individuation remains the exception more than the rule. We may all be increasingly free to have our own favorite color and form of dress, to marry outside our class or nationality or not to marry at all, to vote according to our own political persuasions and worship according to our own personal faith. But still, the bonds and boundaries of collective authority impose strict limits on the development of the consciousness and autonomy of the individual. Tolerance of individual differences and dissent vary from one place to another, but still the preference and pressure for conformity persist. Even in the august halls of academia, respect and tolerance for differing views can be extremely limited or be replaced by virulent hostility. True mental individuality will only emerge when the principal objective of education becomes the development of independent thinking rather than rote memorization and acceptance of established academic perspectives. Electoral politics and parliamentary debate too often degenerate into a demand for mindless political correctness, so that the variety of candidates disguise the absence of real choice for voters. Yet the evolution of the individual is as inevitable and inexorable as the irrepressible urge of the awakened mind to think and question. Once awakened, individuality cannot be repressed. Once tasted, the freedom to decide for oneself cannot be suppressed for long.

The individual has always played an essential role in the evolution of the collective. Every new idea, innovation, and creative initiative finds expression first in the mind and actions of an individual and only later becomes a possession of the collective.[5] The individual is the catalyst for the development of the group, the creative mutant gene that spurs the creativity of society. But the evolution of individuality is not synonymous with the aggrandizement of individualism. Freedom to develop one's own uniqueness does not imply unlimited freedom for the pursuit of self-interest in neglect or opposition to the legitimate interests and aspirations of others. The relationship between individual and collective is always reciprocal but not always balanced. Many societies in the past have restricted freedom and privilege to a small number of individuals to think, decide, exercise power and enjoy on behalf of the collective. But all individual achievement ultimately belongs to the collective. All that the individual possesses and utilizes for advancement—language, concepts, ideas, knowledge, skills, imaginations, tools, organizational capacities, technological innovations and physical

infrastructure—are a legacy of the cumulative accomplishments of countless individuals and groups in the past. The individual cannot think a thought without borrowing heavily from the legacy of the group. The accomplishments of the individual are the accomplishments of society. All that the individual achieves is accomplished on the strength of that inheritance and therefore belongs rightfully to all, if not in whole, then most certainly in part.

The evolutionary direction is from subordination of the individual to the will of the group to a balanced relationship and partnership of the individual and collective, based on their mutual interdependence. At different times and places, all manner of relationship has been attempted. Recent history testifies to the enormous power unleashed by the liberation of the individual from subordination and domination by the collective. But it also testifies to the need for balance and limits on individualism when it descends into flagrant self-aggrandisement and dissipation of one at the expense and to the detriment of all. The inalienable right to freedom is counterbalanced by the inescapable responsibility to utilize that freedom in a manner supportive of the betterment of all.

Prevailing democratic practices flagrantly invite the electorate to support that which will benefit them or their group personally, even at the expense of other citizens, all humanity and future generations. Such a system can never lead to the fullest development and emergence of individuality. Self-actualization and service to humanity are complementary rather than mutually exclusive aspirations. Neither can be fully achieved separately without pursuit of the other.

7.3. Dissemination of Power

A third visible dimension of social evolution is the evolution of power discussed earlier in this paper. That evolution proceeds simultaneously from lesser to greater power of accomplishment for and by the collective and from a domination by privileged elites to a more equitable distribution of power among members of the collective. Neither goal can be fully achieved independent of the other. The increasing power of the collective is patently evident. Global society and its individual members are many times more empowered to communicate and transport locally and globally, improve health and prolong lives, acquire and disseminate knowledge and skills, act remotely, reach out and organize collectively, pray or learn or laugh together.

The increasingly equitable distribution of power is less obvious and more complex. Recent research, such as Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the 21ˢᵗ Century,* suggests that economic power is more concentrated than at any time since the roaring 1920s and the power of organized labor has declined dramatically. Studies show that this is true within nations, but on a global level, economic power is becoming more and more widely distributed between countries. China is already the second largest economy and India is growing rapidly. The power of corporations relative to national governments is increasing. National governments are less able to exercise power over multinational corporations, who seek refuge and leverage by shifting their assets and production facilities to the highest bidder overseas. So too, power is increasingly accessible to enable individuals around the world to communicate, travel, acquire knowledge, improve their health, prolong their lives, and fulfill other aspirations. Today there

are more than 10 million non-governmental organizations operating globally as a fifth estate for self-expression and coordinated action by global civil society. Nuclear weapons no longer are a guarantee of security. Aristocratic elites have given way to new generations of wealth and power. The rights of women, the disabled, racial and religious minorities, immigrants and foreigners are more secure than ever before. It is easy to identify exceptions, but the overall direction and trend from decade to decade is evident. Public exposure and punishment for political corruption, police brutality, sexual misconduct, corporate malfeasance and financial malpractice are on the rise. But clearly the shifting of power from established elites to new centers of power by itself can be only an interim stage in the process of its devolution.

The strength of democracy is that it more widely distributes political power than other political systems. The freedom, self-confidence, self-respect and self-reliance that result release more of the energy of each individual than any other social system. Education informs that energy and raises the aspirations of individuals to further develop their capacities and transcend the limits of their inheritance. Social rights combined with social organization and technology empower the individual to more fully utilize the opportunities afforded by freedom.

Yet for all its virtues, the prevailing system of democracy severely constrains the true exercise of power by the individual. The right to vote may be granted, but freedom of choice implies alternatives, which are very often severely limited. Freedom of choice is often illusory, as power resides more with the party than elected individuals and the behavior of elected officials is constrained by their preoccupation with re-election. True distribution of political power cannot be achieved under a party system in which the individual voter only has the option of choosing between two increasingly polarized viewpoints and value systems. Life is too complex to be reduced to multiple choice questions.

8. Promise and Threat of Technology

Ever since the invention of the printing press, newspaper, radio and television, technology has exerted considerable influence on the evolution of democracy. The role of the mass media and social media in the recent US Presidential election dramatically illustrates their central role today. During the 19th century, dissemination of information to the public was quite limited and depended largely on local newspapers, which reflected the prevalent views of the editors or of a specific region. The mass broadcasting media of the 20th century tended to unify the national electorate by presenting a common mainstream view of unfolding events. Today the multiplication and fragmentation of media sources inundate the public with different, contrasting and conflicting news reports purporting to be factual but heavily skewed to influence public opinion in one direction or another. Of special concern is the tendency noted in the 2016 US elections of the public to give preference to sources of information that validate and reinforce their own existing values and beliefs and to ignore or disparage those sources which contradict or challenge their views. As Nobel laureate Amartya Sen once pointed out, no famine has ever been recorded in a democratic country with an independent judiciary and a free press. But today a free press is not necessarily synonymous with a fair, objective or factual one.

The promise and threat of technology are also apparent with respect to the future of employment. Humanity now possesses the technological potential to meet the needs of all human beings. But in the absence of a coherent overall social strategy, the indiscriminate application of this technology could as well impoverish as improve the lives of countless millions. A full exploration of the impact of emerging technologies on society and democracy is beyond the scope of this article, but it is necessary to emphasize that political stability and social cohesion necessitate that technologies invented by human beings with the intention of promoting welfare and well-being are not permitted to blindly dominate and rampantly undermine social and economic security. As the quality of food and medicine is not regulated universally to protect the general public, society has a right and government has an obligation to ensure that the impact of technology on human beings is beneficial or to introduce other measures to compensate for any negative consequences it may entail. Technology can unite or divide, augment cooperation or competition, support democracy or destroy it. It is the task of government to ensure that emerging technology becomes part of the solution to make democracy more effective.

The participation of individual members of society in its governance—either directly through participative processes or indirectly through election of representatives—lies at the heart of all forms of democracy. Technology has played a key role in reducing or marginalizing the importance of the individual in innumerable ways, such as the mechanization of warfare, the mechanization and automation of economic functions, and most recently the automation of knowledge acquisition and decision-making processes through artificial intelligence. At the same time technology has played an immense role in empowering the individual citizen by enhancing access to information, communication, transportation, education, health, economic productivity, and so forth. Today, it greatly empowers individuals to acquire knowledge, project their views and ideas, communicate with a wider audience, network of other people and multiplying their individual capacities through association with other people.

9. Known Remedies

The Nordic countries are well-known examples of countries where the practice of democracy appears to avoid many of the pitfalls evident elsewhere. Among the common characteristics these countries share are a relatively homogeneous population, high levels of investment in human capital, a long tradition of liberal values and pluralism, high levels of participation in democratic processes, and the application of the principle of subsidiarity to decentralize decision making to the local level.

In other countries where these characteristics are difficult to emulate, there are still known remedies that can dramatically increase the efficiency and effectiveness of democratic institutions while reducing the common abuses, such as the following:

- Decentralizing authority to the local and state level to encourage local participation in decision-making.

- Limiting campaign financing and making fully transparent the amount and source of funding received by candidates.

- Imposing term limits to attract non-career politicians to seek elected office.

- Most nations already have laws in place to punish false statements by parliamentarians and other public officials during parliamentary proceedings, but they are either neglected or only enforced in extreme circumstances. Legislate and implement stricter codes of accountability for truthfulness by elected officials and those running for office, regardless of whether the statements are made in parliament, during election campaigns or to the media. Intentional falsification by public officials must be as punishable as testimony under oath in court.[6]

- Implement a wide range of practical and effective ethical standards in government and the civil service, including transparent government decision-making, protection for whistle-blowers, merit-based promotion of civil service, external and internal compliance and redress procedures.[*]

- Measures to eliminate election fraud.

- Rigorous anti-corruption standards and enforcement to fight corruption.

- Regulate the revolving door between elected office in the private sector and the powerful influence of lobbyists.

- Establish weekly state-of-the-union and state-of-the-state broadcasts conducted by a cross-section of representative civil society organizations to revitalize participative democracy at the national and local level. This would act as a check and balance on the biases of public broadcasting networks, political parties and private media.[†]

- Establish annual state-of-the-world and global citizenship broadcasts conducted by a cross-section of representative international civil society organizations from the perspective of the world's citizenry, rather than that of governments, corporations and mainstream media. This would act as a check and balance on the biases of public broadcasting networks, political parties and private media.[‡]

- Establishment by the national academies of science of Evidence-Based Policy Centers for high priority problems relating to education, health, public safety, the environment, law enforcement, corruption, justice, etc. to more closely align and direct the capabilities and resources of the scientific community to address pressing domestic and international issues.[§]

These and many other known remedies have been applied successfully by different nations at one time or another and could be included on a more comprehensive set of democratic standards.

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[*] Howard Whitton, February 2001 https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/35521740.pdf
[†] Proposal by Lloyd Etheredge, Director, Policy Sciences Center; Fellow, World Academy of Art & Science
[‡] Proposal by Lloyd Etheredge
[§] Proposal by Lloyd Etheredge

10. Alternative Pathways

> *"Prevailing policies and institutions are founded on and draw their legitimacy from entrenched economic doctrines, which need to be challenged and replaced by a human-centered, value-based transdisciplinary conceptual framework."*

The Dubrovnik Roundtable also explored meaningful efforts to envision systemic political reforms that could more successfully fulfill the potentials of democracy. The Independent Constitutionalists of the United Kingdom, for example, have developed a platform for radical decentralization and devolution of democratic processes to address some of the central ills of the present system.[*,7] Their recommendations include—

- Shift from elective representative democracy in which citizen participation is limited to voting in elections to participative representative democracy which combines the involvement of citizens in the management of public affairs with genuine bottom-up representation, mandated and accountable.

- Shift from adversarial bipolar party politics to one that fosters loyalty of elected officials who place loyalty in their constituencies over party allegiance and compliance.

- Shift from winner-loser take all electoral systems to ones based on proportionality to maintain a greater correlation with votes cast and the resulting representation.

- Adoption of an ethical code for elected representatives that establishes high standards for truthfulness and accountability for acting on the promises and pledges made during elections.

- Measures to increase opportunities for citizens to represent their communities on specific issues now under the purview of professional politicians.

- Wider use of referendums to directly ascertain the views of the electorate and allow the direct action of citizens on decision-making.

- Fair political funding that limits the influence of any individual, corporation or lobbying group to determine the outcome of elections while also enhancing campaign financing transparency.

These and similar prescriptions need to be seriously considered. The exact form in which they are cast and the means of implementation must necessarily differ from country to country and level to level, but the intention behind them is applicable to most democratic societies. Both conventional and new approaches can be adopted to address them more effectively. For instance, governments can mandate that all election expenses, such as media advertising,

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* ICUK declaration of purpose http://www.icuk.life/declaration.html

must be paid for by a special digital currency issued by the government and fully redeemable in national currency. By this means, the government could electronically track the identity of those making the expenditure and the use to which it is put and make that information transparently available to the general public in real time.

A fully effective system would have to extend changes far beyond political institutions and processes to address the economic and financial practices that threaten the stability and viability of contemporary society. The New Economic Theory Working Group established by the World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS) in collaboration with a consortium of partner organizations and concerned social scientists, has concluded that piecemeal modification of policies and institutions will not be sufficient to bring about the magnitude of changes required. Prevailing policies and institutions are founded on and draw their legitimacy from entrenched economic doctrines, which need to be challenged and replaced by a human-centered, value-based transdisciplinary conceptual framework.[8]

Similarly, WAAS and the World University Consortium have concluded that effective measures to address the multidimensional challenges confronting humanity today will require radical changes in the global educational system. The capacity of the system will have to be rapidly expanded and upgraded to provide the huge number of aspiring youth in developing countries with opportunities for accessible, affordable quality education. But a mere extension and replication of the existing system will not be sufficient. The present fragmented system of education is itself part of the problem. There is need for a new value-based paradigm in education that shifts the focus from the subject to the student, from passive indoctrination to active learning, from memorization of information to independent thinking, from competition to collaborative, peer-to-peer forms of learning.[*] Institutions and procedures can only go so far in eliminating the ills democracy confronts today. The only real and lasting solution is a culture of liberalism. Such a culture cannot be established or safeguarded simply by legal provisions and institutional measures. It must be established in the minds of the people through a spirit of independent thinking, rational analysis and allegiance to truth rather than personal preference. These are the greatest endowments rightly bestowed by a progressive system of education that places emphasis on thinking rather than facts, questioning rather than learning all the right answers, and perceiving reality in its rich many-sided complexity. The truths on which democracy can prosper are truths that complement and complete other truths rather than those that contradict, negate and deny them.

The challenges to the future of democracy extend beyond the nation-state to the governance of the global community. It is ironic that the institutions established by the world's leading nation-states with the specific ideal of promoting freedom and democracy at the national level should cling to outdated, undemocratic principles and practices for global governance. The evolution of the international political system is beyond the scope of this article, but it is important to consider the intermediate territory that lies between national and international systems of governance. Globalization has placed many of the issues confronting nation-states and citizens today beyond the sole authority of national governments to address on their

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[*] See http://wunicon.org/files/reports/Report%20Conference-Future-Education-Rome-Nov-2017.pdf

own. International financial crises, financial speculation, tax havens, economic inequality, immigration, nuclear proliferation and global warming all require concerted action by groups of nations. The present democratic system provides little opportunity for citizens to influence the policies of their governments that require international cooperation. Innovative approaches, such as those by SIMPOL to establish a means for citizens to promote simultaneous policy formulation internationally on issues of critical importance, deserve to be experimented on widely. The SIMPOL model is an innovative approach to encourage electoral candidates to support a set of policy measures that require international collaboration.[9]

"The blockchain could serve as the basis for establishing a globally inclusive system of polling for conducting referendums of the entire world population on issues of critical importance to the future of humanity."

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11. Envisioning the Future

The recent development of distributed ledger technology, commonly known as blockchain, opens up new and unprecedented opportunities as great in variety and magnitude as those generated by the development of the World Wide Web (WWW) over the past two decades. The blockchain is essentially a parallel system to the WWW that also rides on the foundations of the global electronic communications network we call the Internet, but with a fundamentally different structure and distribution of authority. The blockchain is a global database distributed on a large number of independently owned and operated computers around the world that enabled fully verifiable and highly secure transactions to be carried out without resort to a central repository of data or a centralized authority for verification. This permits a level of decentralization or uncentralization far beyond that realized by the WWW.[10]

It is still too early to clearly envision the ultimate implications of the global blockchain, but its revolutionary character is already apparent. It could make possible the development of a rapid, low cost, peer-to-peer global payments and lending system, an inclusive system of banking accessible to every human being with access to a mobile phone, a universal registry for property ownership and transactions (roughly 70% of landowners in the world today lack legally verifiable documentation to establish their rights), a universal registry for human identity to replace the innumerable means by which individuals have to prove their identity today, a universal inventory of the earth's resources and consumption, and countless other applications until now unthinkable.

More specifically with reference to democracy, the blockchain has the potential to usher in a whole new age of participative democracy. At the national level, it could support tamper-proof online voting systems that reverse the steep downward trend in electoral participation in the world's mature democracies. It could enable voters to transparently track in detail the actual voting records of elected officials on any issues of importance to them. It can make

possible very low cost public referendums to assess public support on specific issues. It can serve as the basis for transparent tamper-proof reporting of suspected criminal or civil wrongdoing by public officials and submission of evidence.

"Democracy can thrive only under conditions in which power is widely distributed, in which peace, freedom, equality and prosperity are widely shared, and in which a culture of democratic values is freely and fully embraced by both leaders and the electorate."

Representative democracy as it is practiced today is predicated on the recognition that informed decision-making on many legislative issues requires in-depth knowledge, which many voters are unlikely to possess. To circumvent this limitation yet still significantly enhance voter participation, the blockchain could also serve as a vehicle to make the introduction of *delegative democratic* processes in which voters assign their voting rights on specific issues to different representatives whom they regard as better informed, trusted experts or advisers.[*]

At the international level, the blockchain could serve as the basis for establishing a globally inclusive system of polling for conducting referendums of the entire world population on issues of critical importance to the future of humanity, as envisioned by this journal seven years ago.[11] This would, for the first time, represent a direct voice for humanity in its own governance and, perhaps, an essential step in the establishment of an effective system of global governance that transcends the narrow provincialism of nation-states to establish the sovereign right of the entire human community.

The newly emerging technologies of the 4th Industrial Revolution present both unprecedented opportunities and challenges to humanity. This brief discussion of the potential impact of blockchain technologies points to emerging opportunities to dramatically enhance participative democracy. But the decisive determinant of humanity's future will not be technology. It will be *human choice* whether to subordinate ourselves to the power of the technology we develop or assume authority and responsibility as its creators for ensuring that it is applied to promote human welfare and well-being.

One of the characteristics of paradigm change is that it is very difficult to conceive until it is already upon us, as the potentials of the World Wide Web were understood by only a few visionaries until they began to be realized in practice, as the world's financial experts grapple to comprehend the significance of the digital currency revolution which is now in an early stage of unfolding. That is why in this article we have focused on the irresistible long term forces that are driving global society to progressively embrace universal human values

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[*] For an extended discussion of the potential impact of blockchain on democracy, see Chapter 8 of *Blockchain Revolution: How the Technology Behind Bitcoin is Changing Money, Business and the World,* by Don Tapscott and Alex Tapscott, Penguin Random House LLC, New York, 2016.

and to develop more free, equitable and effective systems for the governance of humanity's ever increasing social power. Democracy can thrive only under conditions in which power is widely distributed, in which peace, freedom, equality and prosperity are widely shared, and in which a culture of democratic values is freely and fully embraced by both leaders and the electorate. Democracy is incompatible with a social environment in which human welfare is at risk and individuals are left to fend entirely for themselves. Secure borders, rule of law, economic development, investment in quality education and social equity are essential conditions. But even more so, it is at risk when the underlying values of liberalism are reduced to platitudes or discarded as impediments to imposition of central authority. Representative government must be truly representative of the will of the people, but it must be respectful and inclusive of the will and well-being of all the people, rather than that of being either a dominant elected majority or powerful ruling elite.

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The Future of Democracy Challenged in the Digital Age

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Abstract

Recent evidence is marshalled concerning the impact on democracies of the global explosion of electronic platforms and digital companies, based initially on the US government-supported and now worldwide Internet. These companies, driving Wall Street stock prices, are still largely unregulated and unchecked by conventional anti-trust regulations, especially in the USA. These companies, especially the social media giants, are examined for their growing threats to democracies in all countries. This paper explores deeper structural issues and further threats to democracies posed by the basic business and operating models of these giant global corporations. Their vast profitability rests on capturing huge caches of private personal information on their registered users by offering "free" services. This Orwellian data-trove is then sold to advertisers, thousands of third-party marketing firms, politicians and too often to officials of repressive regimes. This tsunami of personal data allows surveillance of citizens in both democracies and autocratic states. Evidence of such perversion of free speech and privacy in democracies is documented. Proposals are offered for government regulation building on the EU's GDPR. Also proposed is reinforcing personal privacy autonomy and freedom by expanding Habeas Corpus, the ancient English common law. The paper also includes an overview of the threats to democracy from other forms of market-based commercial activity including the global financialization of worldwide stock, bond and currency markets, central banks' policies, and efforts to reform these securities markets. All these threats to democracies continue, and addressing the issues requires a more future-oriented approach to planetary environmental risks, rather than anthropocentric academic studies and conventional reforms of past times.

In *The Road to Unfreedom* (2018), historian Timothy Snyder observes the USA as "sleepwalking" in the current information warfare by authoritarian states led by Russia, targeting democratic values and institutions. In our now global digital age, it is no longer necessary to wage kinetic conflicts, since democratic countries like the USA and those in Europe can be so easily undermined with cyber attacks, propaganda and weaponizing social media and open political cultures. Snyder's examples include the divisions sown in the USA in its 2016 elections and still continuing, as well as the discord in the UK since Brexit, which he calls "Russia's greatest foreign policy success"(p.104-7).

Evidence is piling up that social media and other easily weaponized institutions and norms of democratic states are being successfully disrupted in the USA, Europe and other democracies. In *Antisocial Media* (2018), author Siva Vaidhyanathan documents

how Facebook and other platforms are used as tools by authoritarian states, such as Facebook's cooption by Philippine strongman Duterte and in Myanmar where Facebook was exploited in the genocidal attacks on the Rohingya population. These and other misuses of the Internet are summarized in The Economist's special report *Fixing The Internet: The Ins and Outs*.[1] The magisterial three-volume *The Information Age Society and Culture* (1996) by sociologist Manuel Castells, reviewed in an unpublished paper by physicist Fritjof Capra, remains the most comprehensive survey of these historical changes.

In *The Entrepreneurial State* (2015), economist Mariana Mazzucato critiques these new digital platforms emanated largely from the USA and the mostly young libertarian-leaning white men who launched Microsoft, Amazon, Google, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat and similar electronic platforms—many with governmental subsidies—using the Internet, a taxpayer funded, government innovation. China is rapidly catching up with WeChat, Alibaba, Tencent and even broader enterprises. The young Silicon Valley coders now re-writing our civic rules, naively claimed that the connectivity they provided "free" would usher in a new level of democracy and freedom, even falsely claiming that the ill-fated "Arab Spring" was a Facebook and Twitter revolution. In *How To Fix The Future* (2018), serial tech entrepreneur Andrew Keen dissents, criticizing Silicon Valley's pretensions, offering reforms to their business models and civic irresponsibility. A report in New Scientist titled *The Race to Stop Bots Taking Over the World* describes how law makers want to clamp down on automated social media accounts and disinformation.[2]

Until 2017, these firms were lionized and unregulated while installing lobbying arms in Washington. In *The Wealth of Networks,* Yochai Benkler takes a positive view of how social production transforms markets and freedom.[3] They are now seen as vastly profitable monopolies, exploiting the "winner take all" network effects of the Internet. Claiming to be merely technology platforms, with no responsibilities for content, these new data-fueled giants have business models relying on selling their users' personal information to advertisers. They use ever-more targeted algorithms offered to thousands of advertising and marketing companies and easily exploited by the Russian "bots" emanating from the St. Petersburg-based Internet Research Agency. Not until mid-2017 did the US Congress at last hold hearings, calling lawyers for Facebook, Twitter and Google. These representatives initially stone-walled on how their platforms were hijacked and contributed to the narrow election by some 70,000 votes, of Donald Trump, ratified by the obsolete Electoral College— in spite of candidate Hillary Clinton's popular 3 million vote majority. Eventually, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg was shamed into testifying more truthfully.

Evidence that these social media companies had become "de facto" news sources for almost 50% of the US public, forced today's debate about how they should be regulated. Minimally, a consensus is emerging that all these companies must be re-classified as news media and held to the same journalistic standards of truth while publicly disclosing their advertisers, political funders and conflicts of interest. Microsoft scientist Jaron Lanier's *Ten Arguments for Why You Should Delete Your Social Media Accounts Now* (2018) calls for changing the business models of these companies from their current reliance on advertising and

addictive algorithms based on behavioral modification of users.   A consensus is emerging in the USA that these companies also should be broken up, using anti-trust regulation or become public utilities with government oversight. Meanwhile new start-ups offer ad-blocking apps which are being rapidly adopted by online users, 19% in the USA, 24% in Canada, 29% in Germany, 39% in Greece and 58% in Indonesia, as reported in Bloomberg Businessweek[*].

The European Union (EU) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a model now in force which addresses the worst aspects of corporate data collection and surveillance of their users, including the so-called Internet of Things.[†] A New EU copyright law tightens the rules on use of content on big social media platforms requiring payments.[4] The US Congress created the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) in the 1970s to prepare law-makers with knowledge needed when questioning witnesses like Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on how their use of personal data drove their algorithms for vast profits. Through the 1980s, OTA provided congress members with needed background on all the technologies under public debate on their possible impacts on health, society and the environment.

OTA marshalled top experts from US universities and laboratories for their reports on future problems and possibilities…but gored too many sacred cows and special interests. In 1996 Congress then slayed its OTA messenger. The recent hearings on Facebook, Google, Amazon and Twitter on Russian hacking of our 2016 election saw congress members caught on camera, blindsided, ignorant of the technologies these giant companies use to build their billions of users and outsize profits. Twitter's claim to make its content conform to behavioral standards in its "health initiative" is critiqued by psychologist Prudy Gourguechon in Forbes.[5]

In our TV show "Social Media in the Crosshairs", NASA Chief Scientist Dennis Bushnell and I explore the need for oversight, new business models and possible anti-trust breakup of these social media monopolies.   We discussed ways people can protect themselves, their privacy, autonomy and safety from the dangers of hackers, spyware and cyber-attacks. As the public faces the threats from automation, robots, artificial intelligence (AI) and the biased algorithms now controlling our daily lives, members of Congress are calling for restoring the dormant OTA. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and other agencies try to replicate OTA's services, question these deeper issues and how these technologies are threatening our privacy, millions of jobs and even disrupting electric grids and financial services. Science policy researcher Katie Singer assesses the broader social and environmental impacts of the entire internet system globally, in her forthcoming *How On Earth Do We Shrink The Internet's Footprint?*

A report for McKinsey Global Institute—*Notes From the AI Frontier: Applications and Value of Deep Learning* (2018)—looks at 400 companies and how AI is expected to increase efficiency and profitability across 19 industrial sectors. No mention for what broader public purpose beyond private sector profit—the questions asked in all OTA studies. For example, these advanced AI techniques teach computer algorithms to take over ever more tasks requiring "deep mind" judgements based on human brain functions. Thus, as Jaron

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[*] See https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2018-05-10/inside-the-brotherhood-of-pi-hole-ad-blockers

[†] See "The Idiocy of Things" May 31, 2016 http://www.ethicalmarkets.com/the-idiocy-of-things-requires-an-information-habeas-corpus/

Lanier points out, training AI systems to translate languages requires feeding them human translators' knowledge. Then, the human translators' jobs disappear!

This McKinsey report notes that these "deep mind" capabilities, driven by such machine learning, require ever more access to personal data from humans. So consumers must be ever more closely monitored, tracked and surveilled to feed these computer algorithms. Only one of the 19 industrial sectors surveyed referenced any public interest or social purposes. The entire report focuses on "value" to companies, i.e. equated with increasing monetary revenues. In *Radical Markets* (2018), Eric Posner and E. Glen Weyl offer an approach to job losses; setting up unions for workers displaced by human-trained machines learning their skills. Artist Jennifer Lyn Morone counters "data slavery" by registering herself as a corporation to exploit her personal data.[6] Other proposals include paying all users of social media platforms for every bit of their personal information—feasible with existing software, according to Jaron Lanier in *Who Owns The Future* (2014).

McKinsey's conclusion is that progress in AI is expected to yield between $3.5 and $5.8 trillion of additional revenues for these commercial sectors. OTA, with its charter, would have begun by asking what public purpose was to be served and then assessing AI's long-term social and environmental impacts, costs and consequences for all segments of the US population. Grassroots opponents and radical academics in many countries also have government agencies similar to OTA which can report on social media, robots, automation, video-game addiction, and rapid digitalization of all sectors.

Struggles are heating up as to the ownership of personal information naively provided by users for the "free" use of these social platforms. These companies claim that they own all this personal data, since users agreed under the voluminous Terms and Conditions stated on their websites. Banks and financial firms claim that they own all their clients' personal data. Under the GDPR, assertions are that users, customers and citizens retain ownership of this personal data, e.g. "the right to be forgotten", but these rights are limited and tenuous in practice, when facing vastly superior corporate power.

Ethical Markets advocates extending the ancient English law "habeas corpus" to include personal ownership of our brains and all our information, an "information habeas corpus". Battles continue between civil rights groups and corporations over data control, with growing concern about the use of algorithms trained in facial recognition being used by police, sold by Amazon in the USA.[7] These algorithms are so biased that they target minorities unfairly, for example misidentifying African Americans.[8] These algorithms can also change audio and video tracks and photographs—creating new levels of disinformation.[9]

As the battle heats up over data of citizens in all countries, we are told that in this digital age, data is now seen as the primary resource—just as oil was in the fossil-fueled Industrial Era. Three different models of the Internet are emerging: (1) the US model of free and open access to all including commercial users; (2) the Chinese model of government coordinating and managing domestic populations and activities, and (3) the Russian model of geopolitical use by the state in information warfare, superior and cheaper than kinetic conflict. All these issues are discussed in *The Darkening Web* (2017) by Alexander Klimburg who describes

this global battle taking place at the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) in Geneva. Many reformers are designing electronic platforms they hope will become a new decentralized internet, such as Decenternet, Polka Dot and others, using blockchain models. Some of these efforts are discussed in The Economist.[10]

"Increasing education budgets, making higher education affordable or free, increasing MOOCs, mentoring, retraining and on-the-job apprenticeships are all essential."

Digging deeper into the origins and development of the Silicon Valley oligopoly is *The Surveillance Valley* (2018) by Yasha Levine, who traces the military-funded foundations of the Internet and most of the so-called "entrepreneurial geniuses" of Silicon Valley. Levine documents how most of these young coders and their funders used government subsidies and still rely heavily on military contracts. Levine reveals shocking levels of interpenetration between these companies and the US military and related intelligence agencies. This book usefully lists many companies and how and with whom they operate. A chilling report "AI, Warbot" in *New Scientist* dated September 15, 2018 describes in detail how AI machine learning is already penetrating military strategies in a new kind of digital arms race, pointing out that these machine-learning algorithms are not taught anything about human abilities for deeper understanding, collaboration, empathy or the ability to grasp the horrendous outcomes that their speedy blind decisions may cause.[11]

The naiveté of computer scientists, mathematicians and developers of algorithms is breath-taking, as well as their use of the reified term "artificial intelligence" (AI) which is a misnomer, since the correct term should be "Human-Trained Machine Learning". This arrogance is on full display in *Prediction Machines* (2018), by co-authors Ajay Agrawal, Joshua Gans and Avi Goldfarb. They describe how these algorithms are designed to meet the narrow specialized efficiency goals of various contracting companies and financial firms, with the simple economic fundamentalism of most neoliberal textbooks—still taught in most business schools. The impacts on society and the public sector are discussed in a final chapter, as an after-thought. Similar reports abound by consultants like that cited earlier by McKinsey, as well as KPMG, business groups and most corporate-focused research. Examples include Deloitte and the World Economic Forum report *The New Physics of Financial Services* published in August 2018. A notable exception is *The Data Privacy Puzzle* from The Cornerstone Capital Group, New York for the Investor Responsibility Research Center (IRRC) Institute, August 2018, which assesses the viability and vulnerabilities of data-driven business models.

In *Capitalism Without Capital* (2018), authors Jonathan Haskel and Stian Westlake breezily describe the rise of the intangible economy and its effects on so many sectors.They discuss how accounting methods need to be retooled to value information, research, patents, copyrights, recipes, media products, brands, business

models and all these new intangible assets. These changes from the 20th century and earlier industrial societies are from economies based on physical, material goods to those based on services. Such intangible information-based products and services have become more dominant since the mid-1960s, when I co-founded a group, the National Citizens Committee for a Guaranteed Income with the author Robert Theobald of *The Guaranteed Income* (1966). These huge changes must be addressed, since the inequality and employment disruption they continue to produce are still festering, as documented by Thomas Piketty in *Capitalism in the 21st Century* (2017). If societies continue ignoring these unattended effects, democracies will continue to erode worldwide and the revolts of those bypassed and outsourced will continue to be exploited by demagogues. Increasing education budgets, making higher education affordable or free, increasing MOOCs, mentoring, retraining and on-the-job apprenticeships are all essential.

"Human judgement and examination of companies and their economic and social performance give way to mathematical models, algorithms and derivatives—all abstractions from real-world resources, risks and global environmental conditions reported daily by 120 Earth-orbiting satellites."

The financialization unleashed in the 1980s by the current form of neoliberal economic policies is now itself challenged by digitalized cryptocurrencies (see *Money is Not Wealth: Cryptos v. Fiats*, 2017). The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) faced up to these challenges to central banking in Chapter 5: "Crypto Currencies: Looking Beyond the Hype", in the BIS Annual Economic Report published in June 2018. Grassroots groups like the Occupy movements are revealing the ideologies, myths and politics of money-creation and credit allocation (see our TV show "The Money Fix"). This is awakening many money reformers and spawning grassroots local currencies, such as the famous "Berkshires" of the Schumacher Center. Many are calling for universal guaranteed basic incomes (UBI) as reported in Forbes, as well as blockchain-based currencies and even new voting and democratic systems such as "Agora 2.0" proposed by Mariana Todorova, former member of the Parliament of Bulgaria. Calls for such reforms range from lawyer Ellen Brown's *The Public Bank Solution* (2013), Sovereign Money (2018) by Joseph Huber, *A Green Bank of England* (2018) by Positive Money, and the many similar proposals by the American Monetary Institute (AMI) and Canada's Committee on Monetary and Economic Reform (COMER).

The speed and power of current global financialization are driven by computerized stock and bond markets and their high-frequency trading (HFT) as I reported to the UNEP Inquiry on Design of Sustainable Finance, "Reforming Electronic Markets and Trading", (2014) and "FINTECH: Good and Bad News for Sustainable Finance" (2016), also at http://www.unepinquiry.org/ . Over 50% of all securities trading on public exchanges is conducted by computers and algorithms while robotized investment advisors and asset managers and

their indexes, benchmarks and Exchange-traded Funds (ETFs) now dominate. Human judgement and examination of companies and their economic and social performance give way to mathematical models, algorithms and derivatives—all abstractions from real-world resources, risks and global environmental conditions reported daily by 120 Earth-orbiting satellites.[*]

"Reforming and expanding the UN is a necessary condition for the future of democratic states, international agreements and the subsidiarity allowing autonomous, equitable decision-making at regional and local levels."

This is a brief overview of challenges to democracies from information technologies beyond the hopeful visions of Marshall McLuhan, in his *Understanding Media* (1966) of an emerging *"global village"*. Today, political scientist Parag Khanna describes in *Connectography* (2017) how technological connectivity marches unabated in global fiber-optic cables, satellites and computerized HFT. These tools are accelerating financialization with globalized infrastructure, such as China's Belt and Road initiative, while cities are arising and challenging the Westphalian sovereignty of states and the United Nations (UN).

Most of humanity's global problems, from food security, poverty and inequality to desertification and climate change, cannot be solved by any one country alone. In this Age of the Anthropocene, the planet is teaching humans directly about the failures and limitations of our anthropocentric cognition and policies.

Thus global governance becomes unavoidable and the evolution of human concerns in the 17 goals of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) point in the right direction. Reforming and expanding the UN is a necessary condition for the future of democratic states, international agreements and the subsidiarity allowing autonomous, equitable decision-making at regional and local levels. Reining in and re-purposing finance is a pre-requisite, along with breaking the spell described by Yuval Noah Harari in *Homo Deus* (2017) of the money myth and economic fundamentalism. Finance is slowly being redirected from the stranding of past fossil assets in too many pension funds now shifting to the cleaner, knowledge-rich investments in renewable energy and resource-based circular economies of the Solar Age, as tracked in our Green Transition Scoreboard (GTS) reports: *Deepening Green Finance* (2017) and *Capturing CO$_2$ while Improving Human Nutrition and Health* (2018). In our Information Age, all countries have become "mediocracies" , whatever their ostensible form of government, while their "attention economies" run on data, as I described in *Building A Win-Win-World* (1996, ebook).

Global governance structures must be strengthened and reinvented as described by Jo Leiner and Andreas Bummel in *A World Parliament: Governance and Democracy in the*

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[*] See *Mapping the Global Transition to the Solar Age: From Economism to Earth Systems Science*, 2014

21ˢᵗ Century (2018). The UN and its SDGs and climate summits must be fairly and securely funded as in the proposals Harlan Cleveland, Inge Kaul and I co-edited in *The UN: Policy and Financing Alternative*s (1995, 1996). Our 7.5 billion member human family is coming up to graduation time on our home planet Earth and now must face all the global problems our limited perception has created. The Earth will survive humanity's mistakes in any case and life in its biosphere will continue.

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Notes

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Access to the media: a problem in democracy

By HAZEL HENDERSON

The current public interest in all forms of mass communication reflects a growing understanding of its central role in our national life. Not only do we have schools of communications at many of our colleges, but we have an increasing body of scholarly analysis of the mass media's effects on our culture and our individual psyches. More people are at last realizing too, the awesome political power that comes with ownership or control over any medium of communication, whether television, radio, newspapers, magazines, wire services, computer networks, or any other system for moving information and ideas to significant numbers of people.

Communication between all citizens and all their institutions is indeed the primary integrative force needed to turn our fragmented, uncoordinated body-politic into a healthily functioning whole. The sum of all channels of communication in a society make up its vital nervous system. The great challenge is to ensure that all the components of this nervous system are free and open conduits for the maximum possible interchange of information between the maximum number of citizens.

The channels of communication in America today are technologically advanced beyond those available to any other body-politic. In fact, mass media are almost beginning to replace political

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parties in our system of government. They have informed and misinformed our citizens on national issues on an unprecedented scale, but in a largely unplanned manner. The mass media have shown the poor how the rich live, and have shown the rich what it is like to live in a rat-infested city slum. They have given us insight into pressing problems like "perspiration wetness," "tired blood," "bad breath," and the "blahs." They have made Americans interested in each other and whetted their appetite to communicate with each other. But the only way to do this efficiently is by using the mass media, especially the air waves—air waves that always seem to have an editor, a licensee, or a sponsor between ordinary citizens and that precious microphone, not to mention the "static" of endless commercials and entertainment programming.

Nonetheless, radio and television sets are the most efficient tools that Americans have at hand to help them understand our race relations, why our cities are decaying, what our politicians are saying, and what America's role in the world should be. For the under-skilled, broadcasting could offer nationwide job-training and basic education. For children, the air waves could provide an efficient, national "Headstart" program, without the costs of special transportation or facilities. Our mass media could become a national feedback mechanism by providing a random-access conduit for all the wisdom, creativity, and diversity of our citizens.

Our mass media are only a poor shadow of what they could be—not for lack of technology, but because of our imperfect understanding of their potential power. The mass media in America are still operated on the notion that they are purely businesses whose primary concern is to make profits for their stockholders, and to provide a medium for merchandising goods. In the last decade, we have begun to learn the considerable hidden cost to a society in making advertising the chief source of revenue to sustain the operations of its mass media. Since the original decision to cede the use of the air waves to private broadcasters, we have learned that if advertisers pay the cost of putting on programs, the public must pay the price of seeing only programs advertisers

feel will sell their products. Instead of the justly dreaded government censorship, we ended up with censorship by sponsors and private owners.

The advertiser's desire for the largest possible audience naturally conflicts with the needs and interests of minority audiences. It also hampers the germination of new and controversial ideas, which must break into the mass marketplace if they are to gain consideration. In a sprawling country like America, coverage in the mass media is the only means of gaining a day in the court of public opinion. If minority groups cannot get coverage, their only non-violent recourse is to beg or buy advertising. But here they must compete with giant corporate product advertisers who can afford to pay $65,000 a minute for prime television network time. Competition for free "public service" advertising is heating up; but here again, it has been until recently the safe causes, like "Smokey Bear" or "Give A Damn," that are permitted to get their message through.

Even if civic groups begin to "sell" their ideas and programs in competition with products and politicians, who should decide how much time and space ought to be allotted to these different purposes? Just those who own or control the media? For broadcasters, this problem is already serious. Which groups deserve free "public service" time and which must pay? If a civic group, a politician, and a product advertiser all want to buy the same limited advertising time, how will broadcasters decide whose message gets on the air and whose is blacked out? For budding civic groups, the need for publicity is a matter of life and death, and a negative decision could condemn an organization to oblivion.

Similar problems have arisen in political primaries. Politicians would send advance men into an area and buy up all the available time. Other candidates would arrive and find themselves blacked out. And what if a local civic group had wanted air time to raise an issue that was being inadequately covered by the candidates? Some of these matters are subject to a loose set of rules (the "fairness doctrine") promulgated by the Federal Communications Commission, and now being challenged in court, but more often these decisions are left in the lap of businessmen.

When a society is in ferment, as ours is today, pressure for equal access to public opinion through mass media increases as the old consensus splinters. New ideas and new minority opinion groups spring up everywhere. These new ideas are vital for the continual process of renewal and adaptation that prevents cultures from decaying. At the same time, such new ideas are necessarily disruptive and controversial, and therefore underfinanced and without institutional vehicles to promote them. The realization is now dawning on groups espousing these new ideas, that in a mass, technologically complex society, freedom of speech is only a technicality if it cannot be hooked up to the amplification system that only the mass media can provide. When our founding fathers talked of freedom of speech, they did not mean freedom to talk to oneself. They meant freedom to talk to the whole community. A mimeograph machine can't get the message across anymore.

It is entirely possible that much of the recent radicalization of American politics may be due to this media bottleneck. Minority opinion groups have discovered that whereas media ignore a traditional press release on their activities, they send reporters rushing to cover a picket line or any attention-getting "happening." Once other groups caught on to this game, the media became desensitized to mere picketing, and escalation became necessary. Now to get the media's and, therefore, the public's attention, one must hold a dean hostage, dance naked through the streets, throw a rock, or start a riot. In psychological terms, the news media have been "rewarding" and therefore reinforcing destructive behavior, by drawing attention to it and making national figures out of those who have learned what kind of behavior keeps them in the camera's eye.

At the same time, quiet, constructive behavior on the part of all those thousands who continually work to build and heal society, is punished by the negative sanction of being ignored by the media, and never reaching society's attention. Of course, there are exceptions to this generalization, and there are many responsible publications, as well as some unusual radio and television stations that do not make a practice of exploiting sensational news. But until we recog-

nize the dangerous tendencies of the prevalent, oversimplified journalism based on the time-honored editorial use of "rape, riot, and ruin," the radicalization of politics will continue.

Until minority opinion groups are provided with a right of access to mass media, and thereby, society's group consciousness, they will continue to behave in any aberrant way necessary to get attention. Just as the labor movement had to stay in the streets until it had won the right to an orderly channel of communication (in this case, a bargaining table) for negotiation and redress of grievances, so will the new political movements disrupt until the system can provide them open and orderly channels of communication.

The battle now shaping up over the public's right of access to the mass media may well be the most important constitutional issue of this decade. The issue affects every segment of society —from blacks who wish to be portrayed adequately in the media to antiwar groups vainly trying to counteract the promotional budgets of military contractors; anti-pollution groups wishing to counteract the millions spent on defensive advertising, public relations, and lobbying by polluting corporations; or anti-cigarette groups trying to neutralize the millions spent by tobacco companies to promote the smoking habit. Until very recently, there have been only sporadic skirmishes fought for this right of access by a disorganized, apathetic public. The first real change came in 1953, with the birth of educational television. But even today, public television is still only funded at under 5 per cent of the level of commercial television, and our 150 public television stations must still largely rely on local charity to mount their programs.

Pressures to democratize media have mounted sharply now. As always, some critics are responsible and justified, and others demagogic. Many civic groups have learned that they can challenge broadcasters at license-renewal hearings, held every three years by the Federal Communications Commission. Another response has been the explosive growth of "underground" media. Protest magazines and newspapers are proliferating and "underground radio" is beginning to flourish on FM bands held by churches and universities.

An American Civil Liberties Union conference has announced its intention of working to broaden the interpretation of the First Amendment to include the concept of the public's "right of access" to the media. Professor Jerome A. Barron of George Washington Law School advanced this concept in his article entitled "Access to the Press —A New First Amendment Right," in the *Harvard Law Review* of June, 1967. He called for "an interpretation of the first amendment which focused on the idea that restraining the hand of government is quite useless in assuring free speech, if a restraint on access is effectively secured by *private* groups." Professor Barron thinks that the cure for suppression is government regulation through court rulings and laws to force the media to give time and space to unpopular ideas.

What can be done to democratize media and permit more citizen participation? Some enlightened broadcasters have been re-examining their policies. There have been more feedback and discussion programs on local stations, including several "ombudsman" programs to help citizens get action from unresponsive government or businesses.

But efforts simply to bypass the mass media continue. Several blocks in Harlem will soon be wired up to a community-antenna television system with a storefront studio, so that anyone who wishes to address the community can go down, wait his turn, and speak before the camera.

We must remind ourselves, meanwhile, that the present structure of our mass media was not ordained by the Almighty, but merely grew. The first amendment should not be a cloak for our current media operators to hide behind, or to wave in our faces if we suggest anything new. We must ask *whose* freedom of the press? Just the freedom of the present owners? And if so, what about the citizen's freedom of the press, and his freedom to hear the maximum diversity of opinion on all issues?

If we succeed in freeing our mass media from some of their past patterns of operation, then we can decide what needs to be communicated and how to use communications to build our future. First, we must have faith that new information, properly communicated, can change man's per-

ception of reality and therefore his attitudes and behavior. There must be a new, mature ethic of journalism, for both electronic and print media. Current mass journalism is still largely based on the old, fragmented Newtonian vision—where man was the dispassionate, objective observer of his world. Even though few people still believe that man can ever observe the world objectively but is an interacting part of it, there is still a widespread lag on the part of our mass media in perception of this integral nature of reality.

The new, post-Newtonian journalism will be less concerned with aberrant, violent happenings and manifestations. Rather, intelligent, creative newsmen and editors will face up to the knowledge that true objectivity is impossible, and therefore shoulder and acknowledge the heavy burden of responsibility thus placed upon them. They will analyze the complex structures and interrelationships which lie beneath the surface events in the same way that only a handful of "little" magazines do today, and present this material simply for mass audiences. In a democracy as complex as ours, only if the voter can obtain such simplified coverage of the parameters of major issues, can he hope to use his vote wisely. Mass media reporters will seek out injustices and pressures in society before they need erupt in violence or find expression in the "underground media." Just as the sensory system of primitive creatures can only signal danger or dysfunction, so our primitive mass journalism has concentrated on signalling only these inputs to our body-politic. Editors will seek news of the integrative activities of man, as well as his destructive acts. Like individuals, a society needs confidence in itself, and its ability to cope with its problems. We must know of man's love and courage, as well as his hate and fear.

To address adequately the need for more democratic access to public opinion, as well as to meet its huge responsibilities as our most powerful educational system, mass journalism, both electronic and print, must face up to a greatly enlarged function in a complex, mass society. If it fails, the consequences may be disastrous.

For a Universal Declaration of Democracy

A. Rationale

I. Democracy disregarded

1. The Charter of the UN, which was adopted on behalf of the «Peoples of the United Nations», reaffirms the «faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small»… However, the term "democracy" is not used by any of its provisions. The democratic nature of the government is not the main requirement for a State to become eligible to join the United Nations; nor is the violation of democratic principles –and, first of all, the violation of human rights–a reason for a State to be excluded from the United Nations.

   It is only in the preamble of UNESCO's Constitution that the «democratic principles» are mentioned.

2. It's undeniable that the East-West confrontation from 1940 to 1980 is to be regarded as the explanation of the United Nations conception of democracy. Since there were basic discrepancies about the meaning of democracy («popular» democracy versus «real» democracy), it was only considered as another supplementary argument to be used in

the conflicts between them, instead of being the stand-base for national and international peace.

3. At the end of the Second World War, the disagreement over the meaning of democracy had not yet –or at least not immediately– been extended to the other essential feature that makes a human life worth living: the human rights, as evidenced by the fact that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was endorsed in 1948. And even if, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights only mentions democracy once in Article 29.2*, article 21 proclaims that *"everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives".* This provision allows for limitations to be applied to human rights based mainly, but not solely, on the requirements "of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society". It is, therefore, with regards to the requirements of democracy that the limitations to human rights should be appraised. Democracy, which is a regime of freedom, thus becomes the tool to evaluate eventual limitations to human rights.

4. While there is a Universal Declaration of Human Rights, further developed by a series of Agreements, Treaties and Declarations, there is nothing equivalent for democracy. Shouldn't the work that was undertaken in 1948 be completed with a Universal Declaration of Democracy?

II. The Return of Democracy

5. During the Cold War democracy took shelter in the regional organizations (the European Council, the Organization of American States and, some time later, the European Union) and it was not until the fall of Berlin Wall that democracy could find again a place within the frame of international relations. Since 1989 democracy has continuously been dealt with in every work undertaken by international organizations: United Nations has devoted a series of meetings targeted to "new democracies", many of which have drafted Declarations regarding democracy. African Nations have also drawn up their own projects, of which the African Charter on Democratic Elections and Governance of the African Union must be emphasized.

6. The project known as «Declaration of the European Council on True Democracy» is perhaps the most comprehensive, although it could not be adopted due to the opposition of one sole Member State. The Universal Declaration on Democracy of 16 September 1997, adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, is also worthwhile mentioning because of the plurality of opinions it represents and the innovative concepts it includes.

7. Several UNESCO instruments should also be taken into consideration, and especially those devised by the International Labour Organization. The French and North American Declarations issued during the last decades of the XVIII century are naturally worth

mentioning, as well as the instruments (Declarations and Conventions) developed by the Organization of American States. All these tools have been taken into account when drafting the project of the Universal Declaration of Democracy.

III. <u>Democracy and Peace</u>

8. Initially peace was regarded solely as the absence of war between States or within one particular State. This somewhat negative peace was gradually replaced by a "positive peace": the latter concept was meant to go further beyond a simple armed peace, and included all the requirements relating to security, mutual understanding, tolerance and economic and social development. Very soon it became clear that this positive peace was based on human freedom –and, therefore, on human rights– as well as on a political system of democracy understood in the largest sense of the word: from a political, economic, social, cultural and international standpoint.

Ultimately peace should be at the same time negative and positive, but first of all it should be global, that is, a matter of concern for everybody: all men and women are from now on accountable to their fellow human beings, and even to future generations, for peace in the world. If we all have a duty to strive for peace, we also have the right to benefit from peace. We are thus led to plead, in freedom, for a true human right to peace, as opposed to all sources of power, whether exerted by the State or not; a right that should be expected from all

power sources and that will, above all, be attainable only by joining the efforts of all actors in social life: States, individuals, public and private organizations. And yet the system of democracy, based on freedom, is the most adequate mean to ensure national peace and international peace.

9. This yearning for peace, which implies the existence of a democratic regime, makes it necessary for peace, enhanced by democracy, to become a matter of concern for everybody: but before this can be achieved, a true culture of peace has to be established. This was the target of those who, under the auspices of the UNESCO, created the *Foundation for a Culture of Peace*. The project for a Universal Declaration of Democracy that has been developed is a response to this twofold target of humankind: democracy and peace.

10. Because the Universal Declaration of Democracy is intended to actually become the equivalent of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both include 30 articles. Article 30 is shared by both declarations: it clearly states that "nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person the right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein".

B. **Project for a Universal Declaration of Democracy**

Whereas the Law and the international relations have for a long time ignored the political nature of State government, the effective protection of human rights requires at present the existence and free operation of a democratic regime, regarded as the government of the people, for the people, by the people;

Whereas despite the fact that international instruments, universal and regional, designed to protect human rights, haven given rise to a body of innumerable and detailed rules based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there is still lacking the indispensable equivalent, that could be found in a Universal Declaration of Democracy, a tool that is urgently needed to reorient on a personal, local and global scale the behavior and governance of human societies;

Whereas the drawing up of the aforesaid Declaration should enhance the intrinsic bond between human rights and democracy, based on the effective respect of the political, social, economic, cultural and international rights, at personal and collective, national and world levels;

Whereas the World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montréal, 1993) represents an excellent guide, and some of its points have already been incorporated to the text of the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993) ;

Whereas as established in the Resolution A/67/L25 of the General Assembly of United Nations, of 21st November 2012, on Education for Democracy, democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic,

social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives;

Whereas it is acknowledged that the democratic regime constitutes the best guarantee for the promotion and implementation of Human Rights;

Whereas all democratic governance has values and actions worldwide shared, while there is no single model of democracy belonging to any country or region;

Whereas the systemic and ethical crisis that Humanity is suffering can only be solved by a democratic spirit and behavior at all levels, in such a way that the reins of their destiny can be placed in the hands of "the peoples";

Whereas the times of a bloodstained history based on male absolute power are over, and that the human kind, "freed from fear" and able to invent its future, will begin, with the transition from force to word, a new era;

Whereas a Universal Declaration of Democracy should, therefore, cover at the same time political, economic, social, cultural and international democracy;

We now, therefore, proclaim this Universal Declaration of Democracy:

I. **Fundamental Principles of Democracy**

Article 1

Democracy is a political, economic, social, cultural and international regime, based on the respect for human being, the supremacy and independence of justice and law, as well as on the

possibility for any individual to participate in the life and development of society, in freedom and peace and in a favourable natural and cultural environment, being always fully conscious of the equal dignity and interdependence of the human beings.

II.   **Political Democracy**

Article 2

Political democracy represents an objective based on values shared by all peoples that make up the international community, regardless of their cultural, social and economic differences. It is, therefore, a fundamental right for all human beings, and it shall be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality and responsibility, ensuring diversity of opinions, beliefs and common interest.

Article 3

3.1 Since it is based on everybody's right to participate in the administration of public affairs, political democracy implies freedom of meeting and association and the existence of institutions that are representative at all levels and, particularly, of a Parliament representing all constituent parts of society, endowed with real powers and having at its disposal all means required to convey the will of the people, through legislation and control of governmental action.

3.2 Participative democracy will be fully effective when the ways to allow civil society to express its priorities will exist, in order to adapt the

expenditures and investments of the public institutions with the needs and interests of the community.

3.3 The modality of participation provided by the new technologies of communication and information will contribute without any doubt to widen the capacity of the citizens to freely express themselves, reaffirming in this way a genuine democracy.

3.4 To ensure the citizens capacity to freely express themselves, it is essential to guaranty a truthful and verifiable information, particularly on government and institutions.

3.5 The political power must always be attentive to the citizen's voices and views, respecting and warranting the right to disagreement.

3.6. The unavoidable respect to diversity of beliefs and convictions of the citizens demands the neutrality of the democratic State in all cases. It should include the guarantee of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and ideology of any person.

Article 4

A very important element to ensure the democratic exercise of political power is the periodic holding of regular and free elections, allowing the people to express their will concerning the composition of the legislative body and other organs of political power within the State.

Article 5

Voting shall take place by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot, of women and men without any restriction, under conditions ensuring the possibility of a real choice to the benefit of voters, and allowing their opinions to be taken into account.

Article 6

The presence of election observers and national and international media shall not be considered as interference in the domestic jurisdiction of any State.

Article 7

A democratic society entails a multi-party system that must work in a spirit of tolerance: freedom to create political parties or any other political groups in compliance with the guidelines of international law shall be guaranteed. Parties can only be forbidden in those cases and under those circumstances stipulated by the law. Even if it has been elected democratically, the majority shall not abuse its right to govern by infringing the legitimate rights of minorities, to which end the appropriate regulatory mechanisms should be established. Members of the Parliament and of any other representative organ shall consistently participate in all debates.

Article 8

Political democracy requires the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers. The role of the legislative power, which represents citizens, consists in drafting and passing laws, voting taxes and exerting control over the executive power. The executive power shall ensure in particular that law is strictly observed by the security institutions responsible for its correct implementation.

Article 9

The judicial power shall be exercised by independent judges, who shall be impartial and make decisions that are not influenced by the interests of the executive power, the legislative power or any other public authority or private group.

Article 10

10.1 Political democracy shall ensure that an equal and effective protection is provided to everybody against any kind of discrimination, and that every human being benefits from equal opportunities during her/his life. All provisional measures aimed to correct any kind of discrimination; the amends of the damage caused by it or for achieving the equality attainment among persons, shall not be considered as discriminatory.

10.2 Any kind of discrimination as well as any humiliation way of imprisonment or freedom privation, including death penalty, is against the fundamental democratic principles which must be fully respected.

III. **Economic Democracy**

Article 11

11.1 Democracy shall develop economic systems based on social justice, to which all the other aspects and dimensions of the economic life will be always subordinated, whose aim shall be a free and fair competition as well as the indispensable cooperation, in order to achieve a human and sustainable economic development growth, shared prosperity, the

promotion of employment and labour, and a rational use of economic, nutritional, natural and energy resources, with the main objective of ensuring to everybody to have access to the goods and services - particularly health services- necessary for a dignified life.

11.2 The principles of responsibility in relation to society -transparency, permanence, tax justice- must be always taken into account to avoid the hegemony of profit.

Article 12

The democratic process requires the existence of an economic environment that favours the development of all sectors of society and that is aimed, in particular, at satisfying the essential economic needs of disadvantaged groups, in order to allow them their full integration and participation into democratic life. Public powers must ensure the regulation and redistribution of the benefits of development y means of the appropriate social and fiscal tools, for a equitable system of sharing and to prevent social exclusion.

Article 13

13.1 Economic democracy requires the acknowledgement of the economic rights of all human beings, amongst others the freedom of all persons and institutions to buy and sell, and the right to propriety, individual and collective, the deprivation of which shall only intervene on the grounds of public interest and under those conditions required by regulations and by the international law.

13.2 At the same time and with equal emphasis, requires the acknowledgement of the right of everybody to receive from the State

the support and minimal income that, in case of need, will allow the full exercise of the fundamental Human Rights.

Article 14

Freedom of industry and commerce is crucial to democracy, whether national or international: all persons shall be free, except on grounds of general interest, to develop any business or to exercise any profession, art or craft they shall deem adequate. Freedom of commerce will be regulated by national and international institutions in order to promote the development of a real democracy, able to create goods and services with permanent respect of the environment and the rights of the succeeding generations.

Article 15

Freedom of contract, which is the basis of life in society, is particularly relevant for economic democracy because it allows society to freely operate within the national and international frame, provided that the general interest and the requirements of the democratic process are observed.

Article 16

Freedom to undertake, which is today regarded as an indispensable driving force behind economic and social development and, thus, behind economic democracy, is the result of freedom for all persons to exercise their rights, without hindering the rights of others, whose limits

can only be established by national regulations and the international law.

Article 17

Freedom to invest is an important factor of the economic development of a country; without it the economic rights could not be fully exerted because individual initiatives would lack the guarantees and protection that should always be granted to Human Rights, this being the fundamental condition for the existence of a democratic regime in any Nation.

IV. Social Democracy

Article 18

Democracy comprises an essential social dimension, in accordance with the conditions established in article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: the non-observance of fundamental social rights threatens equal dignity and opportunities for all human beings, which is the basis for Democracy.

Article 19

Trade union freedom shall allow workers to actively and without obstacles defend their own interests. It shall enable them to participate,

on an equal footing, to free discussions with the representatives of employers and governments, which will lead to democratic decisions aimed at promoting the general good and ensure acceptable labour conditions.

Article 20

20.1 Social democracy requires that all citizens contribute, through taxes established to this end, to solidarity and to the fair distribution of resources of all kinds.

20.2 Rigorous measures shall be taken to eradicate inequalities, extreme poverty and economic, social and cultural exclusion, as well as any marginalization, in particular by providing people in need with means to become aware of their own rights and to make themselves heard; a series of adequate services will also be made available for them, including an appropriate training aimed at reinforcing their capacities.

V.   Democratic culture and Cultural Democracy

Article 21

21.1. To achieve a sustainable democracy, it is essential to understand it as culture, as a daily behaviour rooted at all levels: personal, institutional and collective.

21.2. It is also necessary a democratic culture constantly nurtured and enriched by education, freedom of expression without restrictions and dissemination of different cultural means, as well as by access to plural information.

21.3. A democratic society has, therefore, the duty to promote education in its broadest sense of the word: to build free and responsible human beings, able of acting upon their own reflections. Learning to be, to know, to do, to undertake and live together in a process that includes, in particular, philosophical and artistic education, to ensure the full exercise of thought and creativity, the distinctive faculties of the human being, as well as civic education and responsible citizenship training with the perspective of education for all throughout life.

Article 22

Cultural democracy is a dynamic process that includes all segments of social life. It also concerns the relationships within the systems of values established by different cultures and the relationships among them. It implies an approach including the imperatives and objectives of culture. Inseparable of the democratic regime, it is a condition of its development and sustainability. Cultural democracy plays a decisive role to overcome the domination by cultural values that are globally imposed.

Article 23

When fulfilling the functions it must exercise within the field of education and knowledge, the State shall not hinder the right of parents to choose, in addition to the public general education curricula, the teachings provided to their children in accordance with their religious, philosophical and ideological beliefs.

Article 24

24.1 Democracy implies the possibility for everybody, without discrimination, to participate in, to access to and benefit from cultural life, information and social communication. All cultural communities, including those placed in a disadvantageous situation because of their small size or because they have a cultural ethnic, religious or any kind of specificity, shall be entitled to develop their own cultural policy, provided that it does not infringe any human right or the rights of other communities. Due to their prolific variety, their diversity and the mutual influence they have on each other, all cultures are part of the common heritage of humankind.

24.2 An important aim of cultural democracy is to associate identities very different among them but all belonging to the same world community, that implies equal rights for all without any discrimination.

VI.   International Democracy

Article 25

25.1 Democracy shall be regarded as an international principle to be observed by international organizations and States in their international relations. International democracy does not only imply an equal and equitable representation for all States, it also covers the social, economic and cultural rights and duties of States.

25.2 At the scale of the United Nations whose Charter calls for action to be taken by "We, the peoples of the United Nations", it is needed that, with the appropriates structures, they are directly represented and, all together with the representatives of the Governments of Member States, can always take into consideration the concerns of representatives of other organizations of civil society, voiced through different ways, as associations, professional entities, public and private groups, social networks, including and in particular those national and regional elected representatives.

Article 26

26.1 International democracy implies that it is incumbent on States to ensure that their behaviour complies with international law; that they shall not resort to threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State; and, finally, that they shall strive to settle their disputes by peaceful means, in agreement with the international law, taking advantage of the international jurisdiction, and, in particular, of the International Court of Justice.

26.2 High level legal institutions, to which all human, technical and financial resources needed for their most effective action will be provided, in order to ensure that, in all contexts and scales the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and this Declaration are fully observed.

Article 27

Democracy shall play an increasingly important role in conducting regional and international affairs. To that end, the international

community, integrated in the United Nations as expression of democratic multilateralism, shall support States in the transition to democracy. It shall also have to show solidarity towards people that are oppressed or live under conditions that are detrimental to their human development.

Article 28

28.1 All persons have the right to the establishment of an international and social order in which the rights and freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the present Declaration will become fully effective.

28.2 No State shall be entitled to make appeal to the principle of non-intervention of the United Nations in domestic affairs when faced to denunciation of Human Rights violations.

VII. Duties towards Democracy

Article 29

All human beings have the duty to respect and defend democracy and peace in their various fields of operation: political, economic, social, cultural and international. They shall in no circumstances exercise or defend their rights in ways contrary to the aims and principles of United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person the right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

The Future of Democracy
A Roundtable & Planning Workshop
April 3-5, 2018, Inter-University Centre, Dubrovnik, Croatia

Background Papers

Issues for Discussion on Future of Democracy

Lloyd Etheredge

Democracy was trusted widely at the end of the 20th century as the best political system for human progress. However, unexpected global trends across the past fifteen years arouse serious concern, and the possibility that they will continue is alarming. Democracy-generated progress has stalled. A new, unforeseen politics of fear and anger has brought democratic values and institutions under siege in many places, including several of the world's most powerful countries. What should we do? The challenge, to be discussed at an international roundtable and planning workshop organized by WAAS and WUC, can be summarized in three dimensions:

1.) **The global spread of democracy has stopped**. Democracy spread in Eastern Europe after the Cold War, but not much has happened since. Instead, China and Russia have consolidated authoritarian oligarchies that rule 1.5 billion people. Once-promising democracies (e.g., Turkey, Venezuela) have eroded. Violence to create religious dictatorships has spread in the Islamic world. In Africa (and elsewhere - e.g., Haiti and parts of the Middle East) history's evolutionary pathway has led to failed or fragile states, decades of assistance for economic and political development notwithstanding.

2.) **Progress within democracies has stalled**. The implied promise that liberal democracy will bring economic and social justice for everyone is no longer reliable.[1] The distribution of the world's wealth has become more unequal, with the top 1 % owning half of the world's wealth (about $140 trillion.) Newer democracies grant a right to vote. However, their democratic political processes are manipulated and remain superficial. Behind the scenes, traditional oligarchies still select candidates and decide what to exclude from agendas. An apparent rise of corruption (e.g., Brazil) suggests an erosion of values in some democratic Establishments.

3.) **In developed democracies, voters are turning against democratic values and institutions, expressing and building a new politics of fear and anger**. At one level, democracy may be working: voters are removing unsatisfactory politicians and elites. However, new demagogic and divisive leaders also are arising whose solutions are unlikely to work and who increase fear and polarization. Elected, the new leaders (e.g., in America) attack the formal and informal rules, cultural norms, and other institutions that support democracy. (They use fake news; aggressive, loud, message-of-the-day media attack machines; and sophisticated negative campaigning to increase turn-out by arousing fear and anger). The new demagoguery is bringing nationalism and ethnic prejudice, greater military investments, and renewed talk about building more nuclear weapons.

A three-day international Future of Democracy roundtable and planning workshop should seek to understand these trends, designate priorities, and create needed

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1 Rather than use Western liberal democracy, the Chinese success of lifting hundreds of millions of people above the poverty line used a more authoritarian, Confucian model and guided capitalism.

strategies. Below are ten issues grouped into three categories for discussion. The intent is to begin crafting a policy framework for the best application of knowledge to the future of democracy: 1.) Where are we? 2.) What do democracies need to know? and 3.) Planning.

1. Where are We?

1.1) Lessons from History

Liberal democracies often are analyzed as incandescent achievements, requiring many centuries and causal contributions, including the preaching of religious authority, **and violence** to change a political world of authority, obedience, exploitation, and injustice. What worked best? Is the right answer to repeat these strategies?

1.2) Lessons from the Front Lines

What is happening now? Are there new types of strategies that will work if applied more widely? Many roundtable participants will have first-hand observations of human rights advocacy, social marketing and cultural strategy, non-violent methods, the ending of the Cold War and the earlier nuclear arms race (after 70,000 nuclear weapons were built), democracy-building in Eastern Europe, the Arab Spring; and UDC nation-building cases. How did the world achieve the enlightened global behavior of the environmental movement, the cooperation for international public health, and coordinated global responses to humanitarian emergencies?

1.3) Are We Asking the Right Questions?

The Axial Age (800 BC to 200 BC) laid the foundations for philosophy and brought the world's major religious and ethical systems to life. Leading thinkers shared the goal of human flourishing as the defining purpose of governments and the standard to evaluate governments. Also, they shared a diagnosis: *"[T]he unbridled pursuit of wealth, power, fame, sensual passion, arrogance, and pride"* impeded the achievement of the good. (Schwartz, quoted in Bellah, <u>Religion in Human Evolution</u>, 2011, p. 422). Are the same motivations again undermining progress?

Or are there other explanations? One possibility is that dysfunctions of the American political system are responsible.[2] Another possibility is that the size of modern democracies requires enormous (and inhibiting) investments of time and money to

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2 The worst global economic crisis since the Depression, with costs to billions of people since 2008, was shaped by high-powered lobbying and negligence of American politicians, government regulators, journalists, academic economists, and many others. Concerning global instability: Behavioral science models have predicted (and the intelligence community has warned), beginning in 2008, that a prolonged recession in many countries (especially with high youth unemployment) would increase political instability, aggressive political conflict, recruitment to terrorism and other change-oriented movements on a global scale. To extend the new causal argument: American leadership for invasions and prolonged and unwon wars in Afghanistan and Iraq has contributed to violence in the Islamic world and built the refugee crises and their growing political stress in Europe.

create agendas and momentum. [If this diagnosis is correct, a solution may be needed or other remedies will fail.]

2. What Do Democracies Need to Know?

The next three topics [4.) Equal Justice Under Law: Metrics; 5.) Economics and Politics; 6.) Achieving Enlightened Behavior] identify a second dimension for discussion: To achieve the goal of democracy (the flourishing of all human beings, someday), what do democracies need to know? Especially in a complex and pluralist world of 7.5 billion people (most of whom might not be listening)? Since almost all democracies assign decisions to elected representatives, a related analysis is to inventory what these elected representatives would need to know to organize swifter progress for everyone?

2.1. Equal Justice Under Law: Metrics

It might be useful, to stimulate and organize a democratic renewal, to create a full annual set of accurate metrics disclosing the distance that each society must travel to deliver equal justice under law to all citizens. Metrics help human beings to recognize comfortable complacency, remind their better selves of unjustified suffering, establish accountability and manage organizational processes, learn, identify blind spots, and accelerate progress. In a world where discrimination and unjustified suffering are ubiquitous, the new metrics might pinpoint the problems to solve so that democracies and human potential can flourish.[3] [Although the task may seem daunting, democracies often do not need majorities to write the future but only organized and committed minorities with gifted leadership.)

- Confucius believed that most political revolutions and reforms did not work because what was needed was a renewal of spirit and the sacredness of other people and nature. Facts alone probably will not work unless they are informed by this special knowledge that Confucius sought.

[A comprehensive metrics should allow creative measures that publicize problems that have become invisible to most voters. The new data on police line-of-duty shooting of unarmed civilians, by race, in America has been alarming. Most citizens may not have thought about how many other missing metrics would cause them to say "Something ought to be done about . . ."

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3 Plato believed that Justice was the key to political stability, genuine patriotism, and military success, and to the trust and voluntary and spirited participation in all dimensions of Athenian life by citizens who knew their contributions would be recognized.

2.2. Economics and Politics

The relationship between economics (both wealth and economic performance) and power shapes societal outcomes in all forms of government, including democracy. Unequal wealth usually changes a one-person-one-vote reality in a democratic political system and can skew results. In America, this power becomes greater as the cost of perpetual political campaigns and election cycles has escalated to billions of dollars.

   - A second issue has emerged from simple models of both economic market systems and democratic political systems. The economic theory of public goods identifies benefits to collective human welfare that will be underfunded by market systems. The parallel conclusion for national democratic politics occurs when future beneficiaries and victims, foreigners (etc.) cannot vote. With the increasing reliance upon democratic governments, the world might be witnessing the cumulative effects of their designed limitations. Perhaps a wise recommendation is to rely upon other systems, with comparative advantages, to fill the gaps. [Although they will currently be underfunded (e.g., scientific research, large non-profit institutions like the Gates Foundation).]

   - A related issue is that unequal wealth can shift the wealthy into a separate reality, a disconnection that can make government unresponsive to the agendas of invisible citizens of lower status.

2.3. Achieving Enlightened Behavior

If the world needs enlightened behavior, and a critical component [setting aside rationality] is a spiritual growth, how can this be brought to life in time?

   The Axial Age pioneered several methods to improve enlightened behavior: 1.) Obedience to universal moral codes commanded by a supreme Deity; 2.) The invention of a new educational process (by Socrates and Plato's Academy) to produce philosopher-kings; 3.) Self-cultivation. (Confucius believed that human progress would be assured as soon as rulers understood what a fully developed human being could be.); 4.) Buddhism and other spiritual traditions advanced techniques (e.g., meditation) for a belief-independent awakening and growth of compassion.

   More recently, science and other professions have contributed a new identity, set of values, and spirit. Today, new professional programs offer to train future leaders who can be trusted to apply science-based problem-solving and build international networks for progress that work better than relying upon politics or majority voting or waiting for philosopher-kings. [The sociologist Max Weber suggested that political achievements also will grow to the extent that politics evolves as a profession.]

   A useful step might be to discuss the problem with Buddhist thinkers, the Catholic Church and other religious/spiritual traditions that have been working this angle for 2,000+ years and may have reached an upper bound. Can they take a fresh look at practical methods that facilitate enlightened behavior and that the world could use without requiring conversion to Buddhism or Catholicism?

<center>**3. Planning**</center>

3.1. Change-Making Skills for Democracies and a Pluralist World of 7.5 Billion People

Is it possible that democracies are in trouble because the scale of today's democratic institutions requires specialized skills and investments to develop agendas and make changes? Would a new 21st-century curriculum for citizenship to teach effective change-making improve democratic performance? What would the new curriculum be like? [In early Athens, courage was taught in many ways and considered a part of the education for effective democratic citizenship and for other areas if life.]

3.2. More Reliable Economic Science: Anticipating the Greater Economic and Political Stress Ahead.

The extraordinary, continuing high rates of "lost generation" youth unemployment and *de facto* messages of indifference in the EU and UDCs since the 2008 global economic crisis began, are likely to be increasingly dangerous for democracy and costly for long-term growth. As interest rates rise, the annual payments on the vast increases in national debts will eliminate new funds for better futures and force cutbacks in retirement, health, and safety-net benefits that voters expected. Politics will become even more zero-sum and angrier. Cumulative resignation of written-off youth may shift to political outrage and instability if repayments of government debts and interest to banks takes priority (as it did in Germany before WWII).

Statistically, economists can predict that new recessions in most nations will occur in the next several years. However, because of the 2008 crisis and slow recovery there will be limited options for governments to protect their people by lowering interest rates or adding deficits for stimulus. What do democracies need to know, now, to plan for the added economic and political stress that is coming?

3.3. Fixing Dysfunctional Politics: The American Test Case

What are specific recommendations to repair the dysfunctional political system in America? In the current era of Donald Trump et al., what might be done about urgent and dangerous problems (e.g., involving nuclear weapons) where there could be catastrophic effects for other countries.? How might faked news and Russian interventions (be solved while retaining free speech and press? [4]

3.4. Planning without Perfect Information

A meta-question about likely results of the roundtable and its planning recommendations to set the world on a better track: When information is imperfect, how can this prudently inform successful planning? A specific sub-question: Are there further catastrophic failures of democracy (like 2008) that require new vigilance and methods of early detection?

3/14/18

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[4] We do not yet know if Russian interference tilted the outcomes of Brexit and the recent French election. Or how much worse the problem may become.

Rule of Law Background to Democracy

Winston P. Nagan

In the historical record of managing human groups, there are several contested models. There is "rule by the one", the monarch, or the "rule by the few", the oligarchs, "or the rule that empowers all citizens to participate in the decisions that affect the community". It is the Greeks that gave an emphasis to the notion of popular participation of citizens in the process of decision making by, for and about them. It should be remembered however, that even this original form of democracy was flawed. Women had no effective participatory rights and since the economy was significantly dependent upon slaves to maintain the economic space for democratic practice, the slaves too did not participate. In short, even in its origins the democratic ideal was mainly aspirational rather than a statement of political fact. Still, there is a great deal that permitted this aspirational idea to endure although as a political force it had to contend with other powerful forces skeptical of the principle of democracy. One important aspect to the expansion of the rights of the citizen was the idea that rights could only be secured regardless of the forms of governance if they were co defied and accessible to the population at large. In short, the citizens' rights and duties could be secured by the myth of the rule of law against democratic or oligarchic or monarchic abuse.

The earliest effort to join law with empowerment took place during the 1700's BC the Emperor Hammurabi proposed a set of rules called the Code of Hammurabi. This code set out the rights and duties of the people that lived in the Hammurabi's empire. Since these rights were co defied as law, they secured the legal rights of the subjects of the empire. This of course is not democracy but when the rights and duties of the citizens are secured it enlarges the space for individuals to make decisions about their interests.

During the early period of Roman law, there were constant conflicts between the lower class Plebeians and the Upper Class Patricians. One of the great sources of conflict was the fact that the average Pleb had no idea what his legal rights and duties were. This made them subject to exploitation and abuse. Pleb agitation resulted in the codification of the famous law of the XII Tables. This was the first essential codification of law in the western European tradition. This was not a major democratic advance but it enabled people to make decisions about their own affairs that could be secured by the codified newly crafted XII Tables.

As Roman law evolved, the idea of developing the rules governing all aspects of society lead to the creation of scholarly forms of codification in the form of the writings of distinguished jurists and their application by neutral judges. Even though these juristic writings were not officially characterized by the Law of the emperor, even the emperor was often bound to respect them. This made the jurists suspect and over time several of them were murdered because they generated subversive ideas that restrained the abusive authority.

The emperor Justinian determined that all the great corpus of the law should be codified which the jurists did. The compilation came in four books. One the {The Institutes} --- This was a student's textbook, The {Kodaks} and the {Novellae} the new laws. This initiative made the rules of law accessible to all citizens and again, regardless of the imperfections of the political system, the codification of the law provided political space to the subject under the law.

These works inspired by Justinian later became the foundations of the emergence of enlightenment and University based education in Europe. This resulted in immense scholarly energy directed at systemizing the law in the books. However, the written law also became a source for protecting indiduval rights. These scholarly works formed the basis of one of the

most revolutionary developments in expanding the democratic ideals in France. Napoleon directed that the law be reduced to codes and in codified form, the law would be accessible to all citizens. The Napoleonic codes gave significant inspiration to the individual citizen having a capacity to rely on the written law to protect them from governmental abuse. The codes still endure today.

In England, another revolt inspired by the nobleman required King John to subscribe to a document referred to as the Great Charter, The Magna Carta. Essentially, the Magna Carta blocked the King from exploiting the rights of the nobleman. The Magna Carta soon extended to all English men. It established the great principle that even the great monarchists are bound by the law. These limits inspired parliamentary processes and the gradual secretion of democratic values and parliamentary institutions. It should not be thought that the struggle between law and monarchy was simple. Monarchs resisted the idea of being subject to law and in England, a revolution resulted in the removal of the monarchs head.

The great revolution in the United States against the English monarch was reinforced by the idea that the American Revolution was a democratic revolution. In this revolution the congress was elected and so was the President. However, women were not fully enfranchised and slaves were completely left out of the notion of the body politic. Notwithstanding oligarchic tendencies survived and they presented a challenge to democracy when the south of the United States decided to withdraw. Abraham Lincoln understood the challenge that this posed to the survival of democracy and in his Gettysburg Address he pointed out that the civil war has been fought so that government could of the people, for the people, by the people and will not perish from the Earth.

The First World War was a war fought by monarchs and oligarchs and ruling classes, this was a war in which technology out struck the military brain. Eventually the US came into the war on the side of the Allies who were much more democratic than the oligarchic Germans. Wilson, the American president, had a big picture that could emerge as a consequence of the war. His vision was World Peace and the Universalization of Democracy by the principle of self-determination. Unfortunately, the league could not live up to their promise as dictatorships began to flourish. Soon, all were engulfed in the Second World War. However, Wilsonian idealism was not dead. It reemerged in the form of the Atlantic Charter and the four freedoms upon which the UN Charter is based. These freedoms were freedom of speech and expression {democracy}, the freedom of consciousness and belief {more democracy, freedom from want {economic democracy} and freedom from fear [the freedom from war]. During the post-World War period, the world community emerged their global constitutional system based on the UN Charter and a global Bill of Rights based on the Universal Declaration of Human rights and several important covenants that specify the fundamental rights of the individual in the world community.

Essentially, the Human rights dimension of the development of these rights was largely inspired by the human empowerment and self-determination. In short, it was fundamentally inspired by the idea of democracy secured by the rule of law. This does not mean that it would be an instant global transformation from monarchy or oligarchy to democracy. This is a matter that is still greatly contended. For example, one of the fundamentals of the law was the Stalinist controlled USSR. The USSR, although it used the rhetoric of self-determination, it was essentially a stallanistic autocracy and its influence spread as a contending ideology to the ideologies of social democratic liberalism. This is meant that we went through a global constitutional crisis called the Cold War with a threat of nuclear conflict and today even in the post-communist world, there is a strong residue emerging from Mr. Puden projecting an authoritarian dispensation as a Bull Walk against democracy. The fight for democracy continues. Apart from the political polarity generated by the Cold War, the UN charter which was the successor to the League of Nations, inherited the democratic principle in the form of the right to self-determination. This principle of self-determination generated by the league was also an

instrument that challenged alien rule via colonialism or imperialism. The principle of self-determination and its democratic implications are spelled out in detail in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning friendly relations and cooperation amongst states in accordance with the charter of the United Nations. (1970) The depreciation of democratic values is further indicated in the Declaration when it states "subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a violation of the principle as well as a denial of fundamental human rights."

  The International Bill of Rights provides a documentary foundation for the human rights to democracy. In particular, Articles 18 through 21 highlight the most important foundations of democratic values. To this we should add, Article 6 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which stipulates "everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law." The Universal Declaration is complemented by two of the vitally important instruments of the International Constitutional System. These are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and The International Covenant on Economic and Sociocultural rights (1966). These instruments are further supplemented by volumes of International and Regional instruments affirming the centrality of the human rights to democracy. These documents in effect represent the rule of Law foundations of the human right to democracy as a global alternative.

In the current picture of world politics, democracy flourishes but it is not unchallenged. Recent revelations concerning the electronic interference with elections held in the European Union and the United States can potentially be very destabilizing. These interventions represent an effort to undermine the confidence in the integrity of political participation in elections. Even without foreign interference, there are still significant efforts in the United States. For example, voters suppression and the manipulation of voting districts to dilute the value of political participation. In addition, in states where there are restraints on financial campaigning, the consequences often arise in Plutocratic influence.

This is the summary of the fundamental values incorporated in the democratic ethos "Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives, everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country, the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures"

Source: http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/videos/right-to-democracy.html

Achievements of Democracy

João Caraça

To reflect on "Democracy" one has to go back to basic principles.

Democracy is not a form of government nor a type of constitution, but rather the expression of values connected to the will of the peoples.

Therefore, we can have diverse degrees, a little, or more, or full expression of democratic values or even no level of democracy in any political and constitutional form.

Democracy is based on popular will, whose legitimacy depends on the regular confirmation of that will. Thus, democracy presupposes the rule of law, coupled with a verification process.

Democracy has emerged only twice in history. In both cases social communication has developed and assumed a central role in the political process.

The first epoch of democracy preceded the political preeminence of Athens in classical Greece. Practically all fifth century B.C. Athenian citizens knew how to read and write. It was a period of **direct democracy** where all citizens were called to exercise their rights and duties.

The essence of Athenian democracy was vested in three principles: equal participation in the exercise of power; equality before the law; equal right to free speech.

However, the declining hegemony of Athens after the golden Age of Pericles is the possible explanation for the fact that no Athenian author has celebrated democracy and its practices.

The second time democracy encounters human populations is in the aftermath of the Enlightenment and of the «Great Transformation» that ensued. The values heralded by the French revolution: **liberté**, **egalité**, **fraternité**, were propelled as universals.

The introduction of education, the eradication of illiteracy, the creation of systems of public instruction were essential to the success of the new way of life in industrializing societies. And "progress" stimulated, reinforced and promoted the preeminence of economic perspective.

The emerging world-system was being structured along communication and financial networks. In Western nations modern science was becoming the paradigm of true knowledge and new forms of government based on the **representation** of citizens (and of property) were being developed, supported by the development of political parties and the press.

In the turbulent climate of the nineteenth century **liberty** did overcome **equality** (**fraternity** had vanished much earlier, after 1793, as its universalization was supposed to be "outrageous") much helped by the climate of economic growth, new wealth and political dominance enjoyed by the European nations in the concert of the world. But all went on.

Mass movements, demonstrations and social unrest brought the concept of "class struggles" to the fore and the proliferation of revolutionary attempts. The impact of the World War and the subsequent Russian revolution provoked the re-emergence of the word "democracy" to designate republican or monarchic liberal regimes as a counterpoint to the "socialisms" that were rampant in the 1920's.

This designation was later reinforced, during the Cold War, as the nations of the "free" world were seen as opposing "communism", a promised goal in the Eastern part of the world.

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Representative democracy became thus the characteristic of the political regimes of the Western nations since then, in varied declinations according to time and territory. In these democracies the central question is the free expression of citizenship.

The citizen is one who participates, who objects, who demands why. He or she must possess and safe keep critical spirit, i.e. the capacity of interrogating, of demanding explanations to the governing institutions.

The achievements of democracy in the past century have been undeniably the creation of a general climate of peace, prosperity and social justice in the nations of the Western world.

But, as time goes by, the network society is becoming under siege. Competitiveness has been erected as the ultimate vector of wealth creation, and commodification of all life forms its counterpart. Public space is becoming littered with fake or uninteresting information, and education is suffering from chronical underinvestment. This overall crisis shows that the capitalist world-system is undergoing a bifurcation. But where to?

The future of the world will be played in the field of **equality**, because liberty is ingenuous and, if let alone, easily captured by sellers of illusions or dealers in chimeras. This is the harsh lesson to be learned from the joys and abuses of the twentieth century.

QUESTIONS TO BE EXAMINED

1. In the present multipolar world can peace be maintained by the democratic nations?
2. In the present state of informational capitalism can prosperity (or fair redistribution of wealth) be assured in the democratic nations?

In the present state of disaggregation of state machineries through privatization and financiarization can social justice be implemented or even enforced?

Achievements of Democracy

Elif Çepni

Many forms of Government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.... Winston Churchill, House of Commons, 1947.

Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people. (A. Lincoln)

The ballet is stronger than the bullet. (A. Lincoln).

Democracy is the subject of broad consensus and its promotion is high on the agenda of international institutions. It is only form of government that guarantees many freedoms and it has been accepted widely as the right way of governance. Democratic societies achieved higher per capita income and better social indicators.

No consensus exists on how to define democracy, but legal equality, freedom and rule of law have been identified as important characteristics since ancient times. Furthermore, freedom of political expression, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press are considered to be essential rights that allow eligible citizens to be adequately informed and able to vote according to their own interests.

Democracy is a universally recognised ideal as well as a goal, which is based on common values shared by peoples through- out the world community irrespective of cultural, political, social and economic differences. It is thus a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility, with due respect for the plurality of views, and in the interest of the polity (Democracy: Its Principles and Achievement,1998).
As a form of government, it is a political system that has a capacity for self-correction.

Its main achievements could be summarized as follows;

The diversity of experiences and cultural particularities without derogating from internationally recognised principles, norms and standards.

Preserving and promoting the dignity and fundamental rights of the individual, to achieve social justice, foster the economic and social development of the community, strengthen the cohesion of society and enhance national tranquillity, as well as to create a climate that is favourable for international peace.

A genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences. No one is above the law and all are equal. Equal, open and transparent political competition-free and fair elections based on universal equal secret suffrage.

Civil and political rights to vote and to be elected, the rights of expression and assembly.

Access to information and the right to organize political parties. Everyone can take a part in the management of public affairs.

Public accountability, checks and balances, independent judicial institutions.

"Freedom of Choice" and more…….

A wide variety of regime types exist. Monarchy, dictatorship, aristocracy, oligarchy, democracy, totalitarian, autocratic, authoritarian, constitutional, anarchist could be listed.

Within democratic systems there could be direct democracy, representative democracy, parliamentary democracy and presidential democracy.

There is no consensus on which one preforms better in terms of providing better well-being and stability.

But it is known that the political and social Structure of a country may block or distort the normal economic processes. The definition of "institutions" is a broad one reflecting the "rules of the game" in society.

These institutions are not limited to Government organizations existing in building but extended to a wide range of social behaviour and influences.

Many researchers focus on a narrower concept relating to the role of Government institutions concerning: Property Rights, Regulatory Institutions, Macroeconomic Stabilization, Social Insurance, Conflict Management, Political Rights.

Today, the basic achievements of democratic regimes are valued and accepted by almost all members of the international world order with some exceptions although there are some nonignorable problems of it.

Questions to be examined

1. How the interdependence between peace, development and respect for the rule of law and human rights can be examined?
2. How the relationship between "strong economy" and "good democracy" can be explained?
3. What is the role of democracy and its institutions to keep the balance between diversity and uniformity, individuality and collectivity to improve social cohesion and solidarity?
4. What is the relationship between "welfare state" and "democracy"?
5. What is the role of education and social capital in the (The UNDP defines "human development" as a "process of enlarging people's choices") spread and better performance of democracy?
6. How the causality relations between "the health of democracy" and "the level of educational attainment" can be explained?

Poland: From Transformation Leader to Troublemaker

Zbigniew Bochniarz

Over the course of two decades, my colleague Sandra Archibald (University of Washington, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance) and I led an international research team that studied systemic transformation in post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe. Our team produced a series of articles in 2003, 2005, 2008 and 200[5]9, which argued that at least 10 Central and East European countries (which we named the CEEC-10) had made significant progress over the previous 10 to 15 years transforming their totalitarian political systems with centrally planned economies to democracies based on market principles. This transformation was expedited based on each individual country meeting European Union (EU) institutional, economic and social requirements both before and after they joined. Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia joined the EU in 2004, and Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007. In 2009 our research team concluded that the CEEC-10 had completed their systemic transformation and had begun moving toward a sustainable path of development based on the implementation of triple-bottom-line principles (TBL). Significant investments in human capital (HC) and social capital (SC) had produced a solid institutional base, including constitutions and other basic laws. (One of the sustainability criteria considered in the research included Non-declining Total Capital – NTK, which includes HC, SC, NC – natural capital – and MC – manmade capital).

However, this progress has been seriously challenged, as several members of the CEEC-10, beginning in 2010, have been taken over by the populist-nationalistic wave, which has significantly changed their basic institutions, including their constitutions (in legal or illegal ways) and rules of law. These countries include Hungary since 2010, Poland since 2015, and likely the Czech Republic since their elections in fall 2017. To further illustrate how the progress made along the path of sustainable development could wane in these countries in the near future, this essay will consider the latest institutional developments in Poland.

In Poland the ruling coalition led by the Law & Justice Party (PiS) started to dismantle the independence of the Constitutional Court by replacing – mainly illegally – its independent judges with their own loyalists just after the parliamentary election in fall 2015. By 2017 they succeeded in completely subordinating the Court to the executive branch of government despite the activity of parliamentary opposition parties, country-wide protests and interventions from the European Commission and the Venice Commission, comprised of prominent European and American judges. As of the writing of this article (Winter 2018), there are no independent institutional checks on the constitutionality of the Polish Government's capacity to pass new laws and regulations.

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[5] The international team also included Drs. Masahiko Gemma (Waseda University, Tokyo) and Tanja Srebotnjak (University of Washington, Seattle).

In July 2017, the Government used the superfast track of the legislative process, passing three basic laws that *de facto* changed the Polish constitutional order – the Common Court System, the Country Justice Council (KRS) and the Supreme Court – by simple majority rule in the *Sejm* (Parliament) and Senate, bringing foundational changes to the country's political system in just two weeks. Both the process and the contents of the laws violated the Polish Constitution and basic parliamentary procedures in many areas such as excluding opposition parties from the discussion and nongovernmental organizations from consultations. Although the President, who is a member of PiS, initially vetoed two of the laws (the two which significantly limited his power in favor of the General Prosecutor, who is also the Minister of Justice), the Common Court System law was signed by him and went into effect on September 1, 2017. After negotiations between the President and the PiS party chairman J. Kaczynski – the real decision-maker – two other laws went through the parliamentary amendment process again, were passed by the ruling majority and signed with several insignificant changes, shifting some power from the General Prosecutor to the President and Parliament on December 20, 2017.

The impact of these unconstitutional changes came very soon. As of September 1, 2017, over 120 heads and their regional court deputies have been fired without any comment or justification, and new judges have been appointed who are loyal to the General Prosecutor. The justice system is losing its independence, as it is subordinated to the executive brunch run by one-party interests. Basic democratic values, such as rule-of-law, are disappearing step-by-step. The nation is deeply divided, scared and insecure, and private business has cut their investments to the lowest level in a decade (this is a significant threat to sustaining restitution and modernization of MC). Today, Poland's economic growth is mainly fueled by consumption expenditures financed from budget transfers (mainly by the "500+" program for about 3.5 million people with multiple children), which was instrumental in granting the PiS election victory in 2015.

Recently introduced government "education reform" (called "deform" by the opposition) brings the structure of the Polish K-12 system back to the 1980s (8+4) with old traditional ways of teaching based on teacher-centered approaches. Critical and integrative thinking, combined with practical projects, which were the emphasis of the previous system, have been replaced by extended national history curricula and religion classes at each level. The new curricula could create long-lasting damage to the formation of Poland's human capital – the real engine of transformation, development and growth.

Natural capital (NC) has also been victimized by the current government. PiS introduced massive "sanitary" (the Minister of the Environment's term) cutting in Europe's oldest ancient forest, *Puszcza Bialowieska*, which is protected for conservation by Polish and EU laws. Despite massive protests from academia and NGO communities, the EC and UNESCO, it was continued until January 2018. Recently introduced amendments to hunting laws (January 2, 2018) gave hunters the rights to hunt in national parks and on private land even against the will of their owners, who risk penalization if they protest. The official reason for these changes is to fight AFS – a disease that effects pigs and wild boars – which has spread from Belarus over last few years due to a lack of effective enforcement of governmental policies. The new hunting laws echo government explanations for aggressively cutting the ancient forests in *Puszcza Bialowieska* for the sake of the forest health and safety of tourists.

Aggressive xenophobic propaganda exercised by the government-controlled media (particularly by the Polish TV – TVP) against opposition parties, intellectual elites, refugees, neighbors and the EU destroys the social capital (SC) that slowly grew after the transformation due to legitimacy of the democratically elected governments.

The recent development involving controversial amendments to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), which were hastily passed by the Parliament in January and signed by the President on February 6, 2018, opened new areas of conflict not only within Poland but within international communities and states, particularly with Israel and Ukraine. The initial idea behind the amendment was to fight the term "Polish death camps," which appears from time to time, mainly in the foreign media but also in the speeches of some politicians. For example, President Obama accidently used this term in his speech awarding a posthumous Presidential Medal of Freedom to Polish hero Jan Karski – an officer from the Polish Underground during WWII, who risked his life many times bringing eyewitness reports of the Holocaust to the United States. The amendment's initial and noble intention to accurately defend Poland from responsibility for building death camps during WWII when it was occupied by Nazi Germany was expanded in the last phase of drafting by PiS lawyers to exclude not only the Polish State but also the Polish Nation (never defined) from any responsibility or co-responsibility for the Holocaust during WWII and after (Art. 55a). This extension of the law replaced the original and well-defined term "Polish death camps" to the "Polish Nation" and introduced penalties of up to three years in prison according to the Penalty Code for those who will disagree with this provision.

Lawmakers from opposition parties, top Polish experts and members of the international community, including the U.S. Department of State, have noted the serious limitations presented by such a provision to the Constitutional right to freedom of speech. The provision also represents PiS' attempt to re-write element of the country's unsavory history, which includes the fact that a number of Poles did collaborate with the German administration during the occupation and others "sold" hidden Jews to Nazis for some benefits. Despite this dark history, it is also true that Poles risked their own and their family's lives to help Jews hide (occupied Poland was the only country where Germans imposed the death penalty for anyone who helped the Jews). For example, in the Yad Vashem Holocaust Center in Jerusalem, Poles comprise the largest number of documented heroic people who helped Jewish people to survive during WWII (Righteous among the Nations). Ironically the current amendments to the IPN Act initiated a worldwide wave of hate against Poles and the term "Polish death camps" was mentioned not a few hundred times per year as in the past, but a million times per day during the worst of the backlash. At the same time, the numbers of anti-Semitic and anti-Israel comments are growing in Poland and abroad, undermining over three decades of hard work building good relations (SC) between Israel and Poland and between Jews and Poles worldwide – all of whom were victimized by German Nazis.

The IPN law also opened a new conflict between Poland and Ukraine by condemning Ukrainian nationalism, particularly the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which is historically responsible for massacres of Poles in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia. The Ukrainian Parliament condemned the new IPN legislation for its "distorted notion" of Ukrainian nationalism by grouping it with German Nazism and Soviet Stalinism. In fact, both nations – Poles and Ukrainians– suffered tremendously from German and Soviet totalitarian regimes. Ukrainian MPs were also concerned that the amended Act would strengthen anti-Ukrainian sentiments among Poles, threatening the safety of approximately 1 million Ukrainians who currently work in Poland. The irony is that Poland was the first country to recognize the independence of Ukraine in 1991, and until this point Ukrainians have regarded Poles as strong allies (high SC).

Poland's story illustrates the danger posed by populist-nationalist parties, particularly in the rather young democracies of CEE, when they win elections and start implementing their policies and changes in institutional structures. It worth mentioning that during the election campaign (2015), PiS successfully used false slogans such as "a country in ruins" (despite the fact that Poland was the most prosperous it had been in in its history) and "rising from its knees"

(to protest against Germany, the European Commission in Brussels and multinational corporations "commanding" the Polish economy and previous governments). These slogans and other efforts served to "cure" the populist-nationalists' inferiority complexes, but these tactics could destroy or seriously damaged good relations with neighboring countries and other friendly nations in a very short time. Poland is currently moving in isolation, destroying its traditional alliances and increasing threats to its security.

During our research on designing institutions for sustainable development in CEE (1990–1994) with Richard Bolan (University of MN, Humphrey School of Public Affairs) and our CEE partners, we focused heavily on the critical role of institutions in the transformation process from totalitarian system to democracy. We often cited German philosopher J. Habermas, who indicated how totalitarian institutions could affect basic aspects of societal life, turning socialization into alienation, turning culture into a strange party sub-culture and changing the original meaning of words into their opposite. Having lived my first 40 years in Poland I understood his message well, but I was sure that I would never experience it again. Unfortunately, I was wrong. In the last two years, most of the implementation of the PiS program called "*Dobra zmiana*" (good change) has proven to be bad, and even disastrous, for the country's sustainability. The country has quickly become a divided nation with many Poles immigrating to the West or considering immigration if things go further in this direction. The meaning of words are changing due to the recently changed institutions, e.g., the Ministry of Justice has become the ministry of injustice, the Ministry of Environment – the ministry of environmental destruction, the Ministry of Education – the ministry of deformation, etc. One of the best examples of the meaning change was when PiS established the National Institute of Freedom (*Narodowy Instytut Wolności*) in September 2017 to support NGOs friendly to PiS' ideology and cut off funding to and destroyed independent NGOs. (My Russian and Hungarian friends observed similar processes in their country several years ago.)

This case also shows the importance of high quality and stable institutions. Good institutions are products of rich social capital (SC), the result of heavy investment in building relations, participation from a significant portion of the population and consensus building among and for the people. This is a time-consuming process, but significantly increases the value of SC and produces high-quality institutions for the majority of the population. Institutional changes introduced by PiS in Poland are characterized by fast preparation and implementation without consideration or contributions from the opposition parties, consultation and dialogue with prominent academic or professional experts or even consulting their own layers. The institutional changes are designed and implemented simply to meet narrow party interests and sustain its power. These changes and resulting institutional designs are remarkably similar to the previous totalitarian system.

Poland's government has been led by Prime Minister (PM) Mateusz Morawiecki since January 9, 2018. He removed some of the most controversial ministers, including the Ministers of Environment, Defense and Foreign Affairs. He also introduced new ministers, mainly technocrats from his own circle of trusted people. From the very beginning the PM and his professional, well-dressed and educated ministers have lead with a "charm offensive" within the international community, from Brussels to Davos, to change the bad image of the previous government and repair some damage done by predecessors. Although they are more civilized and knowledgeable than the previous government, it is unlikely they can make any significant change to the institutional changes the PiS has already implemented. I wish they could, but it is unlikely they will be able to bring about anything other than superficial cosmetic changes to improve PR.

Unfortunately, my rather pessimistic predictions about the new PM quickly came true. On Sunday, February 18, 2018, his charm campaign dramatically ended at a security conference in Munich, Germany. At the end of a panel discussion an American journalist with Jewish roots asked PM Morawiecki whether he would be prosecuted according to the new Polish IPN law if he were to write about his mother story of how she overheard that her Polish neighbors were planning to give up her family's hiding spot to the Nazis. The PM, without empathy or civilized apology, speaking as the top representative of Poland, responded with "Of course it would not be punishable or criminal if you say there were Polish perpetrators, just like there were Jewish perpetrators, like there were Russian perpetrators, like there were Ukrainians, not just German perpetrators." This response outraged not only the international audience at the conference, but the world community, particularly in Israel and the US.

Here in Poland we were terribly surprised and ashamed that the PM made a statement that lacked any sensitivity to Holocaust victims. His response has initiated national soul searching and academic discussions analyzing whether it was a personal mistake or a clear policy statement to gain the support of the extreme nationalistic and anti-Semitic electorate within the PiS, and to their right, for the coming election. Whichever the case, the IPN law confirms that institutions introduced hastily and in a totalitarian fashion, as it was in this case (after midnight and without any serious discussion and consultations) produce the opposite result of what was intended – instead of defending the reputation of Poland, it has been terribly damaged worldwide, instead of strengthening ties with our neighbors and friendly countries built over decades of hard work, it has weakened them considerably, instead of promoting Poles as good world citizens, it has isolated us from the global civilized community.

In conclusion, the institutional changes occurring in Poland indicate it is clear that we need to include in our research and in the practice of policy design, implementation and evaluation a fourth element in the criteria for sustainability – Sustainable Institutions –emphasizing the importance of a quadruple-bottom-line (QBL) to protect our democracies and economies from populism and nationalism. Otherwise, the world may witness many more examples where countries move quickly from prosperity to crisis, from role-models to troublemakers.

This is an urgent challenge for all of us, and in particular for academia to identify reasons and propose effective solutions. Collaborative academic research can help answer many questions related to the current crisis, including the following: (1) How to identify emerging threats of populism and nationalism and respond to them effectively? (2) How to educate current and future generations – build HC – to make them immune to such disastrous ideologies? (3) How to accelerate building social capital – the source of trust and the foundation for sustainable institutions? (4) How to restore damaged SC within a nation and with other nations (e.g., Poles and Jews, Poles and Ukrainians)? (5) How to redesign the political process of electing representatives and keep them responsible for sustainable solutions?

Notes on Democracy

G. Gutenschwager
February 2018

The *Scientific American* published a brief article, "The Tribalism of Truth" by Mathew Fisher, Joshua Knobe, Brent Strickland and Frank C. Keil (Feb. 2018, pp. 44-47), which posed the issue of how people argue about controversial questions. That is, they either argue to **win** or they argue to **learn**. Usually, if they argue to win, they believe that there is one and only one correct answer to the question at hand, and that all others are simply wrong. If they argue to learn, they usually believe that there may be several correct answers to a question and that learning from others' viewpoints should allow a compromise that is better informed. The former is labeled 'objectivists' by the authors and the latter 'relativists'.

It was this article that focused my thinking on this topic and suggested to me that most of the major systems of thought that govern the western world today are diametrically opposed to the idea of democracy. Strongly held opinions, based either in science, religion, ideology or even Wikipedia, are likely to urge people to argue to win. The Indian parable, "The Blind Men and the Elephant", is not likely to be appreciated by such people. Indeed, they will interpret any response that is not simply total agreement with their position as a challenge and an argument that must be won over. The idea of relativity is quite unacceptable. This is not to say that extreme relativism, such as that found in some versions of postmodernism is any more acceptable. Indeed, Aristotle's "Measure in All Things", must still be the motto, whatever the situation.

Democracy must be based on the idea that there may be several truths concerning a particular social topic, social meant in the broad sense as to include all political, economic or broadly cultural topics, as well. This is because human beings are conscious beings in communication with each other and potentially able at any given moment to perceive the same things in very different ways. Gestalt psychology has shown this quite graphically and Thomas Kuhn's book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* is also illustrative of this idea. We also have more recent discussions of this topic by Rupert Sheldrake on Morphic Resonance, carrying the discussion further into the philosophy of science, itself. Democratic argumentation must be able to accommodate these varied 'truths' in compromises that resolve conflict. The criteria for judging these compromises philosophically must be both scientific **and moral,** remembering Plato's claim that any science without a sense of justice is not wisdom, but mere cunning.

I have argued in the past that this puts science in an heuristic rather than in a deterministic role in resolving *social* conflict, something which can be quite threatening to those who require certainty in their intellectual world. In phenomenological terms, it is the role of science to help us understand objective reality, as it is the role of art to help us understand subjective reality. Indeed, the artist has been given the right to point out contradictions between what we **think** we are doing and what we are actually doing. It is the role of philosophy to combine these understandings so as to help us **learn** what we should do. This means that science may be extremely important in pointing out the many deterministic events in the natural world. It also means that science can be extremely useful in pointing out the many unintended and/or unanticipated consequences of human actions in the social world. But it does not mean that there is one, and only one correct solution to a social problem, whether in mathematical terms or not.

The several schools of economic thought illustrate this problem very well. Economics contains a series of ontological and epistemological assumptions. These assumptions, as the word implies, are not examined empirically, but are assumed to be true. They are ideological in nature, growing out of the experience with mercantilism and industrialization following the renaissance, and first formalized by Adam Smith in the late 18th century. They have serious moral implications as does any ideology, but these implications are ignored on the assumption that economics is a science, searching for universal laws. According to this assumption human behavior is a product of the deterministic and mechanistic nature of these laws: there is, therefore, no possibility of free will or moral responsibility related to this behavior. What meaning can individualism and the 'free market' have in such a context?

Economics would like to be seen as the physics of social science, even if it requires "mathematizing" to establish this symbolic status in the social and academic world. It essentially ignores human beings, presenting them as the caricature, "economic man", while assuming that his well-being depends only upon the accumulation of money. His happiness is assumed to be equal to wealth, with little empirical research to establish the limitations of this framework (Gender is intended, as economics is largely a male science; indeed, the very idea of economics as somehow separate from the rest of society is to a large extent a product of the compartmentalized male brain, as attested to by the research reported in Mark Gungor's book and in his YouTube presentations). This search for certainty and its 'arguing to win' severely limit the democratic potential of economics as a social science. Indeed, we are currently suffering from these limitations in our current pseudo-scientific, manmade economic crisis.
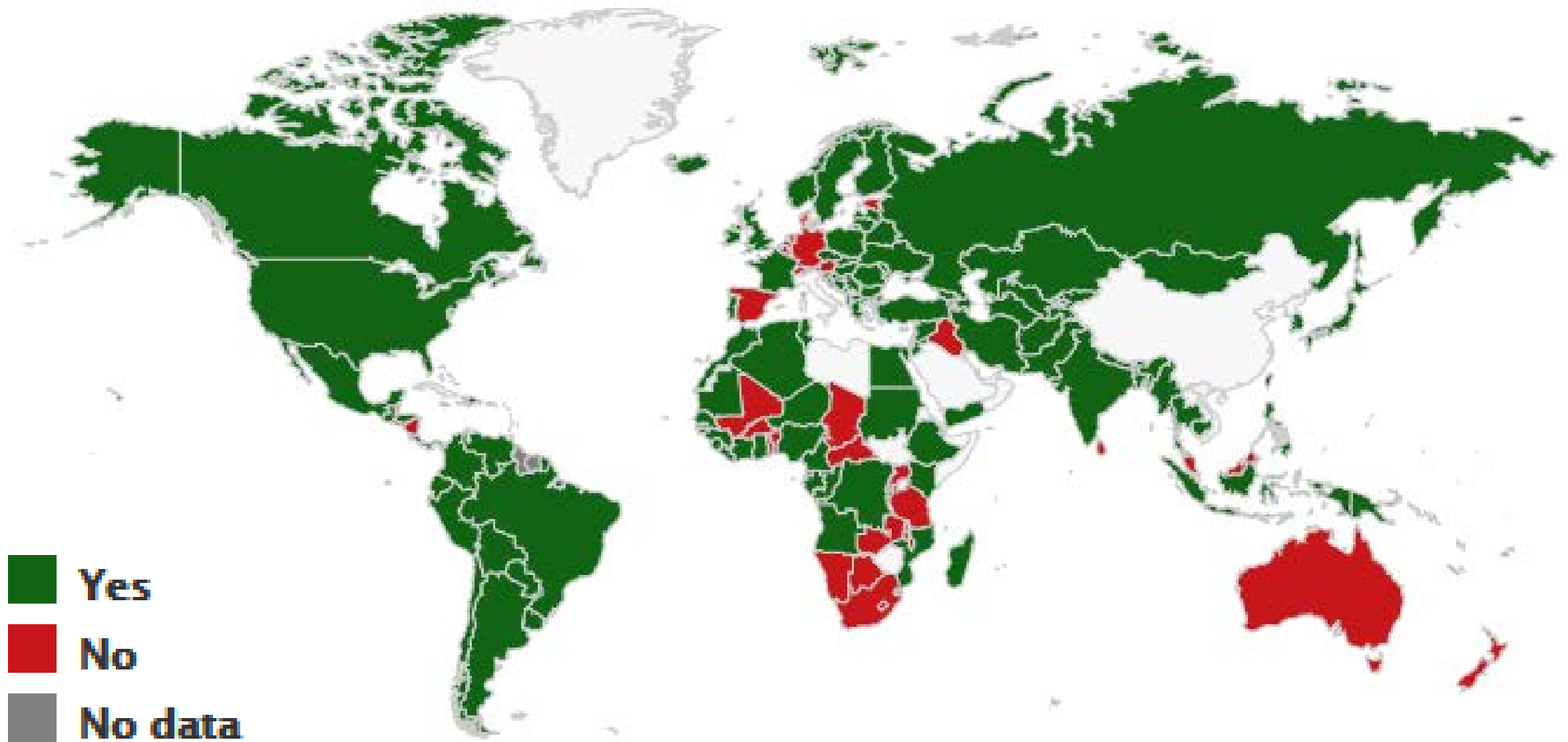
In short, determinism and its need for certainty are quite antithetical to democracy. Our discussion on the future of democracy must at some point confront this dilemma.
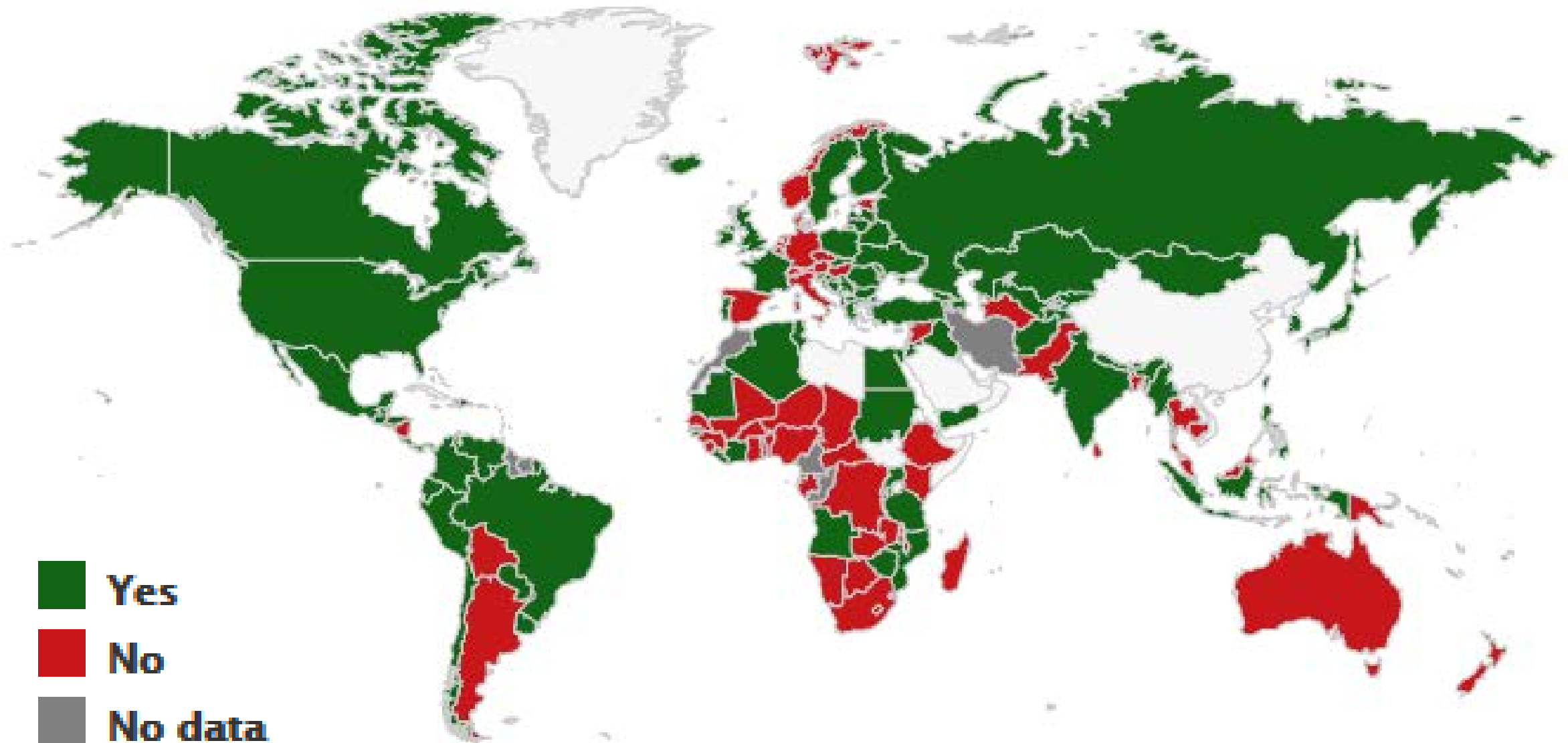
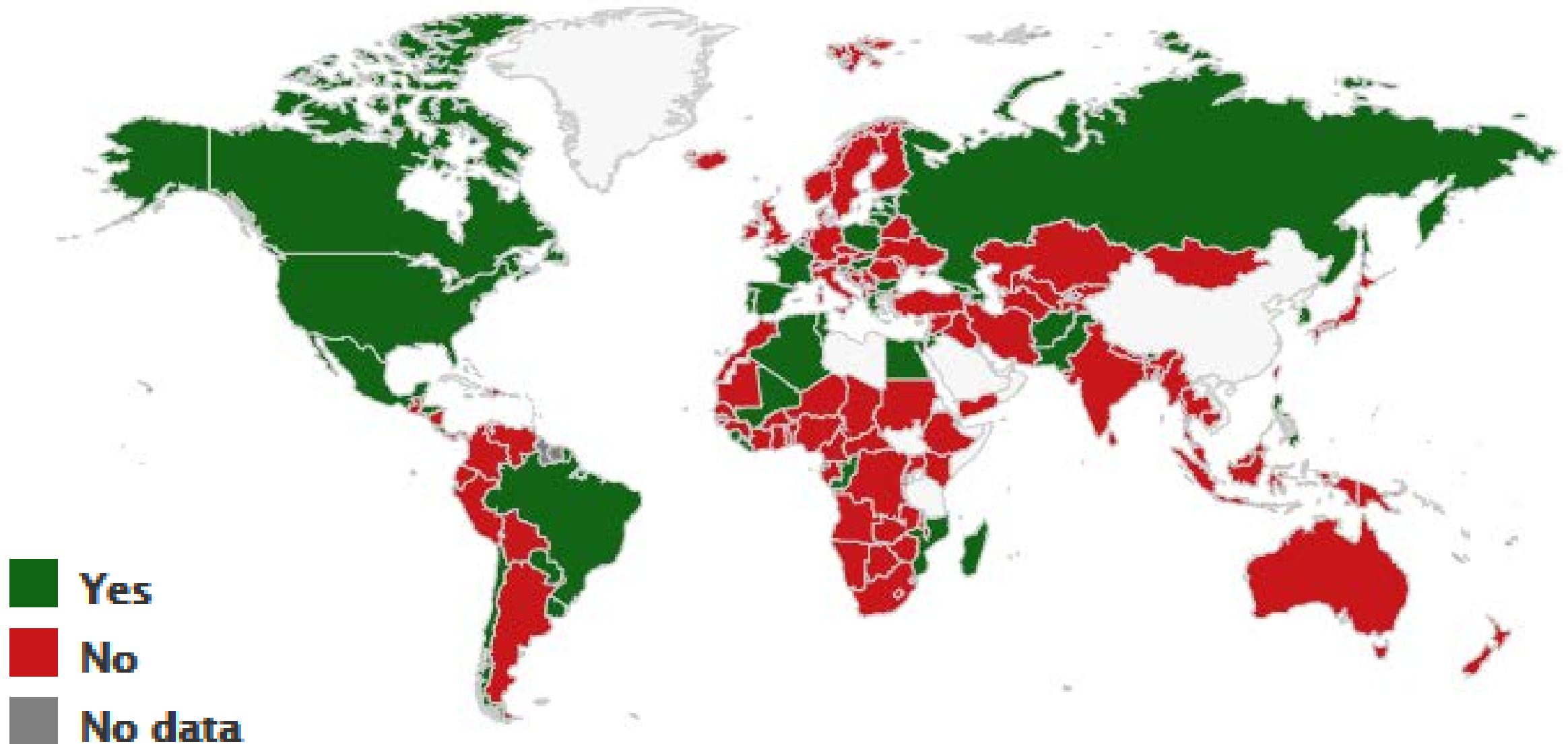# Money in Politics

Global practices – country-wise

https://www.idea.int/data-tools/question-view/527

Ban on donations from foreign interests to political parties

Yes

No

No data

Ban on donations from foreign interests to candidates

Yes
No
No data

Ban on corporate donations to political parties

Yes
No
No data

Ban on corporate donations to candidates

Legend:
- **Yes** (green)
- **No** (red)
- **No data** (grey)

Ban on anonymous donations to political parties

Legend:
- Yes (green)
- No (red)
- No data (gray)
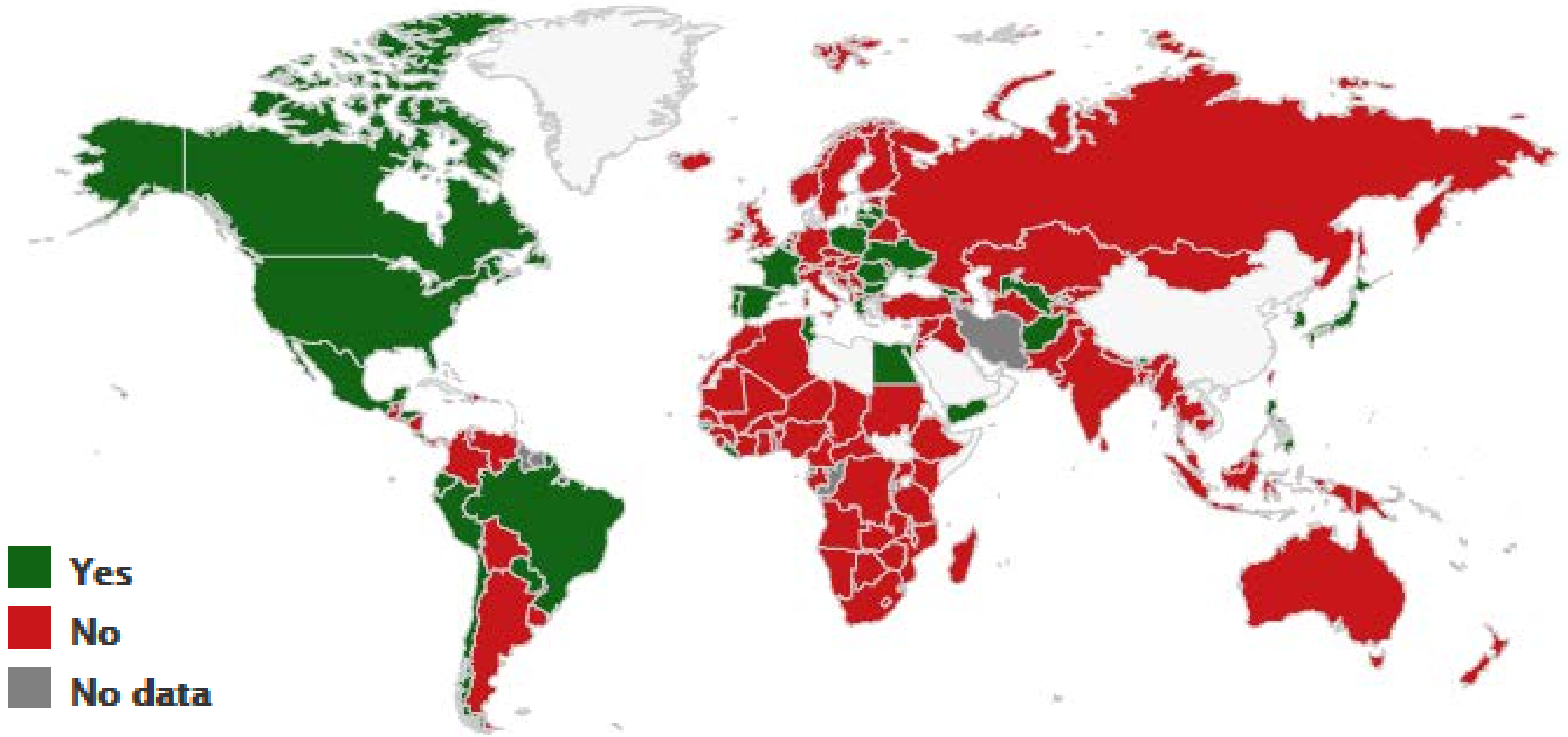
Ban on anonymous donations to candidates

Yes
No
No data
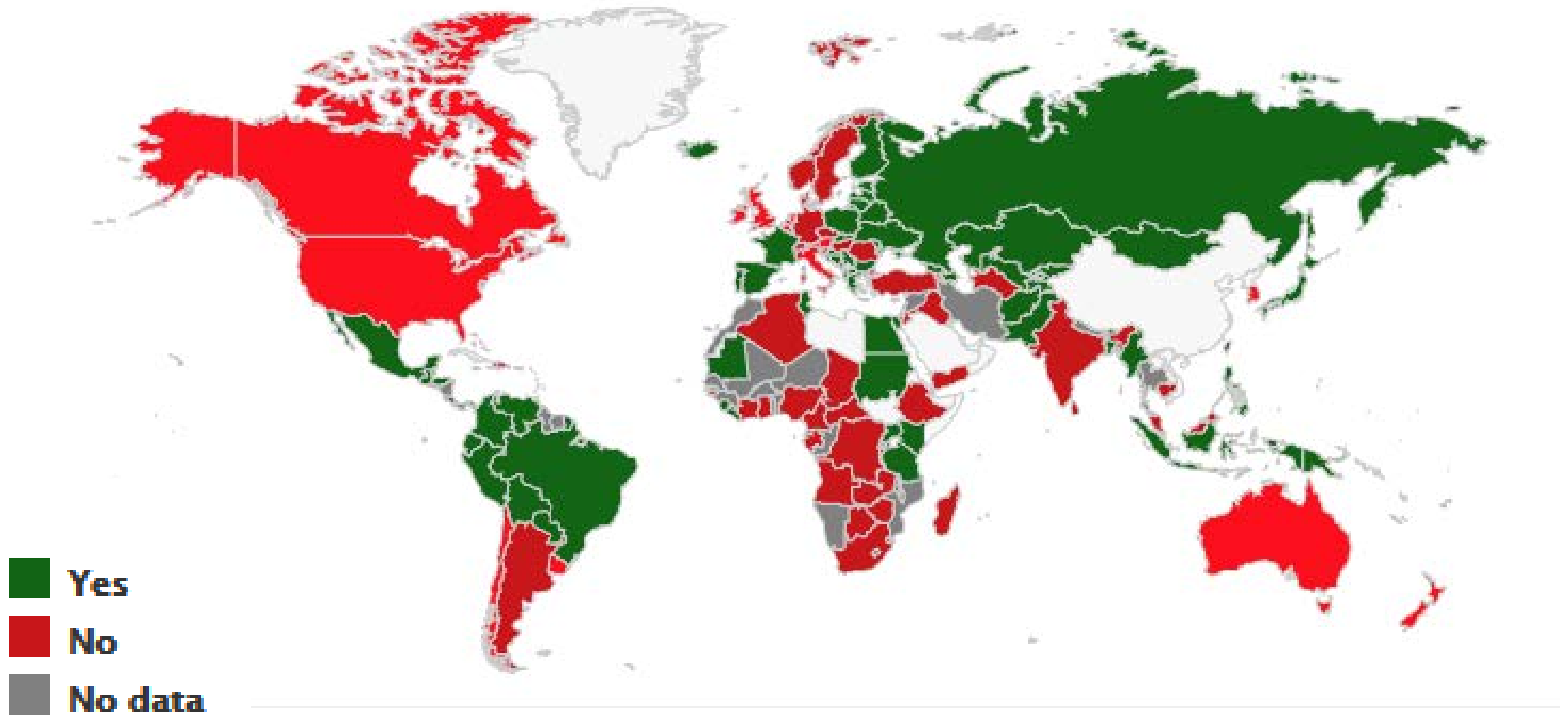
Provisions for direct public funding to political parties

Legend:
- Yes, regularly provided funding
- Yes, both regularly provided funding and in relation to campaigns
- Yes, in relation to campaigns
- No
- No data
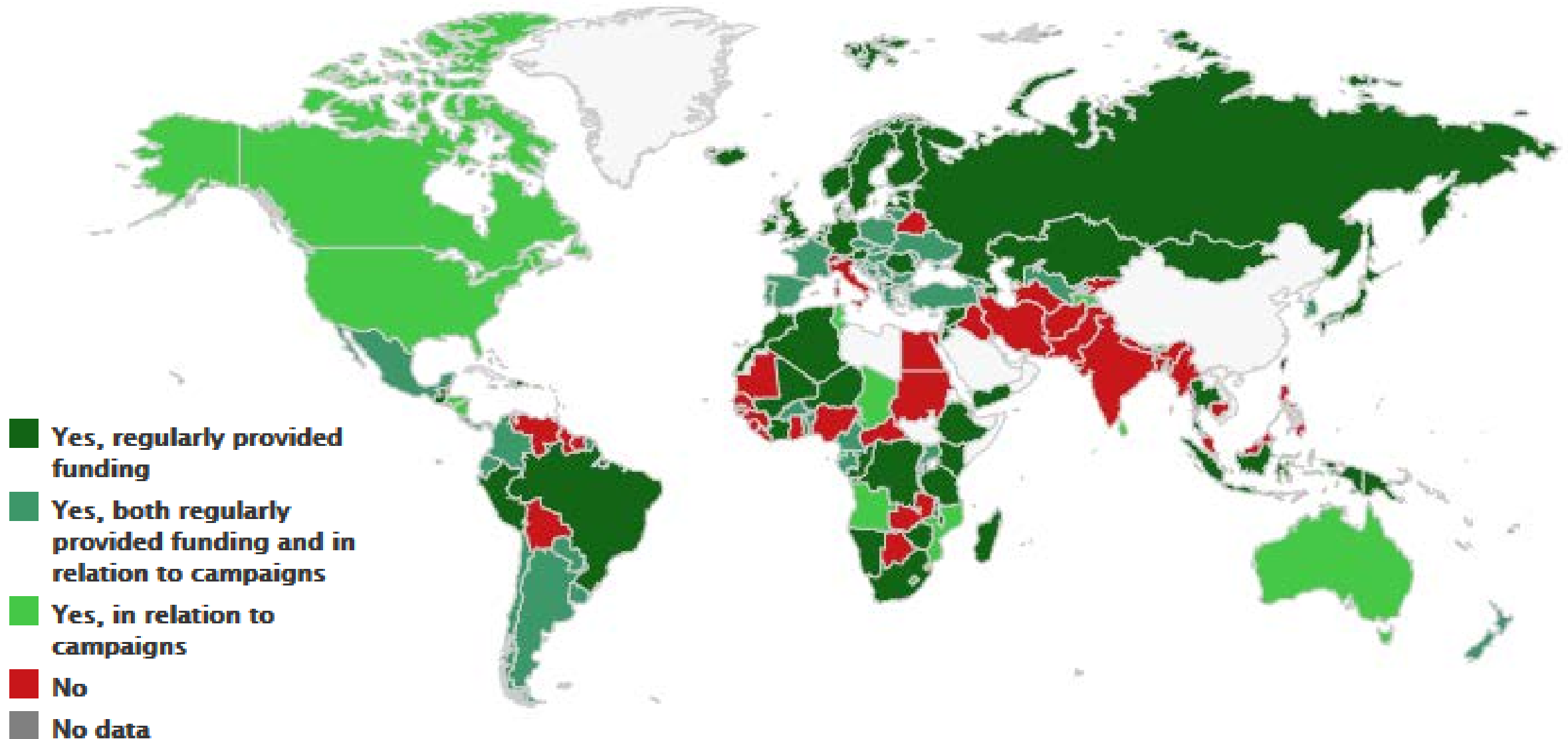
Free/subsidized access to media for political parties

Legend:
- **Yes** (green)
- **No** (red)
- **No data** (gray)
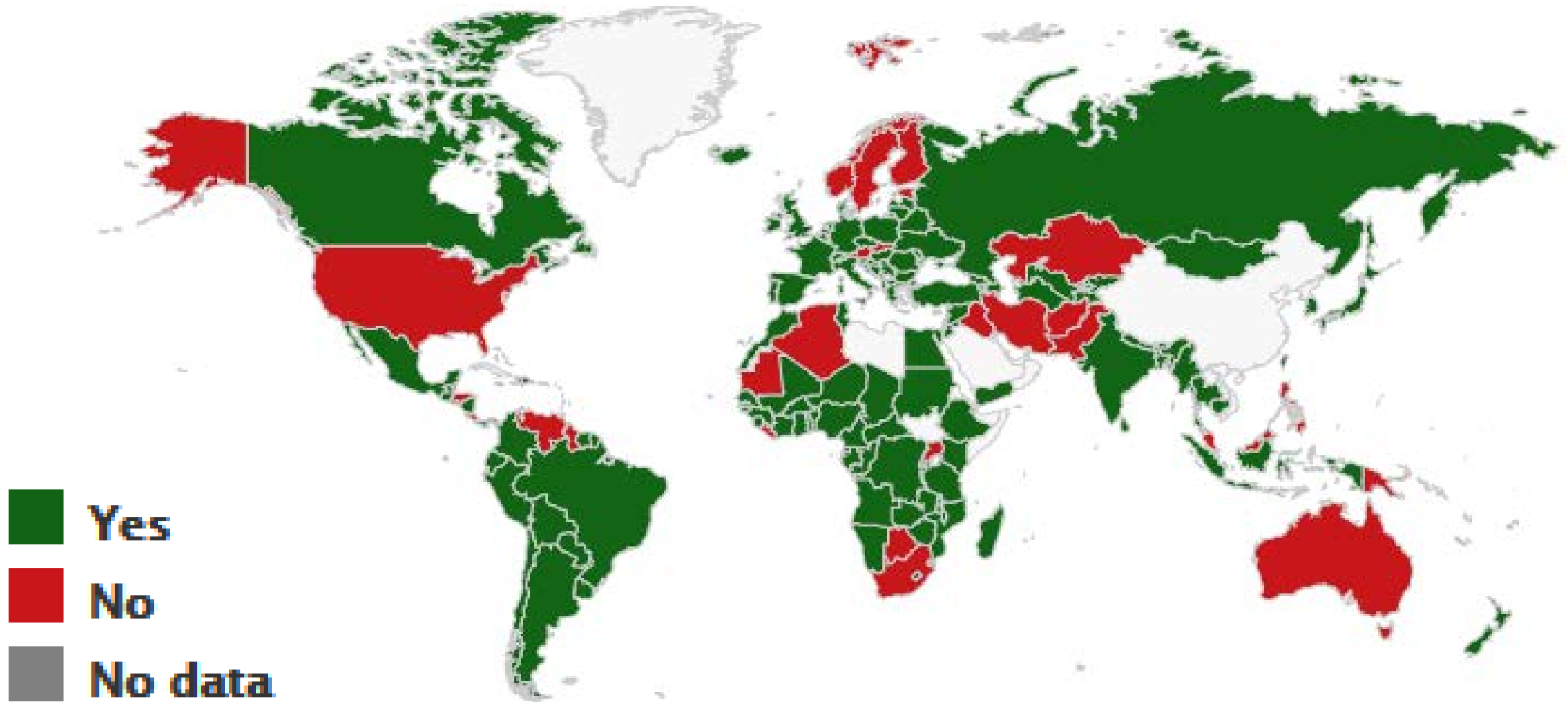
Free or subsidized access to media for candidates

Legend:
- Yes (green)
- No (red)
- No data (gray)

29

Ban on vote buying

Yes (green)
No (red)
No data (grey)
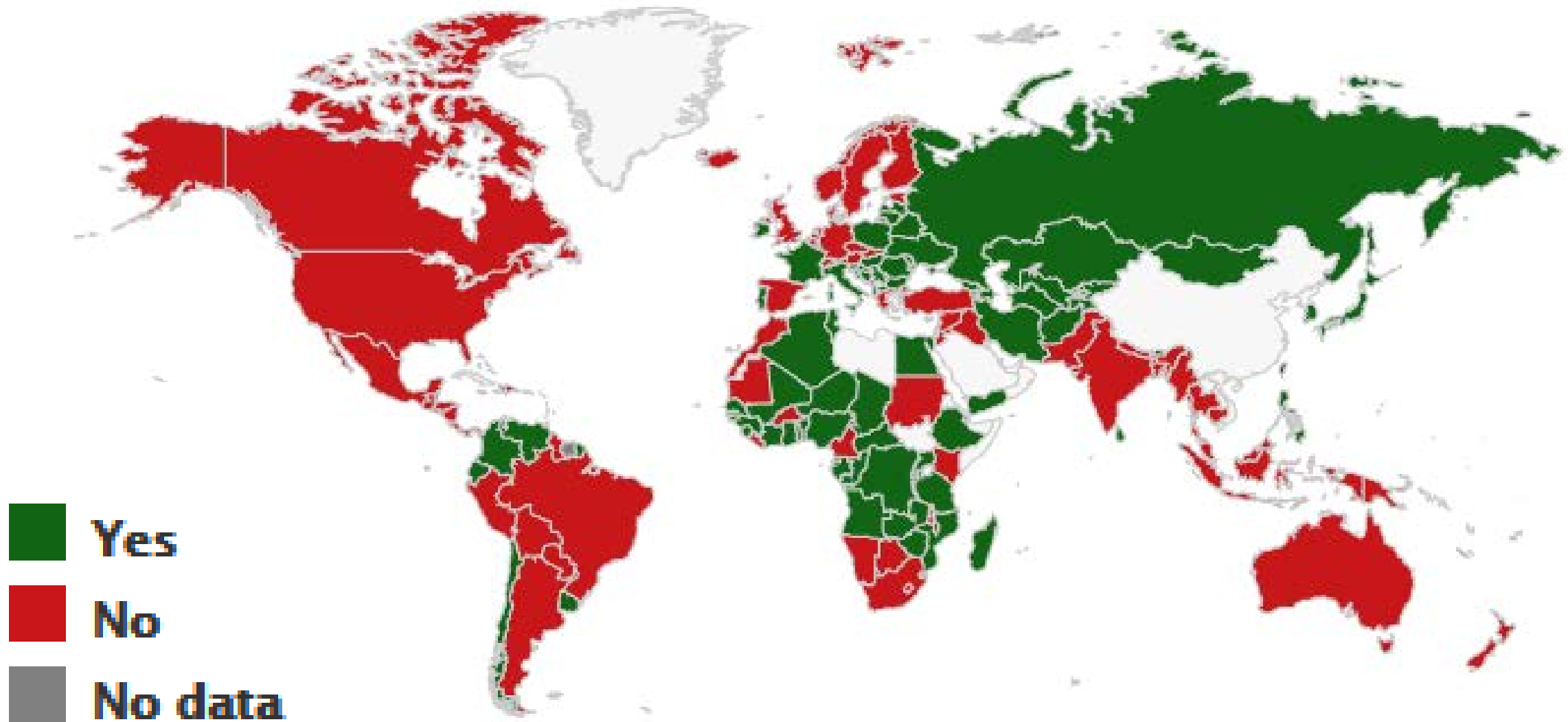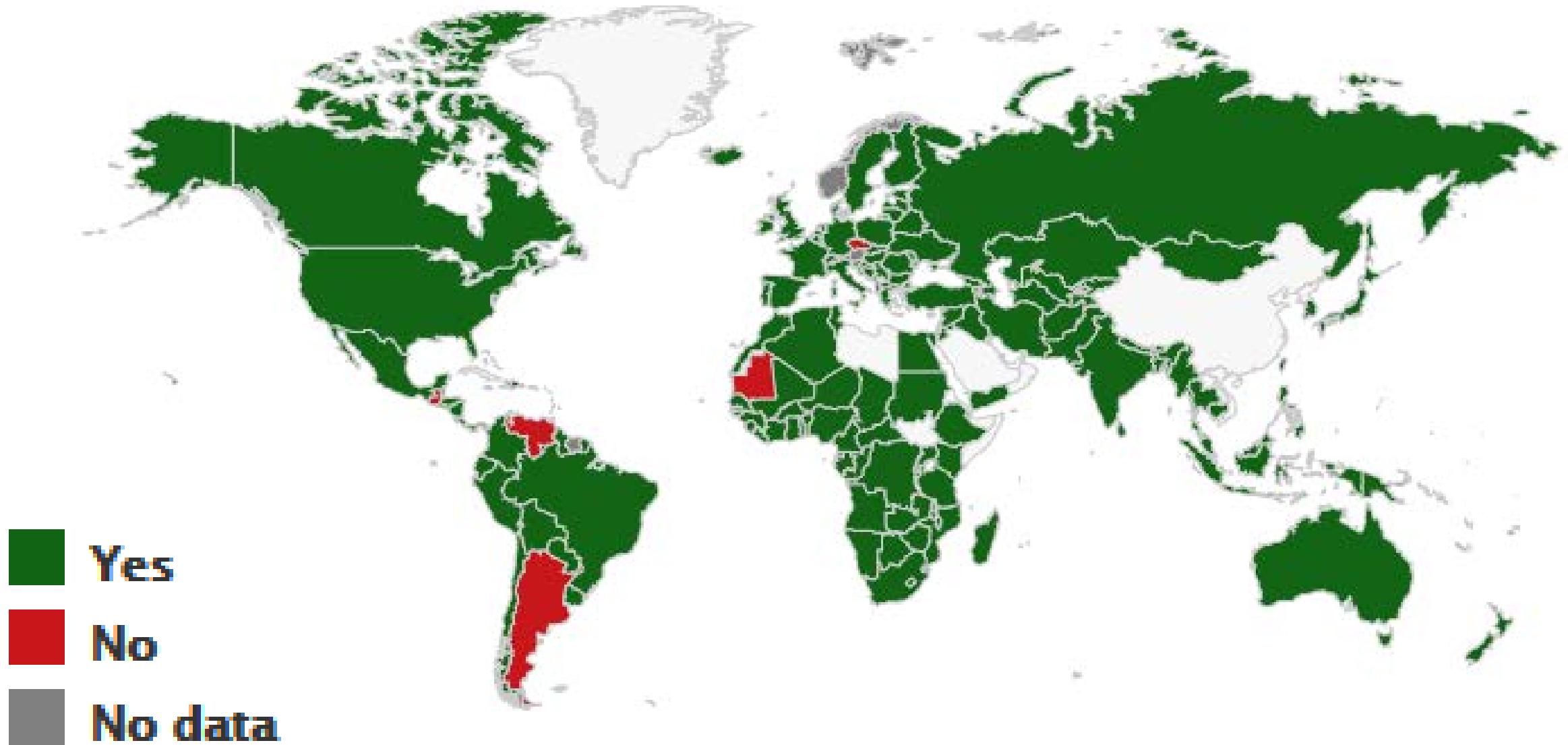
Limits on the amount a political party can spend

Yes
No
No data
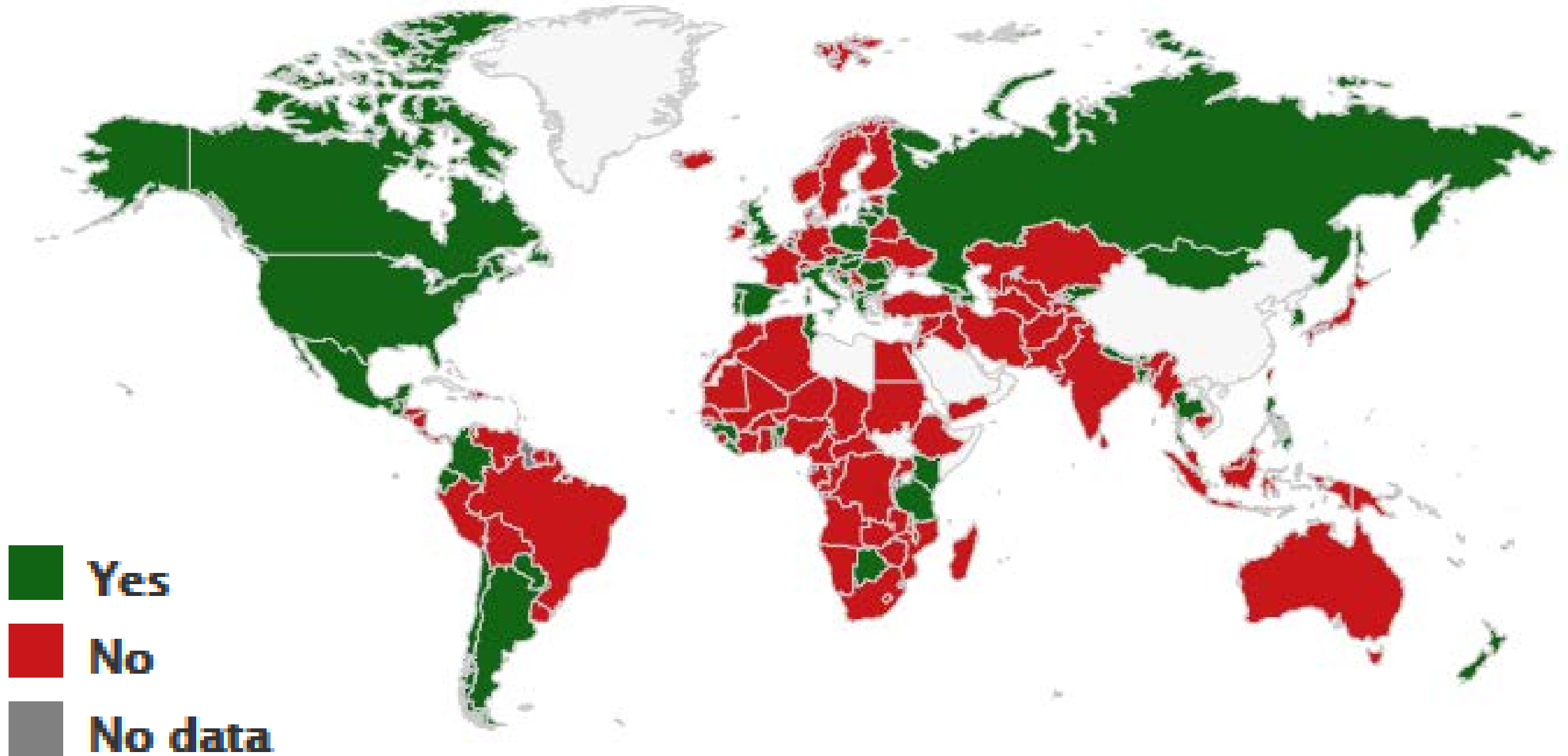
Limits on the amount a candidate can spend

Yes (green)
No (red)
No data (gray)
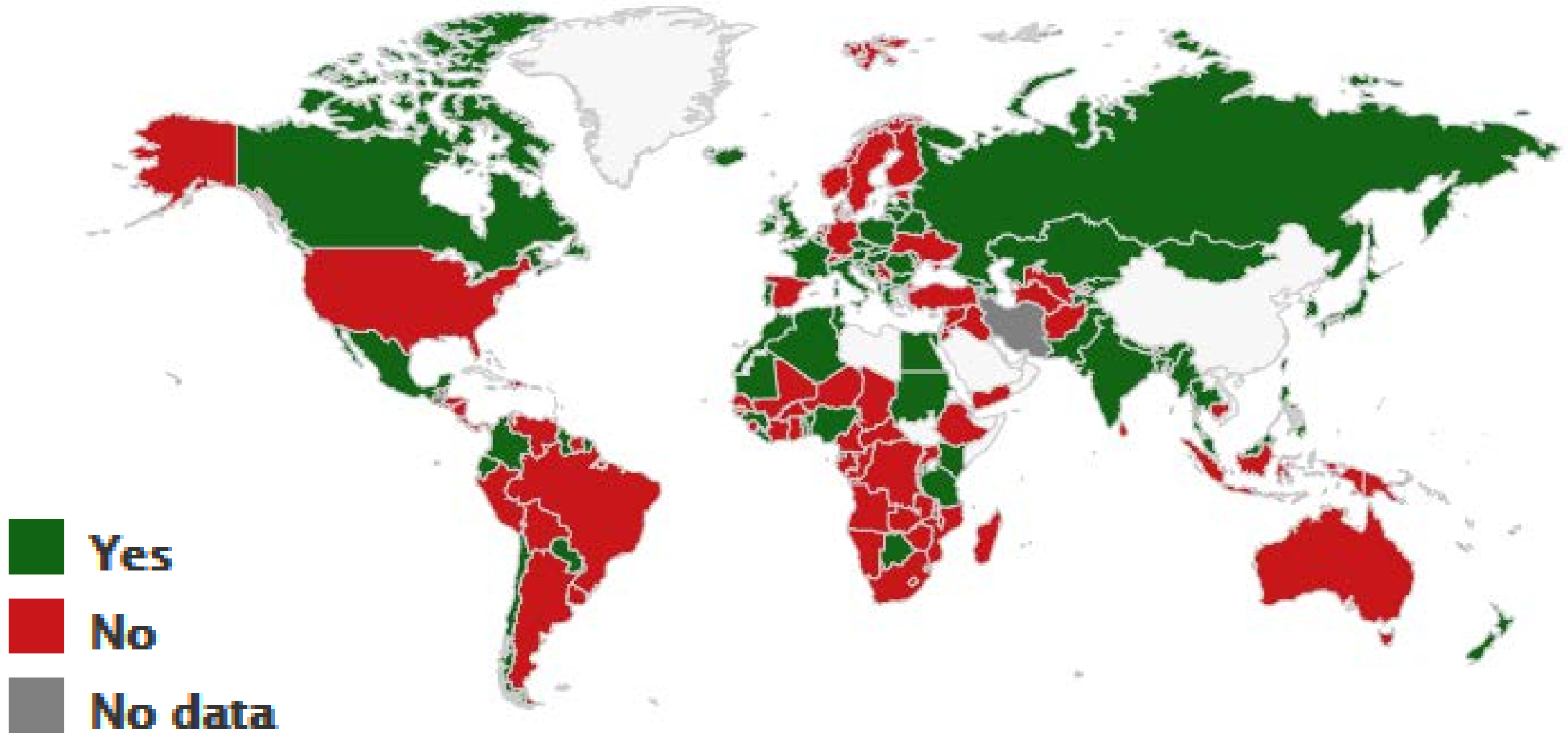
Regular reports by political parties on their finances

Legend:
- **Yes** (green)
- **No** (red)
- **No data** (grey)
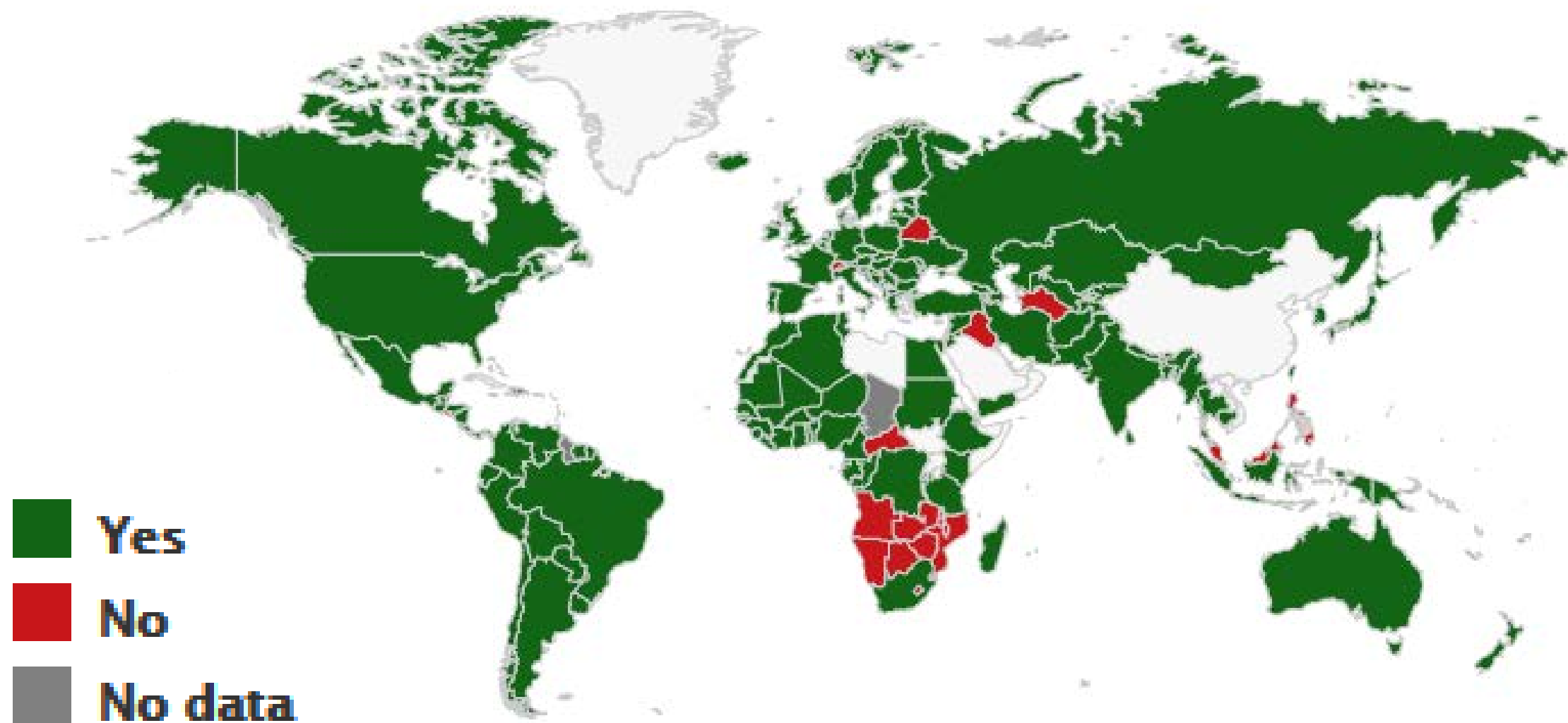
Political parties must report on election campaign finances

Legend:
- **Yes** (green)
- **No** (red)
- **No data** (grey)
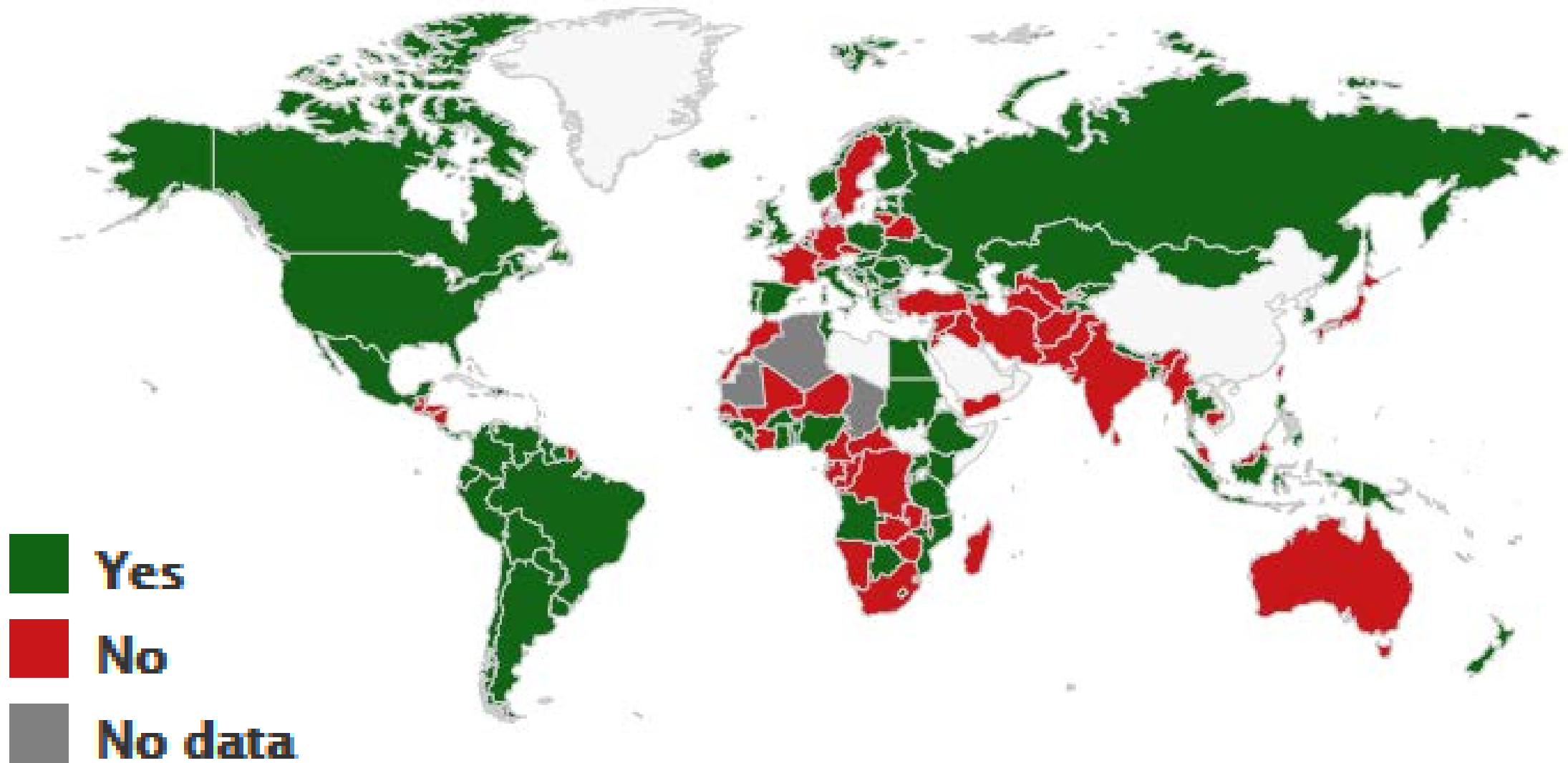
Candidates have to report on their campaign finances

Yes
No
No data
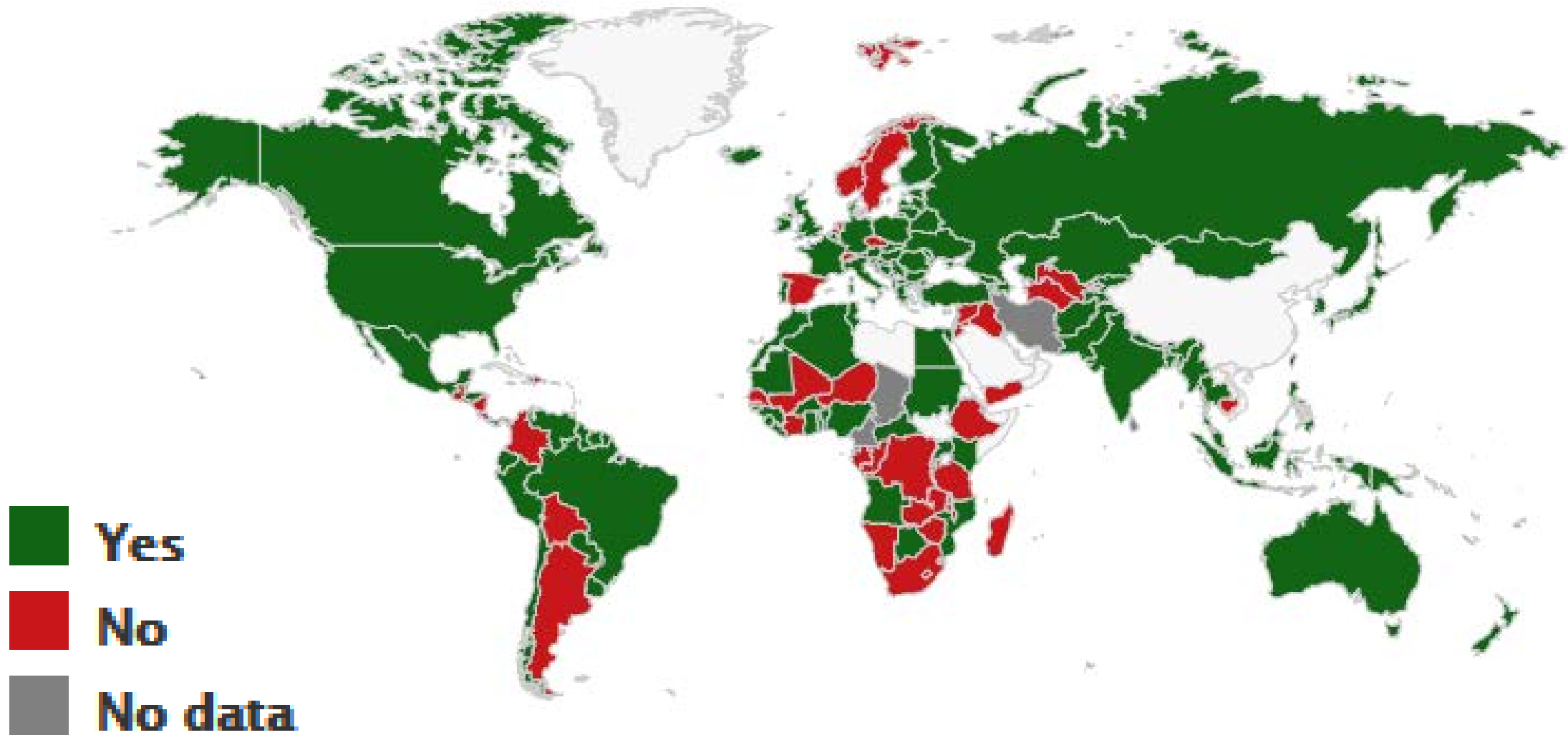
Public access to reports from p. parties and/or candidates

Legend:
- Green: Yes
- Red: No
- Grey: No data
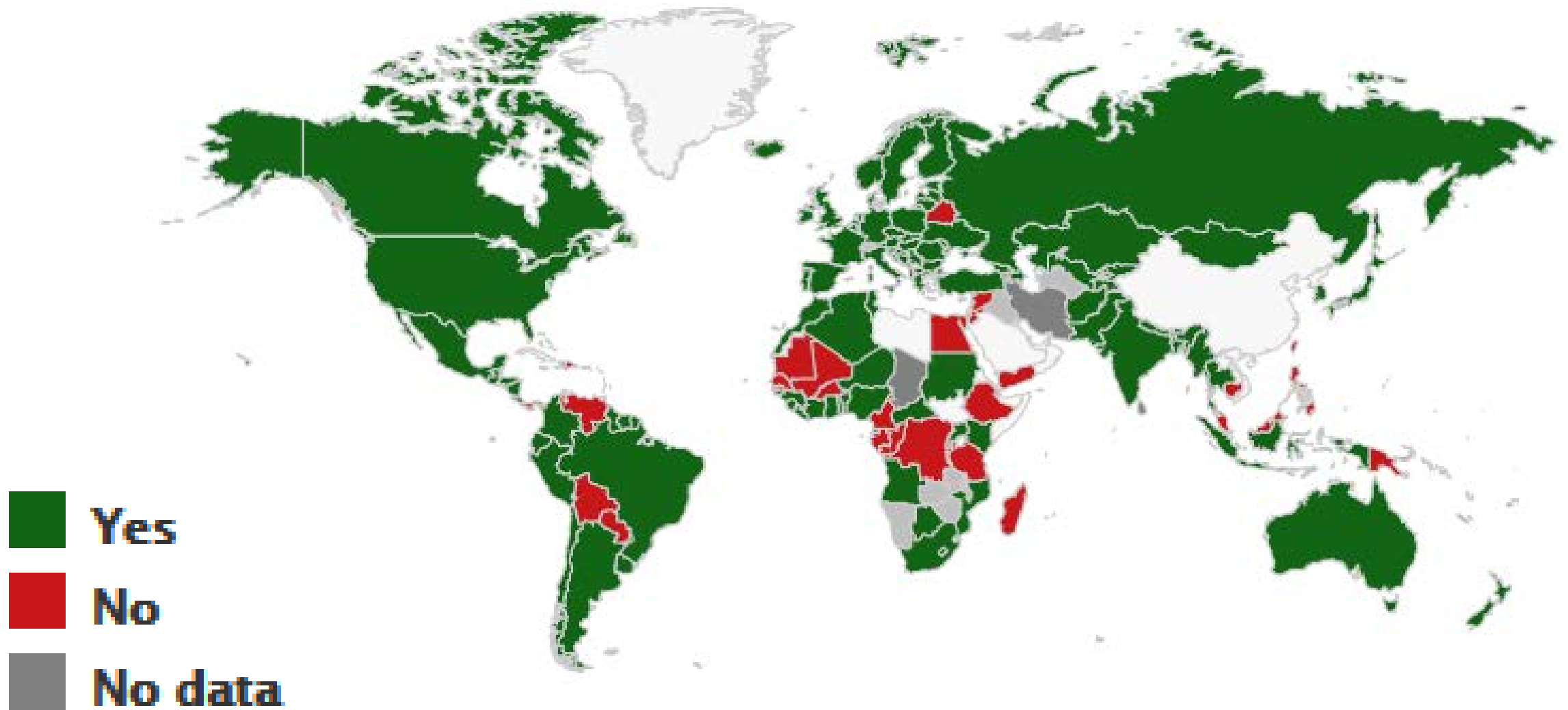
Declaration of Purpose of the Independent Constitutionalists UK (ICUK)

(www.icuk.life)

Towards a

PEOPLE'S POLITICAL-ECONOMY OF INCLUSIVE TRUSTEESHIP

ICUK is a movement and political process to create a Constitution for the UK that instils integrity into Parliamentary debates, offers citizens participative representative democracy, voters a proportional electoral system and the people the means to build a just economy that reduces inequality and conserves and replenishes planetary resources.

This Declaration is intended to be used as a meta-narrative and source of inspiration for the preparation of individual Constituency Manifestos by Constitutionalist and other Independent (1) parliamentary candidates, who, sharing these principles, values and goals and by reason of their competence, integrity and civil experience shall stand in future elections.

PREAMBLE
Democracy is the art of thinking independently together –
in the UK there is a way of making it achievable

It is our belief that moral purpose, trust and belonging are the essence of social being, that the way we are governed is a matter of concern for every citizen and that entitlement to rights entails shared responsibility for the collective creation of the means for their enjoyment. We aim to use the system, to become the system, to change the system, to recover trust.

Our elective representative democracy in Westminster has ceased to represent the interests of the people adequately. Successive Acts of Parliament that have created our uncodified constitution have failed to ensure that the centralised decision-making power accorded to Parliament justly expresses the will of the people (2).

This democratic deficit is revealed in three ways. Many voters find it difficult to question the truthfulness of political claims in the mainstream and social media. The first-past-the-post electoral system can result in the votes cast bearing little resemblance to the party-political complexion of parliament and in MPs representing a minority of constituency residents. Winner-loser competition between political parties generates tribal loyalties which combine with lobbying pressures causing MPs to disregard the opinions and needs they hear from their constituents.

Voters thus feel powerless and angry. Governing the country in these confrontational and ritualized ways is not in keeping with the behaviour of the people around them. Most people are remarkably social and unselfish. They cooperate more often than create discord, and volunteer supporters of beneficial causes are not hard to find in streets and villages across the country.

Trust in politicians has thus been severely eroded by this stark contrast. But these negatives can be redeemed by groups of constituency citizens using the system, to become the system, to change the system, to recover trust, and by invoking People Sovereignty (3) underpinned by the notion of Constitutional Supremacy (3) entrenched in a **Written and Living Constitution.**

We therefore propose:

I. SYSTEMIC POLITICAL REFORM

1. That the prevailing "**elective**" representative democracy whereby citizen participation is confined to voting in local or general elections at distant intervals be replaced by "**participative**" representative democracy. This combines the ongoing involvement of citizens in the management of public affairs with genuine bottom-up representation, mandated and accountable.

2. That current adversarial, bipolar party-politics and the winner-loser point-scoring Westminster culture should now give way to agreement and consensus creation by independent MPs - **loyalty to constituents** must take precedence over party allegiance and compliance with party disciplines.

3. That in future elections constituents ask candidates if they accept an ethical code (4) for elected representatives.

4. That, in light of their comparative advantages, the processes whereby, at whatever level, representatives can be selected for or removed from office - election, sortition (selection by lots), combinations thereof, rotation, renewal and recall - be the subject of in-depth public debate and scrutiny. In this way, **functional structures**, mandated and accountable, based where possible on time-limited allocation of responsibilities, can be made to replace the **fixed hierarchies** that cause status-creation and corruption.

5. That the existing First-Past-the-Post electoral system be reformed as a matter of urgency and moved toward **proportionality,** thus to obtain greater correlation of votes cast with the resulting representation.

6. That henceforth in all elections and, where resorted to, in referendums (5), the people be **responsibly** prepared to make informed choices before voting.

7. That the franchise for all elections and referendums be a settled residency (6) period for citizens aged 16 years and over.

8. That, where decision by simple majority vote is stipulated, constitutional checks and balances combine with adequate citizen preparation to protect minority interests.

9. That a fair political-funding (7) system for the preparation of elections and referendums be established that upholds the « one person one vote » principle and prevents the unfair use of personal and/or institutional wealth to leverage political influence.

II. A WRITTEN CONSTITUTION FOR THE UK

10. That the principle of Parliamentary Sovereignty (8) (of undemocratic origin) by which we are currently governed be replaced by that of **People Sovereignty** underpinned by **Constitutional Supremacy** and entrenched in a **Written and Living Constitution**.

11. That the initial purpose of Constitutionalist and other Independent MPs when elected to Parliament, either through occupancy of a majority of seats or of a significant proportion thereof, shall be to work for:

(a) responsible preparation and holding of a referendum on whether the people of the United Kingdom wish to continue with parliamentary sovereignty or adopt people sovereignty underpinned by a new principle of constitutional supremacy; and

(b) if the latter, establishment of an **Advisory Constitutional Convention**, whose task shall be, through widespread citizen participation combined with expert opinion, to advise the Westminster Parliament and government on the drafting of a new Constitution.

12. That said Draft Constitution make provision inter alia for:

(a) the existing Supreme Court to act henceforth as a **UK Constitutional Court or Council**, empowered with major new constitutional responsibilities, including power to declare unconstitutional and therefore invalid any laws that violate the Constitution ;

(b) special procedures for amending the Constitution's provisions;

(c) clear specification of the roles and functions of the branches of government and of civil society;

(d) expression of the shared values of the people of the United Kingdom, and of the principles of true democratic self-governance, thus serving as a compass to guide the people in their moral aspiration and direction of political travel;

(e) following public deliberation, the adoption of the said Draft Constitution by the people of United Kingdom in a responsibly prepared referendum and subsequently its enactment into UK law by Act of Parliament;

(f) inclusion in the voting papers for said referendum of adoption of an option for continuation of the House of Windsor as titular head of the United Kingdom following its oath of allegiance to the Constitution.

III. SYSTEMIC RENEWAL OF THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

13. That Independent parliamentary candidates, supported by constitutional change and constitutionally established citizen participation, shall campaign for the creation of a People's Political-Economy of Inclusive Trusteeship (9) which upholds the values and principles set out in this Declaration. Further, said process of creation shall include democratic scrutiny and citizen deliberation of *inter alia* the policy options set out hereafter:

(a) **Economic Sanity** Whereby the production and distribution of goods and services is organized according to planetary sustainable patterns (e.g. the Circular Economy (10));

(b) **Measuring Economic Efficiency** Replacement of GDP as a measure of the UK's wealth by the UN's Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI), and other metrics such as the Inclusive Wealth Index (IWI);

(c) **Economic Inclusion & Distributive Justice** Building social justice into the process of wealth and value creation through inclusion, thus enabling people to benefit directly from this process as opposed to having to rely on benefits downstream.

(d) **Reform of the existing Monetary System (11) and renewal of Public Oversight of Finance**
Convinced that the current financial and monetary "mess" is the result of almost 40 years of dominant economic thinking that (1) money, finance, and markets are neutral, and know best; that (2) banking and finance should be unconstrained, and (3) that central banks and governments should simply step out of the way, Constitutionalists propose:
• **Promotion of public understanding** of money, banking and finance and their uses, which releases the latter from the control of a supposedly "neutral" technocracy and exposes the poor understanding and misconceptions of classical and neoliberal economics;
• **Development of regulations** that make possible public control and oversight of finance so that finance serves people and the productive economy rather than the speculative interests of a minority;
• **Democratic deliberation towards consensus on**, among other issues: Money Creation • Credit/Debt • Interest • Central-Bank and Real Interest Rates • Monetary Financing (People's Quantitative Easing) • a debt-free Sovereign Money (12) System •

Community Currencies • Credit Guidance and the respective roles of Public Finance Institutions and Private Banks • Government-supplied Safe Assets • and International Capital Controls.

(e) **Ecological Transition** Promotion of a healthy environment and of pubic awareness through inclusion, (e.g. Democratisation of renewable energy production (13)); This provision is currently under discussion in the Strategy Forum .

(f) **Reform of the existing Fiscal System (14) and Funding of Public Investment**:
Knowing that one of the principal functions of government is the funding of public services through, among other sources of income, taxation, and convinced that governments must take the lead in developing effective tax regulation rather than relying on self-regulation and negotiation, Constitutionalists propose:

• **Promotion of public understanding** of location value, of land use and ownership, and of the concepts of "good" and "bad" sources of public revenue;

• **Democratic deliberation towards consensus on:**
- *An Annual Ground Rent or Land Value Charge* - a rental, that is, on all private land use (1) as a significant means of financing the public services to which that land gives access and (2) as a disincentive to property ownership for purely speculative purposes, in particular "land-banking" (the holding of land "out of use");
- *Measures to ensure* the fair levying of "good" revenue raisers, and effective regulations to prevent global tax avoidance by individuals and multi-national corporations.

• **Public Investment** in the localisation and balanced regionalisation of public services: education, social care (including family support and services for older people), health, and social housing;

(g) **Social Responsibility** A requirement that companies, as co-creators of the country's wealth, declare their public benefit purpose and ownership obligations, and abide by them, thus diminishing their financial commitment to disconnected shareholding that limits their research, development and innovative capabilities;

(h) **Subsidiarity** Decisions affecting the lives and management of communities shall, where and whenever possible, be taken by those more directly concerned by the consequences of such decisions;

(i) **Regionalisation** In which over time capital cities, subregions and districts are granted statutory powers within boundaries that are formalised through participative referendums;

(j) **Accountability** All public institutions to be endowed each with its own charter, including **Trust Status** for public utilities such as the NHS and the BBC, the latter being required to support citizen deliberation prior to elections and referendums;

(k) **Equality** To the equal political and legal status of all citizens be added their right to equality of opportunity, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, race, belief or other arbitrary form of discrimination;

(l) **Citizens' Rights** Extension of the International Bill of Human Rights (accompanied by a Citizen Code of Responsibilities), to include a commitment to life-long learning and quality of work. Democratic scrutiny of the idea of a Citizen's Dividend (15);

(m) **The Commons** Prevention of all further sequestration and expropriation of public space and amenities, whereby to preserve existing commons as expressed in land and rights;

(n) **Education** In constitutional literacy, democratic practice and civics in all schools and places of education.

(o) **Big-Data, Technological Innovation and the Political Economy** The current rising-tide of digital and technological innovation is seen by some as a source of unbounded

opportunity, generative of new forms of political organization, as something upon which the survival of our species will ultimately depend.   Others see it as immersive, intrusive, disruptive, inscrutable, beyond democratic oversight and ultimately destructive of what is valued in human society and even of human kind itself.

For Constitutionalists, however, three things are important:

(1) Technology is never deterministic, and can be used to create very different kinds of society. Deciding which of these to realise may well be the most important moral challenge humankind will have to face in the coming decades.   Humanity has become a major agent in shaping the circumstances of its own existence, and for this reason if for no other, the decisions it makes in devising a future for itself within its planetary habitat will be matters of *political choice* and not of engineering or scientific inevitability.

(2) The survival of our species will depend not on *palliative* technological fixes but on *curative* systemic and mindset change, on our being able to move away from our current unsustainable, growth-based system that the generates inequality and has humans competing with each other for increasingly scare resources.   It will depend, ultimately, on our ability to subject accelerating technological change to democratic control and oversight. An "ought" cannot be got from an "is" and just because something becomes possible does not mean that it is desirable. In other words, the grasp of our moral imagination must catch up with our technological reach.

(3) It is unlikely that of and in themselves digital eco-systems with their virtual connectivity will offer a new global civic space - a viable real-world structure of political organisation - capable of driving co-creative activism. Algorithm-based digital and robotic technologies will doubtless prove valuable tools in creating a better world, but only real-world participative deliberation can define and confer legitimacy on the ends that will make that world better.

IV. ADDITIONAL NOTE

Guidelines for consideration in creating the new constitution

The range of national constitutions around the world shows each one is crafted to suit the country's geography, history, population distribution, cultural traditions and political aspirations, normally with provision for amending its clauses over time. And they vary in forms of government and political systems on a scale from confederation through federation to regional integration, and even more decentralised devolution.

The Union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is exceptional because it does not have a single codified constitutional document. But its rich tradition of incremental amendment by successive Acts of Parliament provides a base on which to build a codified constitution that offers moral progress, trust, and a sense of belonging.

Confederation - the functional coming together of sovereign equals -   might well prove the desired future extension of this constitutional initiative, three of the four nations already having their own assemblies and cultural identities.

But account needs to be taken of emerging demands for more devolution - for instance from Greater London and Greater Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, etc., and from Cornwall (Mebyon Kernow), Yorkshire, the Northern region, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man - whose constitutional integration may best be served through a federal, confederal or regional system of governance.

In short, the range of options is plentiful. But so also is the documentation available to inform future debates on constitutional change: not only from other countries but also from previous parliamentary debates in Westminster, particularly those from the 1960s onwards.

Editors' note: without being overly stipulative, the purpose of this Declaration, together with its Explanatory Notes, is to provide a clear and comprehensive statement of ICUK values and proposals. It is designed essentially for use by collaborating activist individuals and agencies and by Constitutionalist and other Independent parliamentary candidates in preparing their manifestos in future elections. It remains work in progress.

(1) Independent Non-adversarial Politics While mindful of their ongoing duty and commitment to promoting the values and principles enshrined in their country's Constitution, the first loyalty of Constitutionalist and other Independent parliamentary candidates would be to their constituencies whose interests they defend. Their function is essentially a representative one: they are mandated by their constituencies, to whom they remain accountable and by whom they can be recalled. This in essence is what Constitutionalists mean by *participative representative democracy* (ideas that are born of citizen participation and carried forward by representation to regional and national assemblies). It is the anchor of the independent non-party politics that ICUK is attempting to promote.

The advent of independent candidates in significant numbers, Constitutionalists are aware, would constitute a major departure from what exists. It would be a new way of doing politics that replaces party politics with what might be termed "issue-based" politics moved by real-world ideas and issues rather than by ideology. Independent representatives come to the parliamentary table (necessarily hemispherical in shape) with agendas and concerns as defined by their constituency committees and the like. Essentially thereafter, parliamentary business becomes, *first* the discovery or identification of common ground and shared purpose, and *second* the negotiation of consensus and compromise (a process that would include voting as a last resort) regarding what exactly is to be done and how. Groups and alliances of representatives with their spokespersons (necessary for practical purposes) would inevitably emerge from this process, but, in stark contrast to political parties thus far, such groups and alliances would be functional, flexible and time-limited.

What must unite Independent Candidates of whatever origin is a commitment to genuine democratic practice. Martin Bell's *10 Principles*, ICUK's *Guidelines for Collaboration* and Flatpack Democracy's *Ways of Working* all provide suggestions as to how this genuine practice can be achieved. All these methods basically involve reaching inclusive and consensual decisions by encouraging members of a group to keep objecting to a proposal until, between them, they produce an answer all of them can live with. Locally it's not hard to see it producing better decisions than the average local authority meeting. Scaling it up to regional and national assembly levels presents a formidable challenge, but one that Constitutionalists believe is well worth taking up.

(2) The **"Will of the people"** is the term frequently employed to describe the shared values and collective purposes of a community. The all-important question is however: how is the will of the people to be determined?

The "will of the people" is clearly not what, for example in Germany, the Soviet Union and Communist China, a series of dictatorial and totalitarian ideologues imposed upon their respective populaces during World War Two and subsequently. Nor was it what Mrs Thatcher, over the heads of many of her ministers and Parliament, said she was convinced she heard through her special ear, and even less what Tony Blair was reflecting when he took his country to war in Iraq. Indeed, the will of the people, that collective aggregate of individual reason, is not even what audimats, box-ticking opinion polls and market surveys - those trackers of individual preference - claim to inform us about.

For Constitutionalists, the "will of the people", *not being a discoverable given*, cannot by definition exist prior to the painstaking democratic process of collective enquiry, debate, discourse, deliberation and consensus-building that brings that "will" into existence. In other words, the "will of the people" is an act of purposive collective creation. Unless and until that ongoing articulative act begins to be accomplished, and the processes by which it is achieved enshrined in a written and living constitution and perpetuated by constant democratic practice, we risk being left with a political void. History has repeatedly shown how this void can all too easily be filled by the lies and manipulation of unscrupulous individuals and groups who, driven by self-interest, seek to divide, control and exploit, especially when the communities concerned are cowed by scarcity, deprivation and fear.

(3) People Sovereignty and Constitutional Supremacy People (or Popular) Sovereignty is the theory embracing the notion that all political power resides in the people but that the people *delegate* a defined measure of that power to a government to avoid the practical impossibility of making and enforcing laws themselves. This theory goes hand in hand with that of **Constitutional Supremacy** whereby the Constitution becomes the supreme law of the land and cannot, at least in its fundamental features, be altered save by wide popular consent. Constitutional Supremacy embodies the notions of (1) a constitution, written and accessible, that in principle *invalidates* any laws that are inconsistent with it, and (2) of *entrenchment* whereby the latter's provisions cannot, for example, be repealed by Parliament as at present under the principle of Parliamentary Sovereignty. Neither should the provisions of a constitution be altered by plebiscitary consent through majority vote without controls in the form of constitutional checks and balances. Such checks and balances, in turn, should be so designed that minority interests are protected and the enduring moral and ethical dimension of the settlement that the constitution sets forth be secure. For Constitutionalists, this includes "the shared values of the people of the United Kingdom and the principles of democratic self-government, so that the Constitution should serve as a compass to guide people in their moral aspiration and direction of political travel" (see Clause 12 (d) of our Declaration of Purpose). Finally, any such Constitution would need to recognize an enhanced role for public participation, for, as we have already suggested, under a reformed system, rather than government simply imposing its authority on the people, power will be delegated by the people to government with a remit, however broad or narrow, which reflects their "will".

These, then, are the principles (which, incidentally, have been adopted by almost all other *democratic* states) underlying the constitutional settlement that our movement believes should now be established in the United Kingdom.

(4) An ethical code

Martin Bell's 10 Principles   We will:
- abide wholeheartedly by the spirit and letter of the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by Lord Nolan in 1995: *selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership*;
- be guided by considered evidence, our real world experience and expertise, our constituencies and our consciences;
- be non-discriminatory, ethical and committed to pluralism;
- be free from the control of any political party, pressure group or whip;
- make decisions transparently and openly at every stage and level of the political process, enabling people to see how decisions are made and the evidence on which they are based;
- listen, consulting our communities constantly and innovatively;
- treat political opponents with courtesy and respect, challenging them when we believe they are wrong, and agreeing with them when we believe they are right;
- resist abuses of power and patronage and promote democracy at every level;
- work with other elected independents as a Group with a chosen spokesperson;
- claim expenses, salaries and compensation openly so the public can judge the value for money of our activities.

These principles apply to personal integrity. Our strap-line reads: *We aim to use the system, to become the system, to change the system, to recover Trust.* Its reference to Trust extends these principles into the broader and more complex contexts of societal and global relations. Hence our insistence on articulation by companies of a Declaration of Public Benefit Purpose and on Charters for all public institutions (Provisions III. 13 (g) and (J) respectively of this Declaration).

(5) Referendums Constitutionalists believe that referendums have a place in participative representative democracy but their role is to complement it, not replace it. Their link to democratic legitimacy is tenuous and heavily conditioned. Far more than primary legislation, the outcome of a yes/no referendum leaves the content of the decision underdetermined, particularly when the question put to the people, as in the case of the EU referendum, affects an array of interconnected issues of law and policy. In most liberal democracies the use of referendums is strictly regulated by a written constitution that restricts the types of question that can be asked and the conditions under which they have a binding legal effect. The UK's

unwritten constitution lacks this robust constitutional architecture. The experience of the EU referendum is another blow to the argument that the UK has no need for a written constitution.

(6) **Settled residency**   **This note is under discussion in the Strategy Forum.**

(7) **Fair political-funding** Constitutionalists believe that if one person's vote is not to count more than any other, then no one's money should either, and dethroning the billionaires and corporate and union funders would help to restore political power to where it properly belongs: with the people. This is the principle underlying a fair political-funding system. One example of such a system might be: every party would be allowed to charge the same membership fee (say £20). The state would then match it with a fixed multiple. All other funding would be illegal. If a party or movement wanted more money, it would need to attract more members.   With Referendums, the state would provide an equal amount for campaigns on either side.

(8) **Parliamentary Sovereignty**   Our current system of government is one where Parliament enjoys an absolute and unfettered right to make and unmake laws. It is based on an uncodified and largely informal "constitutional" settlement in which, following power struggles between a monarchy claiming absolute power and Parliament, all the spoils of victory went to Parliament. The people were left with little or no part to play. That situation has prevailed to this day, in spite of the advent of universal suffrage and the post-war establishment of the welfare state when the interests of the people began to be represented and taken seriously into account. In recent decades, however, citizen participation in governance has become increasingly confined to voting in local and general elections at distant intervals.   The simple truth is that Parliamentary Sovereignty is of undemocratic origin in that the people of Britain have never been invited to vote on whether we should be ruled by a parliament which claims absolute sovereignty, let alone by a parliament which has become an arena where two major parties are engaged not in *representative* politics but in an adversarial *power* struggle, leaving the minority parties squeezed out and deprived of any representative influence. Electoral reform, which enjoys the overwhelming support of the people of the UK and which might be a step towards addressing this state of affairs, is one of its more obvious casualties. The choice at general elections has long ceased to be between the "pluralism" of two or more different sets of policy options. It has now become a choice between electing a party that wants to *retain* power and a party that wants to *gain* it. But power, since all other considerations appear to be irrelevant, to what end? The people, the only "estate" with a legitimate and democratic right to answer that question, has seen its voice and vote progressively confined to participating in what, not without reason, has been dubbed an "elective dictatorship". The Brexit referendum and its muddled aftermath illustrate the depth of our current constitutional crisis and just how confused people are about the *sovereignty* issue. Constitutionalists believe that a paradigm shift is now necessary and clarification long overdue: the unfinished business of wresting sovereignty from an absolute Monarch and transferring it to what has become an increasingly unrepresentative and backward-looking Parliament of undemocratic origin must now be completed. A forward-looking principle of People Sovereignty must now be constitutionally established and Parliament restored to its proper representative function.

(9) **People's Political-Economy of Inclusive Trusteeship**
People's because people will begin to hope and recover trust in society and in the political system only when they feel included in the latter, when it belongs to them, and when they have a meaningful part to play. For example, widespread participation in the framing and writing of a comprehensive Constitution will help people to recover commitment and understand how important are the themes of Trust, Solidarity, Devolution and Confederation. The antagonisms, mounting personal insecurities and abrogation of personal responsibility generated by the current system, must give way to mutual trust and cooperation. This change of attitude across society will be possible only if meaningful livelihoods are available to all, and if all are encouraged to *'use the system, to become the system, to change the system'.*
Political-economy because moral and social purpose must precede the economic means of their achievement. People are ends in themselves, not means to an end. They and the Planet they share with all other living species must be put before profit and mindless growth. Principled pragmatism must become the watchword of economic management.

Inclusive Trusteeship because, even though *Homo sapiens* has become a major agent in shaping the circumstances of its own existence, the future of our species depends on the survival of other living species and on our sustainable use and replenishment of finite planetary resources. Recognising this truth, Constitutionalists believe that a viable political-economy for the future must be symbiotic with Planet Earth enabling us as its custodian*-stewards to hold it in trust for future generations.

*a person who has responsibility for taking care of or protecting something

(10) Circular Economy   Decoupling human well-being from resource consumption (i.e. more resource consumption does NOT mean more human welfare) is at the heart of the Circular Economy. It takes essentially two forms: the **fostering of reuse and extending service life** through repair, remanufacture, upgrades and retrofits; and **turning old goods into as-new resources by recycling atoms and molecules.**   People - of all ages and skills - are central to the model. Ownership gives way to stewardship and caring; consumers become users and creators. The remanufacturing and repair of old goods, buildings and infrastructure create skilled jobs in local workshops, and, with "outmoded" technologies (for example, electro-mechanical) disappearing from vocational training courses, value is restored to the skills and experience of workers from the past.

Yet lack of familiarity and fear of the unknown mean that the circular-economy idea has been slow to gain traction. As a **holistic concept**, it collides with the **silo structures** of academia, companies and administrations. For economists used to working with GDP, wealth creation by making things last is the opposite of what they learned in school. GDP measures a financial flow over a period of time; while the circular economy, by measuring quality as well as quantity, preserves physical stocks. Increasingly, however, concern over resource security, ethics and safety as well as green-house gas reductions are shifting our approach to seeing materials as assets to be **preserved**, rather than continually consumed and disposed of.

(11) Monetary reform   For Constitutionalists what is at stake here is the nature of money itself as a vital social good. Money facilitates commercial exchange, it provides the basis for social investment, and it has the power to stabilise or destabilise society. They firmly believe that handing the power of money creation over to commercial interests is a recipe for financial instability, social inequality and political impotence. Constitutionalists are convinced that reclaiming that right in the national interest from the wealth elite of the City of London would prove a powerful tool in the struggle for lasting and inclusive prosperity,

(12) Sovereign Money   Some 24 national campaigns argue that taking the power to create money out of the hands of banks would end the instability and boom-and-bust cycles that are caused when banks create too much money in a short period of time. In this way, banks could be allowed to fail without bailouts from taxpayers. It would also ensure that, rather than being lent into existence as currently happens and frequently for speculative rather than productive purposes, newly created money is spent into the real economy, thus reducing the overall public debt burden.

Only one campaign has official endorsement -- Iceland -- on which one review has commented: "Under the proposed sovereign money system, the Central Bank of Iceland would increase the money supply in proportion to growth and consistent with the mandated inflation target. Direct control of the money supply would remove the need for traditional policy instruments designed to manipulate commercial banks' incentive to create money, such as policy interest rates and regulatory lending limits. The government would then put the money into circulation via sovereign bond purchases, and/or fiscal measures. To avoid conflicts of interests leading to the oversupply of money, decisions over allocation would be made by a committee independent of the government." For Constitutionalists, however, whatever system of money management is opted for, by government or independent thereof, it is crucial that the overall process remain at all times subject to public oversight thereby ensuring that money is deployed as a "social good" in the interest of the many rather than, as at present, of the few.

(13) Democratization of the renewable economy The provision of the country's energy supply is currently controlled by corporations and consortia. Under democratization, individual citizens and small and medium enterprises could be enabled through subsidies, tax reductions or other incentives to feed electricity from solar energy or other renewable resources into the

national grid and, as voters in local council elections or as local councilors, to participate in establishing priority zones when national incentives were allocated geographically.

(14) **Fiscal reform**   Constitutionalists remember that land is not a manufactured good but a birthright, a free gift of nature. They are fully aware of the paramount impact of land and property ownership regimes on the entire economy and are mindful that housing policy needs to acknowledge that land-banking (the hoarding of land out of use) and the ownership of property for speculative rather than residential or home-making purposes are the underlying cause of inequality and the direct cause of the high cost of homes. They are confident that an annual land-value charge or ground rent would help to end land and property speculation and provide government with the funds to build more homes.

(15) **A Citizens' Dividend**   The concept of a Universal Basic Income - a regular and unconditional cash transfer from the state received by all individual citizens in acknowledgement of the part they play in generating the wealth currently enjoyed by only a few -   needs no introduction. It is an idea that, in varying shapes, political parties across the world are now adopting as official policy.

Constitutionalists are well aware of the many issues, positive and negative, raised by this idea: its alleged effect on work incentives, its affordability and funding, its transparency, its administrative efficiency, its potential for contributing to sustainable consumption and "values growth", its relevance to mounting automation and to freeing people from a life reduced to "shopping between shifts at work"; its role, finally, as a first and tentative step in creating a new economic and social order.

Constitutionalists believe that the list of issues raised by the idea of a Universal Basic Income should now be the focus of democratic deliberation. They prefer, however, to speak of a **Citizens' Dividend (CD)**. Why? Because, unlike most redistributive benefits which are funded from taxes that penalize productive effort, CD is neither benefit nor tax, nor even redistributive. It is a **dividend** paid to all citizens out of the rents (i.e. the income) from the land-value they all help to create. And its payment out of the public's finances becomes possible once the fiscal system has been restructured to include an Annual Ground Rent that honours the principles of both fairness and economic efficiency.

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A Constitutionalist Guide to Morality: Language as Democracy

St Juien-en-Genevois
January 2018

Re: 5 December 2017 exchange between Clive, Janos & Michael

        DP - Anybody Who Gives You a Belief System is Your Enemy

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Michael wrote: Whether or not truth is discoverable is doubtless a matter of debate. Moral truth, however, can only be **co-created**.

Clive wrote: One could ask the question, is morality anything to do with truth? Is it an essential prerequisite for peaceful co-existence?

When the individual reaches a level of understanding within themselves, they are at peace with themselves. Conflict or abuse of others destroys that peace. Does morality have a part to play in peaceful co-existence if that condition prevails?

Janos wrote: Next door to morals is ethics.

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The quote from *Diffen* that Janos provides in support of his contention reads:

Ethics and **morals** relate to "right" and "wrong" conduct. While they are sometimes used interchangeably, they are different: **ethics** refer to rules provided by an external source, e.g., codes of conduct in workplaces or principles in religions. **Morals** refer to an individual's own principles regarding right and wrong.

Whatever meanings people commonly attach to the words "ethics" and "morals", one thing seems perfectly clear: meanings are the ideas that *by convention* we agree given words in given contexts shall carry, the words functioning as labels for, or sign-posts to, those ideas or meanings. Our agreement is in itself an act of what might termed "unconscious" democracy. But like all unconscious verbal assumptions, its truly democratic nature becomes apparent only when brought into consciousness and shared with others, which is why Socrates, who understood this, spent his life encouraging people to define their terms. Constitutionalists understand this. For, when they call for a Constitution, they insist that it be not only written but also living. A constitution - a necessary, though by no means a sufficient condition for democracy - by laying down the ground rules that make genuine democratic practice possible, constitutes in itself *the* primal act of democratic co-creation. And that act of co-creation becomes "ongoing" whenever the conventional and agreed terms of the Constitution are challenged and redefinition is called for, or when as happens occasionally those terms need to be adapted to changing circumstances.

It is my contention that for some time now a similar situation has obtained in the field of moral philosophy: circumstances have changed and a redefinition of terms is called for. Indeed, it is my further contention that a paradigm shift towards more democracy-friendly moral thinking is long overdue.

The distinction *Diffen* makes between ethics and morals is the conventional one: "ethics" are external, objective and pertain to society, while "morals" are internal, subjective and pertain to an individual's sense of value, of right and wrong. In its Comparison Chart, *Diffen* further suggests that "ethics" have to do with what external society deems it is right to do, while "morals" depend on what we internally believe it is right to do.

Now a similar sort of distinction underlies the discourse of the French moral philosopher, André Comte-Sponville. In a recent interview for *Le Monde* (April last year), he insisted that morals must be disassociated from politics: "We need morals to govern ourselves", he said, "and politics to govern together the communities to which we belong". "But", asked his interviewer, "do we not need, if not morals, at least a minimum ethic in politics?" "Yes", replied the philosopher, "of course we need morals! But we must remember that the moral question remains: *what should I do?* not: *what should so-an-so do?* Morals only work in the first person. For the others, the law and compassion must suffice."

In what follows it shall be my purpose to show just how misconceived, muddled and misleading this distinction or disconnect between "objective" ethics and "subjective" morals continues to be. It has become a source of needless confusion and a barrier to any meaningful understanding of the democratic functioning of human moral sense.

First, it blinds us to the fact that much, if not most, of what we as individuals believe it is right to do is a function of acculturation, of what society (the other members of our communities) suggests it is right to do. The fact that, until relatively recently, this process of acculturation had been captured and controlled by an elite minority, abetted by the officers of organised religion or its equivalents, should not hide from us **the fact of acculturation as an abiding and necessary moral force.**

Second, the distinction fails to recognise another moral truth: were it not for "others" (and here in our eco-centric times we must include all living creatures) with whom we share our existence and common environment, what we did or did not do would be a matter of moral indifference. It is, indeed, the very existence of "others" in combination with human agency that makes what we do or fail to do "moral" in the first place. Imagine for a moment the situation of an individual living alone in a world devoid of all other living creatures. Could we in that circumstance meaningfully speak of our individual being morally accountable or responsible? Responsible? Accountable? To whom exactly?

Another French moral philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, puts it differently but voices the same idea about the essential role of "others" in moral matters when he writes: *There is no authentic sociality apart from ethics, and there is no ethics apart from sociality* (1). Levinas uses the word "ethics" but he could equally well have used the word "morals" without altering his proposition one iota.

No, the traditional distinction between "morals" and "ethics", between the internally "subjective" and the externally "objective" has limited use only in our current world of hoped-for adult, democratic and egalitarian deliberation.

That distinction may have borne analytical weight in an authoritarian age of imposed moral order when we were being told what to do by "our betters and superiors", when the consuming fires of our immature consciences could be assuaged by the liberating absolutions of Father

Confessors or the kindly words of Spiritual Advisors and empathetic friends, but it has little relevance to our own age when moral values need to be co-created and moral calculus collective rather than individual.

There is indeed a cruel and tragic irony to all of this. Precisely at the time of our venturing across the threshold of the authoritarian home of our speciel childhood into the wider, freer adult-world of moral relativism, precisely when it behoves us to begin thinking collectively for ourselves rather than have an arbitrary "few" think for us, we find the communities, so necessary to the democratic process of our thinking independently together, weakened as never before, atomised by the rampant globalised consumerist individualism that has invaded with meaningless noise and empty choices the moral-political space so recently released from the control of organised religion.

The question then arises how is that moral-political space to be filled, and with what? At this juncture, Constitutionalists with their Declaration of Purpose are primarily concerned with the how rather than with the what.

First, they would agree with philosopher David Hume that an *ought* cannot be derived from an *is*. They are concerned, that is, to make a clear distinction between how they observe the world *to be* and how they believe the world *ought to be*, between statements of observable scientific fact on the one hand and moral propositions on the other. I am reminded of this distinction when I recall that as a young Anglo-Saxon learner of Spanish needing to master the distinction between the use of the *subjunctive* and *indicative* forms of verbs, I was amazed and somewhat humbled to hear a four year-old deploy the subjunctive mood to the manner born, which indeed is what she was. She herself was no doubt unaware of the distinction she was making, but her language was!

Statements of observable fact or truth about "how the world is" are, of course, to a very large extent co-invented, but even so they are not "made-up" out of thin air. They start life in the empirical observations of often independent thinkers and, through a frequently long and tortuous process of what scientists call "peer review", end up as settled and reliable consensual statements about "how things are". Such is the case, for example, with adaptive selection through replication of Darwinian evolution theory, or with Nicolaus Copernicus' earlier empirical discovery of Heliocentrism. We can as a result safely assume that tomorrow the sun will rise! If it doesn't, then Copernicus' theory is no less scientific, it is simply wrong. For as Karl Popper rightly suggested, in order for an observation to be truly scientific, it must be capable of falsification.

Now contrast this with moral propositions. To what extent are the latter capable of falsification, to what extent can they be said to be true or false? I would suggest the question is meaningless. If I say to you: "I think you ought to do so and so" and If you answer: "That's not true", I would simply be left feeling that I had not been understood. Unlike scientific facts, moral propositions are not things that we can verify, they are not susceptible to being found true or false, but they can be said to be desirable to a greater or lesser extent and as such can be agreed to or disagreed with.

Moral propositions are thus, more than anything else, matters of informed and shared understanding. And it is this informed and shared understanding that lies at the heart of democratic discourse, whose success or failure depends ultimately on our ability to communicate with each other.

To what extent the current social media, in spite of their trumpeted connectivity, will provide a stable locus for genuine democratic communication is very much an open question. Undoubtedly in certain instances the social media already do. Undoubtedly also in many other instances they appear to be eroding the collective exercise of moral imagination, by leading

people to disengage into bubbles of isolation from which they shout their personal preferences or to retreat into comfortable silos of the like-minded where prejudices and opinions can remain entrenched, safe and unexamined by encounter with a genuine "other".

Constitutionalists believe that the time has come for a paradigm shift in humanity's moral thinking: Subjective Morals and Objective Ethics can no longer be viewed as separate entities. The "what *I* should do" is now inseparable from the "what *we* should do"; the "I" and "we" belong to the same joint and several response to the single political-moral challenge now facing our species. That challenge, we now know, will involve our co-creating a shared understanding of what it is to be human and of the interdependent relation of our species with all other living species and with the shared life-sustaining environment of our Planet. And that shared understanding, we believe, must be the true purpose of democracy in the twenty-first century.

At the beginning of this piece friend Clive asked two questions. I trust that a Constitutionalist answer to both those questions is now a little clearer. Does morality have anything to do with truth? He asked. Well, it should now be clear: not a great deal, if by truth he means observable fact. Although, were a moral proposition manifestly to run counter to observable fact, it would not be taken seriously: as in, I think water should flow upwards! But the real point is that moral propositions have essentially to do with something more than just factual truth. My use of the term "moral truth" at the outset was crass. I should have spoken rather of "moral propositions".

As to Clive's second question: Is morality an essential pre-requisite for peaceful co-existence? In light of what has been said above, I should answer: absolutely so. Of course, being at peace with oneself and accepting oneself are prerequisites for peaceful co-existence but they are only half the picture (2). They are the foundation upon which the other half of the exercise of peaceful-coexistence - avoiding conflict with and abuse of others - becomes possible, through, that is, our being able to "listen well" and to thus genuinely to communicate and co-create with others, as the proponents, for example, of Socially Engaged Buddhism are at pains to emphasize.

(1) From: *Introducing Levinas to Undergraduate Philosophers* by Anthoy F. Beavers.

(2) There is an analogy here with the message that Kate Raworth in her admirable *Doughnut Economics* is trying to get across: we need to shift beyond the narrow view that has confined economics to a study of how to achieve abstract equilibriums towards co-creating a more systemic and holistic approach that includes households, the commons and the state, and not just markets.

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Agnosticism and the Uses of Religion by Michael Mulvey

"I believe in an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky. They represent the true human tradition, the one permanent victory over cruelty and chaos." (E.M.Forster)

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A Theist speaks

"I enjoyed the supper together yesterday and have been pondering since whether an agnostic stance is a practical option. Since there is no absolute proof of the existence of God, agnosticism is no more than acceptance of the obvious. From a practical standpoint, it begs the question: 'Is there an afterlife?' If the answer is 'No', then there can be no ultimate purpose for the individual beyond this life. Human life becomes no different from that of plants, except for self-awareness. It is the same conclusion that the atheist would reach.

If the answer is 'Yes, probably or possibly, there is an afterlife', two further questions present themselves: 'What could be the form of the after-life?' and 'Could there be a connection between the before and after?' These, of course, are the questions which concern the theist. In effect, the agnostic is in an inconclusive position, which seems to me unsatisfactory. As you yourself said, it is sitting on the fence."

An Agnostic replies

Part 1

Is it very helpful or strictly accurate, I wonder, to speak of an agnostic "stance"? Agnosticism - the state of not-knowing - is more in the nature of something that is thrust upon us, that we are constrained to, rather than an option we take or a position we adopt. Your use of the word "stance" seems to imply that we have some sort of choice in the matter. I don't believe we do. We can choose to attempt to know more, to ponder further and more deeply, to garner more information about, to seek the views of others, but ultimately "not knowing" is a place we find ourselves in, not something we opt for.

You say that from a practical standpoint it begs the question: is there an afterlife?   Is the existence of an afterlife a necessary consequence, I wonder, of a belief in the existence of God? Whatever the case, the theist *believes* there is an afterlife, the atheist *believes* there isn't, neither of them *knows,* and that they have in common with the agnostic who doesn't *know* either. One is bound to say, however, that the theist has a sight more believing to do than the atheist unbelieving, as philosopher A.C. Grayling has very ably demonstrated in his *The God Argument: The Case against Religion and for Humanism* (Bloomsbury, 2013). About which more later (1).

But, why from a "practical" standpoint? This seems to suggest that the agnostic in his failure to reach for religious belief is being impractical. But the agnostic never sought to be practical or to enjoy the comforts and conveniences that practicality might bestow. He seeks only to be honest. Agnosticism is more than anything an act of honest recognition, a taking cognizance of the fact that we do not know, and, in the case of the existence of God, of the fact that, for the time being at least, we cannot know because, as you rightly say, there is no absolute proof either way.

In this light, I am not sure either that "acceptance of the obvious" is a very satisfactory description of what agnostics do.   Whether what one has accepted is obvious or not rather depends on how much thought one has given it. It is only after much reflection, I would suggest, that most agnostics come to an acceptance of the limitations of human knowing, of the unfitness of our finite knowledge system to confront the infinite, of the inability of human beings to look beyond their finite state with any certainty. It is precisely this point that the former Bishop of Edinburgh, Richard Holloway, makes in a recent interview with the philosopher Brian Appleyard: " I am now an agnostic", declares Holloway, "which for me is

acceptance of ignorance and uncertainty as the *inevitable* basis of the human condition." The italics are mine.

So, yes, I agree, agnosticism is a "sitting on the fence", but it is hard-won. It is acceptance, yes, but a humble and honest acceptance of the inherent limitations of human "knowing", an acceptance of *doubt* as the end-point of all human epistemological endeavour. To my way of thinking, as I hope to show below, it is not so much the agnostic's *acceptance* of not knowing that is potentially problematic, nor the atheist's regrettable abandon of open-mindedness in refusing to acknowledge doubt, as the theist's tendency to flee the "here and now" and seek refuge in a "hereafter"*,* in narratives that, alas, prove all too frequently divisive distractions.

But it is your "except for self-awareness" that worries me most. To my way of thinking it is precisely human self-awareness, our capacity for reflexion, that sets human beings apart from all other created beings, whether they be plants, animals or inanimate matter, irrespective of whether their creation is the result of a blind process or has come about through the agency of some Independent Being. Self-awareness makes us special irrespective also of whether or not we are created in the image and likeness of God. It makes the world around us special as well because we humans depend on that world for our continued existence.   So, it is not acceptance of our ignorance about the *life beyond* that makes us more plant- or animal-like, it is rather the very fact of our being able even to conceive of the possibility of a *life-beyond* in the first place that removes us light-years from animal and vegetable existence and makes our species very, very special.

Janus-like we humans with our self-awareness are destined to sit upon the fence of our human condition, simultaneously to contemplate, on the one hand, the *world within* with its intimations of transcendence, of something bigger beyond, and, on the other, the *world without* which we claim to "know" progressively.

This sense of transcendence, our sense of there being something bigger beyond, is, I would suggest, something that all human beings experience in varying degrees and ways throughout their lives. That sense is, after all, one of the things that make us human. It is what some philosophers and humanist thinkers have termed the "God-shaped hole". What we pour in to it, whether we consider ourselves members of a religious community (that is of a shared belief system with God at its centre) or not, is always intensely personal, inevitably subjective. Few - and here I would include many atheists and certainly most agnostics - would feel the need to deny the existence of such a "spiritual" space within ourselves. It is where our deepest beliefs, our personal or shared notions of meaning and purpose reside.   What is so remarkable, so special, about humans is that they have this space at all and that they need to fill it with "meaning" in order to give direction to their lives, one might even say in order to be able to live at all. Not even the insane can live entirely without purpose of some sort, however trivial or misguided the sane judge such purpose to be.

Whence, then, is life's meaning or purpose to be derived? Let us take the case of the theist. He finds that, absent any reliable evidence either way, he *believes* even so in the existence of God and, as a consequence, is entitled to posit the possibility of an afterlife. He will be free thereafter to speculate about the nature of that afterlife, about the possibility of there being a connection between it and the life he is living here on earth, and he will be free, unrestrained by any imperative of reliable evidence (for we are ultimately entitled to think and believe, if not to do, what we will) to speculate about the nature of that connection. At the end of the day he may even discover that, in diametric opposition to what his catechism taught him as a child, he has created a God is his own image and likeness. Was it not Voltaire who said that if God does not exist then man must invent Him?

The second thing you say that worries me, indeed puzzles me, not a little is: "if there is no after-life then there can be no ultimate purpose for the individual beyond this life". I presume that you did not mean to state the obvious and that what you really meant is: without an after-life to be moving towards can there be any purpose for the individual in this life? Or, to put it another way, do we need a belief in an afterlife to make life meaningful?

The answer, as far as I am concerned, is, decidedly, no! Indeed, even among believers in God and the afterlife, one is inclined to suggest that the man or woman who derives life's meaning

directly from a preoccupation with the afterlife is the exception rather than the rule. One is minded of the Trappist monks described by Leigh-Fermor in his revealing and sensitive study of monastic life - *A Time for Silence*. Every morning, Fermor tells us, each member of the community without fail removes a shovelful of earth from that allotted spot in the monastery grounds which is to be his last resting place. An extreme of "otherworldliness", admittedly, but one which points to a potentially problematic detachment from the "here and now".

The idea of belief in an afterlife giving meaning to life may turn out indeed to be the least, or at best the lesser, of religion's uses. Karl Marx saw religious belief as the opiate of the masses, a tool of political oppression and subjugation. Throughout human history and still today, church establishments of all kinds, unable or unwilling to improve the lot of their faithful, have deemed religious belief a useful distraction from the harshness and injustices of life's realities, and the putative beauty of the afterlife just reward and compensation for acceptance of this life's "vale of tears". The Muslim terrorist, however psychologically unhinged we believe him to be, partakes in this respect of a long and established tradition of detachment that so often seems, admittedly in milder form, to accompany religious belief.

Religious belief can, and undoubtedly does, give meaning to many peoples' lives. Yet let it never be said that without "religious" belief life need be meaningless. Even if defined religious belief is unconvincing or arbitrary as far as the atheist and agnostic are concerned, neither would be so foolish as to suggest that life can be lived without belief of any kind. That would be to deny man his humanity. For even atheists and agnostics know (evidence enough exists) that human beings are by nature believers.

So where do atheists and agnostics stand? What life-creeds and beliefs do they put into the "spiritual" space within themselves?

On inspection we find the list to be long and varied. Einstein appears to have believed in a God, but a God of cosmic power, of the underlying unity in the physical universe, an It which, unlike the theist's Sistine God, cannot be blamed for all the terrible things It does. A similar stance is adopted by two very notorious atheists - the philosopher Daniel Dennet and Richaed Dawkins explicator of things scientific - who set enormous store by the beauty of the universe. They stand in wonder and awe at the complexity, balance and diversity of the world of nature. It is their sense of being part of that nature, of an awesome and transcendent whole, that apparently gives meaning to their lives.

Another atheist, Judy Marsh, a Guardian reader (Letters, 18-01-2014), puts it this way: *Recently a woman I know looked me in the eye and said: "We are all God's children you know." I was dying to say, but didn't (for fear of seeming rude): "I wouldn't presume to tell you you're a grown-up and you should take responsibility for yourself". Atheists don't want that weird certainty over the big questions and answers. I don't give a toss what happened before the big bang. My own preoccupation is how on earth are we going to take care of our planet because, sure as anything, God is not bothered about our potential destruction of it. Being an atheist is about taking responsibility for our own actions ..."*

Agnostics have no time for that "weird certainty" either (1).

Over the ages, men and women of creative and altruistic bent - artists, musicians, philanthropists, philosophers, physicians, poets, writers - have frequently been unable to say *why or to what end* they do what they do. The joy and self-fulfillment they experience is reason enough, the sheer sense of purpose they experience when exercising creatively their human physical and mental capacities becomes its own reward. At best their lives lived in this way become a celebration of their humanity. Underpinning their creativity and altruism is a belief in the intrinsic worth of what they do, a belief that gives meaning to their lives.

Then there are the members of ecological and oriental persuasions (Vegans and socially-committed Buddhists, for example) whose engagement with the here and now, whose belief in a sustainable and peaceful future for humanity is by any standards "religious" in all but name. Yet, for most of them the notion of, as you put it, "an ultimate purpose for the individual beyond this life" simply has no meaning.

Finally, and this list is but a drop in the ocean of observable life-creeds, there are the increasing millions of rank-and-file members of latter-day less-authoritarian creeds and cults - Anglicans, Adventists, Evangelicals, and so forth - for whom it is no so much a belief in God or theological conviction that are important as the warmth, the inclusiveness, the sense of kinship that comes with belonging to a community, a belonging that becomes a valued part of their way of life.

The very recent Sunday Assembly movement has recognized this. Can we, secular humanist agnostics and atheists that we are, they ask, not have the camaraderie and inclusiveness of Sunday church-going without the grey-bearded Old Man and the stories of the life beyond that time and religious tradition have weaved around Him?

I believe the Sunday Assemblists are on to something important, not to say crucial, in today's globalised, commoditized and fiercely individualistic Western world. And I would argue that, yes, they can have their "cake" provided certain prior conditions are met. If their movement is to take root and prosper they will need a **unifying narrative**. Nick Spencer, director of *Theos* (the think-tank looking at religion's role in society), has put it this way: " ... you need more than an absence to keep you (people) together. You need a firm common purpose ... I suspect what brings them together is a real desire for community when in a modern, urbanized, individualised city like London, you can often feel very alone. That creates a lot of camaraderie, but the challenge then becomes what actually unites us?"

My purpose in Part 2 of this piece will be to make a modest contribution to meeting the challenge Spencer identifies. Drawing on my 40-year work experience as an interpreter with the United Nations, where I have had occasion to observe international consensus-building on a daily basis, I shall attempt to define the broad outline of a unifying narrative for our species. I hardly need add that many of the ideas and beliefs I shall be alluding to are part of my own life creed.

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(1)   A. C. Grayling's representation of the "existence of God" issue, and hence also, I believe, of agnosticism in the, in many ways excellent, study I have referenced above, is misconceived. In Chapter 5 entitled "Knowledge, belief and rationality" Grayling establishes a matrix by which to judge the rationality of the three available positions on the existence of God - atheism, theism and agnosticism. The rationality of each position is he claims a "clear-cut matter": we *disbelieve* and act accordingly, we *believe* and act accordingly, or *we suspend judgement* and act in whatever prudential way seems best on ancillary grounds (I presume for quite other reasons which have nothing to do with the existence or otherwise of God). "In connection with fairies, deities and unicorns", he continues, "the clear option is the first" (i.e. to disbelieve). But, notice: the "deities" are tucked in between "fairies" and "unicorns", between entities, that is, that believers (if there are any over the age of seven years) claim are part and parcel of our real everyday world, without of course a scrap of evidence to support that claim. Belief in "deities" would be as equally clear-cut as belief in fairies or Father Christmas, at least to many of us, if "deities" were confined exclusively to fairy- or unicorn-like creatures, the sort of creatures that the ancient Greeks believed inhabited Olympus or the old man with a grey beard that most Christians used to believe in. But the "deity" secular agnostics suspend judgement about is something quite different. It is by definition not part of, or connected in any way with, our everyday world or the natural order of things with which we are all familiar. And, at this point, the matter is not quite so clear-cut, in fact not clear-cut at all. Is it, after all, so irrational to posit the existence of a supra-natural entity, of a non-contingent first cause that might account for the origin of our universe? Can we be so sure that our human sense of transcendence, our intimations of something bigger beyond, are mere illusion, or, as some scientistic materialists would have us believe, the useless by-product of evolutionary over-drive? Which is more reasonable: to keep an open mind on these issues acknowledging that, for the time being at least, an explanation of the ultimate origin of our universe is beyond the reach of science, or to ask, as Grayling does, why the universe cannot be its own reason for existing (*op.cit.* page 96-97)? Why not, indeed? Except that his question brings us back to a non-contingent first principle or to ... God (an entity which is its own reason for being). So, while getting us not much further ahead, the question, I would suggest, turns Grayling into something of a neo-theist! But my purpose is not to attempt to attach labels. For, elsewhere in his admirable study Grayling makes, to my mind, an entirely convincing case for rejecting traditional theistic religions as being no longer fit for

purpose, generators in today's world of more harm than good. My purpose is merely to show that for secular humanist agnostics like myself the important thing is to keep our minds open, to stand with doubting Thomas, happy in our lack of faith, content, in almost equal measure, to be condemned by the traditional churches and admired by atheists like Grayling, who writes (page 115, *op. cit.*): "one mark of intelligence is an ability to live with as yet unanswered questions." And I would add that it is also a mark of integrity and courage.

Indeed, to repeat what I have attempted to explain above, the agnostic position on the existence of a deity as on the origins of the universe and all such unworldly matters is part of a much broader epistemological stance - an overall philosophy of "doubt" that prefers to suspend judgement and retain an open mind on matters that are currently unexplained and may remain so.   Most secular humanist agnostics would consider Bayesian contortions of speculation about probability in this connection (Grayling *op.cit.* page 52) a time-wasting distraction, and the "weird" certainties of both theist and atheist, if they matter at all, ultimately untenable.   But above all, the humanist message of secular agnostics must be: mankind has surely not seen through theistic belief at last and escaped finally the epistemological clutch of the Church of God, only to run for cover behind the materialist "certainties" of a new Church of Science. We shall see how important such avoidance of "authoritative" opinion, whether mediated by priests or scientists, is when later in Part 2 we come to consider matters of human morality and above all a consensual definition of human nature as the starting point for a speciel* narrative.

* The adjective "speciel" as far as I am aware is a neologism. I use it here in the sense of "that which pertains to *homo sapiens,* the human species".

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