

**PUBLIC SERVICE AND DEMOCRACY OR WARFARE AND EMPIRE; ADMINISTRATION OR
MANAGEMENT:
WHAT COULD BE THE NEW NORM, AS WE EXIT THE PANDEMIC?
LESSONS WE LEARN FROM HISTORY**

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*“And now, what will become of us without barbarians?
Those people, after all, were a solution of sorts.
Constantine Cavafy “Waiting for the Barbarians”*

ABSTRACT

*The world is in the throes of a wholly unprecedented and unforeseen predicament: a pandemic, global in scope and of uncommon virulence. The pandemic brought to a halt an economic boom, whose benefits and hopes for a better tomorrow availed a small minority, with vast swaths of humanity continuing to live from hand to mouth. With no clear end in sight and the plight from this pandemic borne largely by the poor and segments of the society least able to fend for themselves, the questions commonly asked, as countries are preparing to exit from the crisis is: Will there be a “new norm”, as we exit from the Crisis and what will this new norm be? This paper probes this question, with help from past experience. The history of Antiquity and Medieval Europe comes in handy in this respect. We speak of models of governance; we speak of institutions but also of ideologies which underpin those models and shape those institutions. They have changed over time. But it was to this period, from roughly the age of Pericles to that of Machiavelli, that we can trace the genesis, as well as early debates, on both the forms of government and the overarching values to which they ought to adhere. It was in Athens, Greece and during the fifth century, that speculation on politics, participative democracy and ethics first began, in a systematic way. In all fields of activity, the Golden Age of Athens (478-404 BCE) produced exceptional leaders and thinkers; men like Pericles, Themistocles, Thucydides and Plato, precursor of Aristotle. This Golden Age coincided with the hegemony of Athens. It came to an end abruptly, after a protracted war compounded by a pandemic. This thirty-year war (431-404 BCE) has been discussed extensively in a seminal work by Thucydides, which to this day is studied by both political scientists and students of warfare. As we all know, defeat brought to an end the hegemony of Athens but also sealed the fate of Sparta or Lacedaemon. Neither recovered really until many centuries later. Thucydides explores this sequence of events. Three passages stand out in his detailed analysis. The first describes the policies that Athens and Sparta adopted in an attempt to establish and to consolidate their dominion over their respective allies. The second is the speech attributed to Pericles; better known as the Funeral Oration (Epitaphios).² In inimitable prose but also in the mould of many a Western leader in our days, it lavished praise on Athens and democratic governance but also cast aspersion on Athens’ adversaries, who followed different paths. In yet another passage – the Mitylenian Debate – Thucydides recounts the way the Athens hegemon “punished” the Mitylenians, when they rebelled.³ Explaining this, Thucydides, in words that he attributed to the Athenian leadership, bluntly expressed the view that democratic governance was really incompatible with empire and, when “push comes to shove”, democracy incapable of holding on to an empire without resort to force (Thucydides 1985: 229-290). The sequence of events, which led to war and doom for both the warring parties, gave rise to the telling expression “**the Thucydides trap**”. Over the past two centuries, as well as two millennia many a national leader has fallen into this trap. Peace, democracy, and sound governance have suffered as a consequence.*

Keywords: *governance models, management, public administration, public service, COVID-19 pandemic.*

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² http://corematerials.homestead.com/01_pericles_funeral_oration.pdf

³ The Mitylenian Debate (also spelled "Mytilenian Debate") is the Athenian Assembly concerning reprisals against the city-state of Mytilene, which had attempted unsuccessfully to shake off Athenian hegemony during the Peloponnesian War. The Debate occurred in 427 B.C.; Thucydides reports it in book three of his History of the Peloponnesian War, and uses the events and the speeches as a major opportunity to reflect and to offer his views on the political and ideological impact of the war on the parties involved.

INTRODUCTION

What will the new “norm” be; how *new*? Looking to past decades, since the 1980’s certainly, the “norm” required “a smaller State ... for private sector-led growth to discharge, effectively, ... functions such as economic management...” (World Bank 1994: XVI). Priming “performance management”, this trickle-down approach focused on “cost containment”, “retrenchment” and “downsizing” (World Bank, op. cit.) It remained mostly indifferent towards the **distributive** aspects of wealth creation socially, nationally, and internationally. A system that “deprivileged” the public sector generally, as well as the world’s poor, promoted foreign wars and mounting military budgets. On the domestic front, by contrast, it practised the 3Ds (Downsizing, Devolution and Deregulation) *in tandem* with *outsourcing* and the celebrated Es (Economy, Efficiency, Expediency and Effectiveness). It focused on the short term. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that, when the crisis struck, the only branch of government with needed strategic reserves was the US military: a Naval hospital and the Army Corps of Engineers, which soon came to the rescue of New York City and State, both in dire need of equipment and personnel. Not surprisingly, uncommon in its gravity and reach, the crisis propelled into salience the institutions of government and social solidarity. These tend to be neglected at times of relative plenty. All institutions of government became the focal points of public expectations and people’s pressing claims. But it was still the poor and people on the margins who bore the brunt of the crisis.

Will this be the “*new norm*” or will the norm entail mending a broken system of proven lack of aptitude to cope with mega-crises but also of known proclivity to bend to the demands of both the wealthy and powerful? It is a system driven by one-dimensional thinking, one-sided views on governance, public management, society, and the State. With SDG16 a global pressing goal and climate change upon us, a system priming equity and universal inclusion must surely be the norm, to which we ought to aspire (Roberts 2020: 604-606; Baimenov and Liverakos 2019: xi-xxv: 1-30; Sen 2009: 208-238, 241-253). But is this norm so *new*? History offers us guidance. It shows us that such norms are born at times of crisis. Sometimes, they are soon forsaken when things begin to improve. They often metastasize into political programmes or into *myths* and *narratives*, which take on a life of their own. The history of “*the West*”, from Ancient times to-date, has been a rich progenitor of SUCH MYTHS AND SUCH NARRATIVES; FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE.

A RECENT PARADIGM SHIFT

There is always a silver lining! After four decades of Reaganism, which taught us that “Big Government” was the source of all our problems, the effects of the pandemic have been to demonstrate the very opposite. We are slowly rediscovering the value of the “*public*” in Public Administration, including a propensity to public-private partnerships, where “public” is in charge. (Nabatchi 2010: S309) Suddenly resurrected, the Administrative State became not only a banker or paymaster, but also epidemiologist, virologist, employer, engineer, social administrator, and therapist of first and last resort. *Regulation*, castigated as “bureaucracy” inimical to progress by *laissez-faire* economists, during the 1990s, was now restored to prominence, when the effects of lax controls over “assisted-living” and related nursing homes came into sharp relief. In just a matter of days, going to work became subject to restrictions and the right to work itself made conditional on Government’s assessment of what, now, represented **essential** as opposed to non-essential forms of occupation and labour.

It was a *paradigm shift*. After four decades of Reaganism, which had us all believe that, at its very best, governments could be described as a “necessary evil”, society came to accept, indeed, to look to government for guidance and for succour. Unevenly in the Nation but

massively in New York, it voted for a government which, after the pandemic, would use its massive powers to mobilise the economy, stricken by the pandemic but, even more importantly, *right* many egregious wrongs that the COVID 19 crisis brought into sharp relief. None of these myriad wrongs had been unknown to citizens or students of our discipline. But they were broadly accepted or at best tolerated during the long decades of the “*Millennial Paradigm*”, to employ words from an article, published in PAR less than a year ago. Its argument ran counter to the prevailing views espoused by most Americans at the end of the Twentieth and the Dawn of the Twenty-First Centuries; views widely propagated in the wake of 9/11 and the ensuing wars (Roberts 2020: 604).

Quite suddenly and drastically, not only ideas on government inherited from Reagan and “sanitized by Clinton” but also a related complacency were out of favour (Roberts 2020: 604). Once angrily rejected as “unpatriotic”, criticism of institutions, became not only acceptable but also part and parcel of an ongoing debate on democratic government and related reforms. A new *paradigm shift*. Not quite, if you consider that the counter-revolution, sponsored by Reagan – Thatcher, represented a sustained and concerted attempt to undo the outcomes of series of reforms from the days of FDR (New Deal) to those of LBJ (War on Poverty and Civil Rights) and by the Labour party in the United Kingdom, in the early post-second world war years. The New Deal and War on Poverty programmes, as well as the UN and post-war Reconstruction not only redefined the role and scope of governance but also brought to light new models and new tools available to governments to carry out their policies, nationally and internationally. We may be rediscovering the value of these tools, borne of another crisis, which hit the western world during the 1920s and 1930s; the crisis which propelled John Maynard Keynes to lasting fame (Carter 2020).

Curiously, this same crisis has also served to spur a burst of widespread interest in chapters of our history, until recently considered closed. Revisiting has prompted a re-interpretation, which has entailed new ways in which we view the past. Aspersion has been cast on venerated leaders; their monuments defaced, and legacies discarded. This is often the result of conflating past and present, forgetting that most leaders or military commanders embrace the values and rhetoric that are current in their lifetime. Rare are those who both withstood the pressures of society of their days and stood the *test of time*. Our times and our predicament, as we exit from the crisis of four decades, demand that we revisit such past events and people that largely shaped our destinies and actions, ideas, and institutions. It may be said of history and of *historiography*, that they acquire importance mostly at times of crises. One may think, in this context, of yet another war, which lasted thirty years and yet another pandemic, which brought this war to an end. The Peloponnesian War, which made Thucydides famous, was that historic war. In this same vein, one thinks of Machiavelli, who tried hard to make sense of a fragmented Italy in the 15th - 16th centuries, always looking to the past for lessons and for wisdom. At times of relative plenty, as in the past four decades, historiography veers not so much to the path of learning but rather to the service of leaders and their goals.

In the paper, which was written for the ASPA National Conference of March 2020, the author of this article drew lessons from the reading, all too often also *misreading* of the legacies that shaped our core institutions of governance. With a name like “Argyriades”, I cannot hide the fact that I am myself, the product of those legacies. Still, I hope you will not think that I take an uncritical view, forgetting the lessons of history and indulging in “*doxology*” or “*hagiography*” instead. By way of introduction, let me suggest that our political culture, as well as institutions and relevant vocabulary have their sources mostly in three cities, namely Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem. To these, I would like to add the Alexandria of a critical period

of history stretching from the 4th century BCE through to the 3rd century of our era; this because, like New York City in our days, it served as melting pot of peoples and of ideas, including some from Persia, from India and beyond.

FROM CITY-STATE TO EMPIRE

It is important to note that those cities and those centuries, from the Age of Pericles through the Roman Republic and Empire to Constantine the Great, were the cradle of two sharply contrasting approaches to governance and civic duty. They are still so today. One is governance as “good”; at the service of the citizens and society at large, and subject to their scrutiny. Both the *Polis* and *Res Publica*, from Pericles to Cesar, are exemplars of this pattern. At the height of its prosperity, Athens became the hub and - hegemon - of a commonwealth or empire which, as Thucydides argued, was ultimately harmful to the values of democracy, as well as mostly ephemeral. Rome proved another story. Though some of its conquests in Europe and West Asia antedated Cesar’s march on Rome, they presaged a progressive but also massive change in the goals and style of governance. Adopted very shortly before the dawn of our era (31 BCE), the title *imperator* signified more than the concentration of power, which the term has come to imply. Not only did the Emperor become the unquestioned ruler of the Empire’s domains; he soon was also now invested with the aura of a deity. Later, under Constantine the Great (306-337), he was accorded the titles of an “Equal to the Apostles” (*Isapostolos*) and “Defender of the Faith” (*Fidei Defensor*). The mystification and glorification of government and of the State were *on*; and they have never left us. Truly, a *paradigm shift*, it signified that citizens no longer were the *focus* or principal agents of government and governance. Although, from time to time, lip service has been paid to the people (*e.g.*, *Vox populi, vox Dei*) – the Emperor’s first duty was to God and to his reign (*Dieu et mon Droit*). The *Citizens* of the Republic became the *subjects* of the Empire; instrumental to the purposes of making State and Emperor ... Great Again!

Ad majorem gloriam Dei (for the greater glory of God), the government and State were boldly reinvented; cast as tools of the Almighty and of History. Fast forward, we have witnessed this narrative play out again and again. During the Middle Ages, the narrative and myth underpinned the Western Crusades. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, they served to legitimate imperial expansion and conquest. Both were explained away as the Empire’s and West’s “civilizing mission” (“*mission civilisatrice*”). Truly, a child of Empire, “the West”, both as a myth and metaphor for conquest and expansion, was born of the Crusades. More recently, in our days, this same myth added substance to the “Western Liberal Order” and “Defence of the Free World”. Both also trace their origins to the principle of Unity, which underpinned the doctrines on State and faith during the Middle Ages (c.f. Dante’s *De Monarchia*). It demanded that the world be governed by one ruler and adhere to one religion. In fact, as we well know, Crusades were largely wars of conquest and predation. Crusaders vented their fury, *en route* to the Near East, on defenceless religious minorities and on Constantinople, today’s Istanbul, which was then hub and centre of the Eastern Roman Empire. The sack of Constantinople was in 1204 but it exacerbated a rivalry and a conflict, which continue to this day. The rivalry began during the 9th century of our era and, by 1054, brought the total separation between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

This carried in its trail a gradual rift between the two halves of the Empire and, to this very day, dichotomy of the world into the “West” and the “East”. *How*, over time, this breach acquired *geopolitical*, as well as *moral* overtones, is an abiding fixture, of which we are still imperfectly aware but which we now accept as almost a Law of Nature. Over the past ten centuries, the *myth* endured, and *narratives* evolved to fit the circumstances. Conflating West

and East with two related concepts - respectively the concepts of *civilization* and *barbarism* – both also born within the Greco-Roman realm - the “**West**” soon came to signify sound and progressive governance while “**East**”, by contrast, pointed to despotism, backwardness, and arbitrary rule. In deference to Greece and Classical Antiquity, both highly prized, “*Byzantium*” was “re-invented” in the late seventeenth or early 18th centuries. A place-name in Antiquity, at what today is the Bosphorus and Istanbul, it came to exemplify the downsides of Empire, which the Age of Lights endeavoured to dissociate from Rome, dumping them all on Byzantium, in stereotype. Even today, “Byzantinism” and “Byzantine” are derogatory terms we use to point to symptoms of “bureaucracy” and obscurantism.

Playing fast and loose with geography, friendly States, in our own days, are called “Western democracies” though some may be located in the Middle of Far East. Some, called Western democracies only a few years ago, may lose both designations should they ever fall from grace. From Turkey to Ukraine, the frequency and the speed of such metamorphoses boggle the mind. Conversely, while democracy seems rooted in the “West”, in stereotype, illiberal regimes, by contrast, foregather in the East. Thus, in our “Western” parlance, “despots” and “oligarchs” are doggedly consigned to the Orient or “the East”, where some may live; hence, “Oriental Despots”. The well-known Scottish author of *Black Sea* had this to say on the subject:

“By the middle of the twentieth century, few European nation states had not, at one time or another, figured themselves as the “outpost of Western Christian Civilisation” ... Each of these nation-state myths identified “barbarism” as the condition or ethic of [the] immediate eastward neighbour”.
(Ascherson 1996:49-50)

Recalling “the barbarians” from North and East, whose waves accelerated the fall of Rome, the West still looks tenaciously towards the East, scanning a distant horizon for likely threats. From the Kaiser’s “*Yellow Peril*”, in the early twentieth century, when Japan suddenly emerged as a factor in the balance of power of East Asia, to the “China” or “Wuhan” virus in our days, one discovers such degrees of consistency and continuity in the thinking and the rhetoric as to cast doubt on the prospects of ever turning the page; moving away from stereotypes that have no basis in fact but still a life of their own. The *myths* that shape our minds and our collective psyche persevere, defying the light of reason and historical research, science, or data analysis. Simply put, they are deeply ingrained in our collective psyche and self-esteem (Roberts 2020: 603-609; Newland and Argyriades 2019: 2; Kim 2019: xv). Hopes, fears, and stereotypes wax perilous at times, when powerfully reinforced by yet another *myth*, also deeply rooted in our psyche. It is an “*apocalyptic*”, *binary* view of the world corresponding to a vision of ourselves, as the “Shining City on the Hill” battling an “Evil Empire” or the “Axis of Evil”. It served as *vademecum* to Reagan and his epigones but has been sadly given a new lease of life by recent political crises and the ongoing pandemic. Reading history is important, in part to explode such myths and to dispose of narratives that cloud the mind and jointly pose a danger to democracy and peace.

WHY IS HISTORY SO IMPORTANT?

So, what may we conclude? What may we learn from lessons borne of history and experience of two-and-a-half millennia? To begin with, from experience, we have learned, often painfully, that history is important. History is a mentor and teacher. Without deep knowledge of history, we are all potentially victims of narratives and metaphors, which offer slanted versions of reality. These are mostly an expression of perspectives of power holders. The story of four decades, since the early 1980s, afford abundant evidence in this regard. Properly studied, history is absolutely necessary to properly understand our widely-shared predicament and learn the lessons it teaches. Regrettably, all too often, exactly the opposite happens. For years,

history has been taught as the lives of famous leaders: from Pericles to Cicero; from Alexander to Caesar; from Washington to Obama. We learn about their deeds, the monuments they built, the accomplishments and speeches, which constitute their legacy. Often missing is the context, especially the framework of institutions, laws, as well as values and virtues which empowered them to act and to create.

Systems and institutions shape the values and the virtues by which we live and act (De Vries and Kim 2014). We neglect them to our peril. Repositories of values, they take a second place in political discourse which, accordingly, is conducted as debates on personalities; warts and all if you do not like them. In recent years, we have seen a surge of this proclivity to indulge critiques *ad hominem*, if only to suggest that our systems are impeccable; only those that we dislike contribute to a cacophony that we can end by removing them from office. The Ancient world excelled in the practice of such “politics”, which made some leaders famous (e.g., Cicero: “*Contra Catilinam*”).

Although some men have given a boost to great reforms, these generally have mostly been the outcomes of complex interactions between societal forces and technological progress or economic change. Not surprisingly, however, in political discourse, we still adhere, predominantly, to the “Great Leader Model”. The upshot of this tendency has been to lionise or demonise our leaders to fit the circumstances and suit a passing phase. This obviates the need to delve into the past, explore a complex setting, national or international, taking holistic approaches on how events take shape, why leaders go to war and what the sequel of conflicts may be (Herodotus 1984: 29). In politics and history, as well as in current affairs, we place the focus squarely on individuals. Thus, we refer to “the Biden or Trump Administrations”. By comparison, the past, socio-economic realities, demographic trends, peoples, and institutions receive rather scanty attention.

There may be no escape from this prevailing pattern, reinforced by weighty narratives, except to bear in mind the perils it entails, of hero-worship especially. The author of this paper has taken this lesson to heart. Few people’s names are mentioned; rather the emphasis is laid on public institutions and major belief systems in evolution. In spite of transformations, which take place over time, core institutions of governance have remained remarkably steadfast; surprisingly no different, as we compare their structures and underlying values, to those born in Antiquity. Like the architectural traits of the Pantheon in Paris or the Supreme Court building and the Capitol in Washington D.C., they remind us of their sources, which lie in Greece and Rome. Some twenty centuries later, we can look back in wonder and marvel at the constancy, consistency, and resilience of certain core ideals even though, over time, the world has moved – shifted in fact decisively - from hereditary rule and autocratic government to mostly participative, collegial, citizen-oriented, and democratic governance. This often-chequered progress has been affected mightily by socio-economic and technological trends but also by the progress or movement of ideas; the focus of this paper.

TWO CONTRASTING MODELS OF GOVERNANCE

As we compare our days to those of the Ancient world, it may be worth recalling that, twenty-five centuries ago, a war of 30 years and a pandemic brought the Golden Age of Athens to a calamitous end. Crossing the Rubicon (c.f. “*alea jacta est*”) and Cesar’s march on Rome likewise signalled the end of the Roman republic, which soon metamorphosed into the Roman Empire. Its sun has never set. Its eastern half succumbed to Ottoman rule, in 1453, but still retained some elements of its glorious Roman past, almost to our own days. Between them, Polis, Republic, and Empire bequeathed to all of Europe, the Americas included and, after World War II, almost the entire world, the structures, and the forms, as well as terminology we use

from day to day. Significantly also these mostly have their source in two antithetical, sharply contrasting models of governance and government:

- *one* of citizens' self-government with a focus on the people, its wellness and security, which it was left to citizens to manage and defend. The famous battle of Marathon (490 BCE) was fought by citizen-soldiers and, likewise, *ta koina*, i.e., the shared concerns in policy and public administration were assigned to accountable citizens, under the rule of law. In other words, the *citizen* was both the principal agent and recipient/beneficiary of the services produced by government authorities and/or civil society. Indeed, there was little difference between the two (Ktistaki 2013: 35-69).
- Under *imperial rule*, by contrast, citizens morphed into *subjects* of Monarchs. To all intents and purposes, the ends to which the Monarch decided to apply resources in his command remained at his discretion. Taxation, often crushing, became the Emperor's way of levying needed funds in order to recruit and to sustain an army of *mercenaries*, at once for domestic security and wars of conquest abroad. This became the *raison d'être* of imperial administration, the goals of which were stated to be "the greater glory of the Monarch and of God". With the advent of Christianity, as the State's official religion, the Emperor became Defender of the Faith (*Fidei Defensor*) which, in practice, turned religion into a pretext and a weapon for endless "virtuous" wars against infidels abroad and recalcitrant "heretics" or other "trouble-makers" at home. Wars were explained away as actions *ad majorem gloriam Dei* ("for the greater glory of God"), an expression also used by Jesuits worldwide.

Though it should be emphasised that the concept of "*popular sovereignty*" never disappeared entirely and was routinely invoked by Monarchs or against them, propagation of the faith, repression of heretics and the conversion of infidels trumped other considerations. Of course, these went *in tandem* with a lot of conspicuous spending – construction of cathedrals and monuments or palaces – which served a similar purpose (i.e., the glory of God and Monarch). Conducted, intermittently, during the Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Western Crusades, significantly coincided with the *Schism*, the rift in other words, then split of both Empire and Christian Church in two. *Duality* and antagonism of East and West, brought this pattern and model of government onto a wholly new level. Propagation of the faith and crushing dissident factions - by all means necessary - morphed into a *new norm*. It gradually prevailed across the "Western World" - and thus *the West* was born. It is still steadfastly with us. In 1204, Crusaders first besieged, then looted and ransacked Constantinople, capital of the East, on their way to the Holy Land. It was, arguably, the earliest in a series of expeditions which combined predation and conquest with a "*civilizing mission*", i.e., "spreading" the faith. Soon, this crusading proclivity brought the *Conquistadores* to the North American Continent, then to the Southern Hemisphere. Imperial expansion was on. In truth, all these *new norms* have never left us. They were seared into the conscience of many a "Western" people, who continue to refer to their wars and expeditions as "Crusades". Even the Nazi invasion of the USSR, in June 1941, was so described (Mazower 2008: 135-178). More recently, in our days, the expression was revived in connection with the invasion of Iraq, though soon the term was dropped, when it was realised how poorly it resonated with peoples in the region.

Significantly, in the days of the Iraq invasion, it was reported that a well-known evangelist planned to join in the expedition, in the hope of spreading the faith. Years later, in our days,

the visit of Pope Francis drew attention to the plight of the dwindling Christian Communities, some of which are among the world's oldest. Over the past two decades, their members, in their thousands, simply joined a growing exodus which, more recently, has brought hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees – Muslims, Yazidis and Christians – fleeing the chaos in countries ravaged by endless wars, as well as occupation, drugs, arms and human trafficking. They flock to safer havens in North America, Turkey, and the EU but also, in this process, deprive their countries of origin of valuable human resources that are so badly needed for governance, stability and socio-economic development. So much for “*nation-building*”! Like many another narrative, from the famous “*Chanson de Roland*” (c. 1100), through Kipling's “*White Man's Burden*”, to the “*Western Liberal Order*” and the “*Free World*”, in our days, they help perpetuate a form of hero-worship, prolific in the number of heroes it creates in our midst, as well as military exploits that laud the conquests overseas and the “*crusading spirit*”. Promoting “*virtuous*” wars, in “*defence*” of our values – religious or political – has given birth to lobbies and scores of pressure groups, whose business is warfare. They make the work more dangerous than it had been already. Given this known proclivity, the best hope for humanity may be “*geriatric peace*”, consistent with the world's broad demographic trends.

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

For two hundred and fifty years, beginning with the dawn of the Age of Lights, the world has seen the genesis, the growth and then decline of rival models of governance. Both were rooted in Antiquity; more precisely in the thinking of Classical Athens and Rome. These rival models acted in opposite directions. The first, as we have seen, promised freedom with equality, well-knowing that the one without the other would lead to contradictions, egregious inequalities and ultimately unrest and war. On all levels of governance, it prized the rule of law and, to this end, a necessary balance between the rival claims of groups or organised communities and individual people. Creation of the UN, after WWII, exemplified this thinking whose high-tide lasted a little more than three and a half decades. Then came a counter-culture which, in the name of progress, attempted to revert to unfettered individualism, and *de-regulation* at home, combined with *hegemony* and licence to interfere in other countries' affairs (Marchese 2020: 11-23). Hopefully, the pandemic, which brought to glaring light the numerous shortcomings of this approach and model, has also demonstrated the imperatives of balancing competing claims and needs under the rule of law. Once more, we may do worse than draw on the rich legacies that have served as the pillars of democratic governance and peaceful co-existence among nations.

From the Crusades to-date, waves of imperial expansion brought about a curious twist to the governance traditions bequeathed by Greece and Rome before the advent of Empire. In the words of F.A. Cleveland, “[t]he theory that government exists for common welfare and that a public office is a public trust” was revived and fortified (quoted by Mosher 1981:57). That it should be conducted under the rule of law, with *due process* and *consistency* took on a special weight against the rival dictum that “whatever pleases the Prince should have the force of law”. (*Quod principe placuit legis habet vigorem*). The Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution proclaimed as much, and much of the same could be argued of constitution-building in France in the late 18th century (Hauriou 1968: 163-169). Both in the USA and in France, Liberty and Equality were elevated to fundamental principles (Mosher F.C. 1976: 9). To be sure, the “self-evident truth” that all men are created equal may not have resonated, in Jefferson's days in the same way as today. However, it pursued a train of thought, which was borne of Stoic philosophy and Roman Natural Law (Hays G. 2021: 37-40). It continues to this day. One of its basic precepts is that humans are born equal (*omnes homines aequales sunt*). How

only a century later – in the late 19th century -- in the pursuit of empire, as well as related agendas -- not only this ideology but also political practice were turned on their heads remain two of the enigmas of post-Enlightenment history. *Racism* and *inequality* were elevated to dogmas. Conquest and domination became noble and imperative; proof of excellence and valour. This shift made little sense without the potent legacy bequeathed by the Crusades. It started a process of *othering*, initially religious, then racial and geographical; a process which continues to our days. It bifurcates humanity sharply into two: those we consider our equals or “western” and “civilised”, and those that we dismiss and despise as “savages”, “barbarians” and “oriental”.

We have seen how this played out during the 20th century and into the 21st. A combustible idea, it rested on two assumptions which turned the fundamentals of the American and the French Revolutions, particularly equality, solidarity or community and freedom, on their head. Thus, at the dawn of the 20th century, a well-known British poet, Rudyard Kipling issued a clarion call to President Theodore Roosevelt, challenging him to accept and take on a new mission: the “*White Man’s Burden*”. More than a century later, few remember either Kipling or the “*White Man’s Burden*”. But both were widely read and discussed during the 1920s, 1930s and even in the war years. The poem celebrated the “civilising mission” of empires and graphically described their captives as “half-devil and half-child” (Immerwahr, D. 2019: 94). Legitimation of empire added substance to the doctrine that, for the good of “savages”, the West needed to act “*in loco parentis*”, guiding peoples in their care to Western virtue and values, *manu militari*, if necessary. A recent manifestation of this “crusading” spirit has given birth to expressions like “*the free world*”, “*nation-building*” and “*regime change*” prompting foreign interference, which continues to our days.

CENTRALITY OF EQUALITY TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

We witness, in effect, the progress or meanderings of ideas, some all too often bent to suit extraneous purposes. Born in the Ancient world, the concept of *equality* required a leap of faith confronted, as it was in those days as today, with mostly stark disparities afflicting society at large. Conflated in Antiquity, as it is still today, with the concepts of community and democracy, it had to accommodate the presence of categories of resident non-citizens: a varying number of immigrants (*metoikoi* or *peregrini*) and slaves. It needs to be emphasised that slaves, in the Ancient world, are not to be compared with those of modern times; products, this time, of economies borne of colonial expansion and human exploitation. Slavery in the Ancient world was often a transient condition. Manumission in Judaea occurred every seventh year. At the dawn of our era certainly, the institution of slavery in Greece and Rome, was influenced by Stoicism, the growth of Natural Law (*jus naturale*) and the related concept of a common human essence, which extended equality to all members of the human community, providing the underpinnings of *civitas humana*. A common occupation of slaves in ancient times was that of *pedagogos* i.e., literally, escorting children. Epictetus, a slave in the early second century of our era, was a noted Stoic philosopher who later “ran a school for young Greek and Roman aristocrats” (Hays 2021: 37).

By contrast, from the days of Antiquity on, *inequality* was seared into the deeply-rooted institution of *patriarchy*, as well as in imperial rule and hegemonic dominance. This paralleled the weakening of democratic governance and of the rule of law. Both in theory and practice but with a modern twist, inequality took on a life of its own, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which also marked the apogee of racism, of “eugenics”, imperialism, Nazism, and fascism, throughout the Western world. Imperialism and Nazism elevated *inequality* onto a whole new level. They preached the cult of violence or hegemony and subjugation as

necessary accompaniments to “progress” of the world. For centuries, they had been core features of *conquistas* proselytism which, after the Crusades, were featured in campaigns of many a western country. When President T. Roosevelt set out to conquer Cuba, he took with him a copy of Edmond Demolin’s book “*Anglo-Saxon Superiority*” (Immerwahr 2019: 68). Significantly, however, during the 17th century, tired of an “endless war” – the Thirty Years War, which ravaged Central Europe - rival Catholic and Protestant princes admitted the futility of trying to force their values on the recalcitrant “others”. In 1648, they signed the Treaty of Westphalia, which introduced two principles hitherto little known and dimly appreciated: the *sovereign equality of princes* (now nations) and the doctrine of *non-interference* in the domestic affairs of other States (*cujus regio, ejus religio*). Within our living memory, they have been twice reaffirmed, combined with non-aggression: in the League of Nations Covenant (1924) and, even more emphatically, the United Nations Charter (1945). Not surprisingly, they have been twice defied, on the eve of World War II and the dawn of the 21st century, which also saw the invasion and occupation of States in Western Asia.

Both left a trail of woes; we have not seen their end. Although explained away as wars to “right a wrong”, to enforce a “New World Order” or, indeed, as an intention to introduce a better way of life with human rights, prosperity and democratic governance, invasion and occupation have shown their limitations and *unsustainability*. They cannot go on for long – without an army of “*Quislings – collaborators*”, as both WWII and the more recent wars have amply demonstrated. In Eastern Europe notably, this regrettable phenomenon took on unique dimensions, later, in the 1940s and early 1950s, occasioning the flight and exile to the Americas and massive reprisals at home (Mazower 2008: 259-471). Experience in West Asia and North Africa, in our days, points to a similar sequel, though it may be too early to tell (Allison 2020; Allison 2018; Wertheim 2017; Niblett 2017). Each time, we make believe that this time will be different because *we*, “Westerners”, are so much better. In fact, it is a pattern as old as Greek Antiquity and Ancient Rome. Some of its traits evolved, with changing circumstances but the hard core remains, later greatly reinforced by spreading faith and empire. It is a pattern breaking with equity and equality, diversity, and inclusion. With Empire and Christianity, as the official state religion, it was progressively invested with the urge to dominate on behalf of the Almighty. *Hegemony* morphed into a mission. From the Schism and the Crusades, through the days of the Inquisition and the Conquistadores, to the (Western) “White Man’s Burden” and the Western Liberal Order, in our days, this seamless continuity has been nothing less than signal. No other political culture or tradition in world history can match it.

HEGEMONY OR NON-INTERFERENCE?

The earliest intimations, as we have seen, go back to Ancient Greece and the Golden Age of Athens. Thucydides, the author of the *Peloponnesian War*, bequeathed us two notable speeches, both by Athenian leaders. One is the “*Funeral Oration*”, attributed to Pericles, who died of a plague in that 30-year war; the other has come out of the “*Mitylenian Debate*” (Thucydides 1984: 265-290). The former served to extoll the virtues and the glory of the Athenian democracy; the latter points to Cleon, the same who carried out the motion to put the rebellious Mitylenians to death. It contained this prophetic passage:

“I have often before now been convinced that democracy is incapable of empire, and never more so than by your present change of mind in the matter of Mytilene” (Thucydides 1984: 281)

It took a leap of faith, after the Second World War, to reaffirm the principles of the Sovereign Equality of Nations and of Non-Interference as the foundation principles of durable peace. They swiftly became victims of a mighty *paradigm shift*, a push back and sea change, that swept the world at large during the 1980s, 1990s, and the start of this new century.

Both *equity* and *equality*, *inclusion* and *diversity* were “downsized” and have been in the cross-hairs ever since. On the international level, this shift began with Tony Blair, leader of the “New Labour”. In 1999, at a speech in Chicago, he dismissed “non-interference” as being no longer valid (Niblett 2017: 18). The string of wars that followed indicated that the licence to “interfere” into other countries’ business was deemed to be a prerogative limited to very few. It harked back to the days of glamoured imperial expansion and of the “White Man’s burden”. Little did the mighty of our days know that others, far less prominent or powerful, would soon, opportunistically, also choose to join in the fray (Wertheim 2017: SR7). Hegemonism and interference have increasingly become counterproductive and perilous. They frequently invite both resistance and resentment, as well as a long trail of woes at home, outcomes of “interference” and “endless wars”.

As noted by Thucydides, democracy, hegemony, equality, interference, and war do not mix very well. Not only interests conflict but also values clash. During the 1980’s and 1990’s, on every level of governance, national and international, with the advent of the new paradigm, both *service* and *equality* came under strong attack to the detriment of our profession. In the words of H.G. Frederickson:

“In the reinventing-government movement, “service” is the enemy to be defeated by empowered citizens making choices, and empowered public servants arranging public choices” (Frederickson 1996: 265)

The Managerial Model prioritised the Manager and the “stakeholder” (shareholder too) over the citizen/customer or employee. It primed obedience/discipline over participation and dialogue (“Let the Manager manage”!). Soon Public Administration morphed into Public Management to accommodate the needs *not* of the common man – the citizen or resident – but only very few at the top: the managers, “stakeholders” and shareholders; “pipers” who call the tune. New Human Resource Management expressed this concept well. Top priority was accorded to the three Ds (Downsizing, Devolution and Deregulation), in the quest of the 3Es (Expediency, Efficiency and Effectiveness). Subordinates, minorities, the women, and the poor were *on their own*. *Homo Economicus*, the outcome of this thinking, was born. Soon afterwards, the ongoing pandemic struck.

DEMOCRACY AND PEACE OR A NEW “BRAVE NEW WORLD”?

At the source of this attack on democratic values and equality was a “*Brave New World*”: the ideology that progress and good governance demanded a small government and “freedom for power holders”. Ideally, it should work with a shrinking public service, as well as *Deregulation*, allowing market forces a free reign and leaving to the government the role of “facilitator” of business activity (World Bank 1994). Over time, we have seen the outcomes of such “facilitation”. Disparities have mounted exponentially to unprecedented levels, to the point of endangering peace, community, and democracy (Krugman 2020: 259-297; Fukuyama 2020: 26-32). Since ancient times, in Greece, in Rome and beyond, it has been widely acknowledged that wealth mutates to power, even changing fundamentals, which people take for granted. In these past forty years, examples of such changes have multiplied, and the *abuse of power* increased with vastly increased corruption. Disparities between the “haves” and the “have nots” have also escalated. While they may pass unnoticed at times of relative plenty, at times of crisis, by contrast, they cause the surge of anger and public unrest. Not only in North America, but also in parts of Europe and of the world at large, growing poverty with the pandemic has forced the hand of government to adopt remedial measures not only to succour the poor but also appease their anger and indignation. It has not always worked, as recent events demonstrated. What will the *new norm* be, as we exit from the crisis? This question is,

for sure, on everybody's lips (Fukuyama 2020: 26-32; Roberts 2020: 603-609). In fact, this very syndrome has been repeatedly present since the days of Antiquity, when freedom and equality, democracy and empire were debated by Aristotle and the historian Thucydides. The debate continues to this day. In Antiquity and today, but especially in our days, massive concentrations of wealth and capacity to use it to force the hand of governments, have undermined democracy and public administration, which rest on *equality* and *service*. Hegemony and inequality have often led to war, conquest, and interference especially in the absence of countervailing forces, as the past decades have shown (Allison 2020: 30-40; Allison 2018: 124-133).

Balance of power, equality, equity and *moderation* in governance and world affairs, *under the rule of law* appear to represent the quintessence of the legacy of Greek and Roman thought, as it evolved primarily in the days of self-government: the Golden Age of Athens and *Res publica* in Rome. This legacy changed drastically in the days of Empire, which shifted both the purposes and focus of the rulers to territorial conquest and aggrandisement and the accumulation of power, considering these assets as signs of divine favour. During the past two centuries, we have seen this pattern of governance play out, with mostly disastrous results. Even today, with World War II and its sequel still fresh on people's minds, some governments, in spite of stated "good intentions", readily shift from welfare to warfare, ostensibly in defence of peace and human rights. Under such circumstances, in spite of pious talk by many a power holder, both *freedom* and *equality* remain at risk. They are not "convenient myths". They undergird democracy, foster the cause of peace, and provide a surer path for global cooperation than hegemonic leadership, however well-intentioned.

After the 1980s, both equality and peace came under fierce attack mostly from the radical right, with narratives which featured neo-conservative thinking and the New Public Management but also bellicose narratives proclaiming the necessity of "moral clarity" and military build-up "in order to preserve and to extend an international order friendly to ... "our prosperity and our principles".⁴ The triumph of such thinking, during the past decades, even more than the pandemic, may arguably be faulted for the afflictions, which the world has had to endure. We need economics and management to guide us to sound governance. Left to themselves, however, management and economics may tend to undermine both democratic governance and Public Administration. We need to couple Management and Economics with the study of History, Ethics, Public Law, Psychology and Sociology. It has been rightly claimed that Public Administration and the Public Service Profession rest chiefly on the pillars of citizens' equality, the rule of law and due process. None of these has carried much weight with neoliberal thinking (Sommermann 2002: 33). To the New Public Management, as earlier mentioned, we owe a model of Man, the *Homo Economicus*: a one-dimensional man, discussed in some detail in yet another paper submitted for the Conference at Anaheim (2020). Needless to emphasise it: a *One-dimensional Man* (Marcuse 1964) may arguably, produce efficiency and effectiveness but, as Thucydides argued in the "*Funeral Oration*" attributed to Pericles, it hardly promotes the prototype of either a good citizen or a good public servant and member of civil society. Humans are *multi-faceted* and so should they remain. We need to reconsider, re-calibrate and re-order our priorities, to build a healthier Society, nationally and internationally.

Close on the heels of Covid and *One-Dimensional man*, this paper has attempted a partial response to the question, which lies at the centre of governance: "who benefits" from government; how much and how reliably; "who pays" for public goods and, other than effectiveness, how highly must we value "*distributive justice*" and *equity*? Since the Golden Age

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_for_the_New_American_Century

of Athens and the Roman *Res Publica*, these questions have represented the core of Political Science and Public Administration.

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