



The Department of
POLITICS and
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Introduction to the Study of Politics Theorising the Democratic State

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Lecture 1

Democracy and Freedom

Democratic Principle

1. *Human individuals should have a hand in organising the structures that govern them*

Democratic Principle 1: Human individuals should participate in the structures that govern them

Principle of Autonomy:

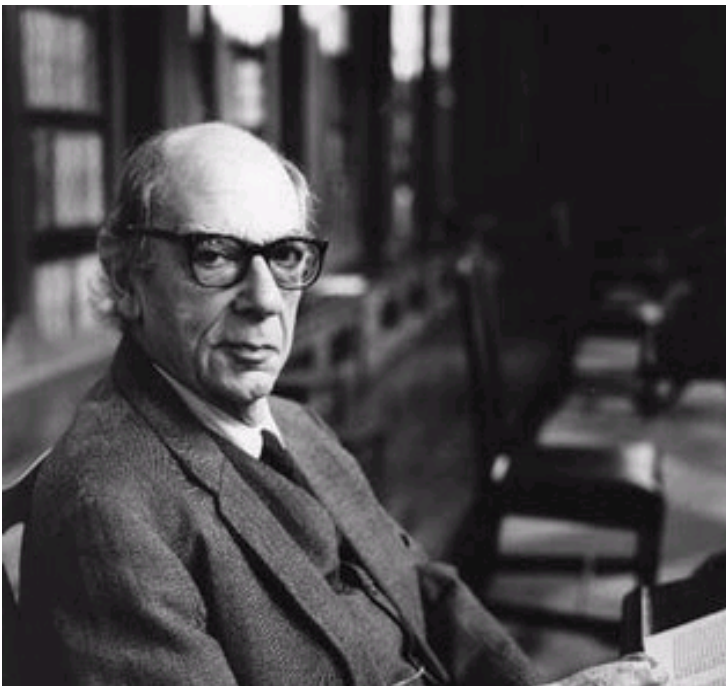
Human individuals should be self governing

nomos: laws, rules, norms

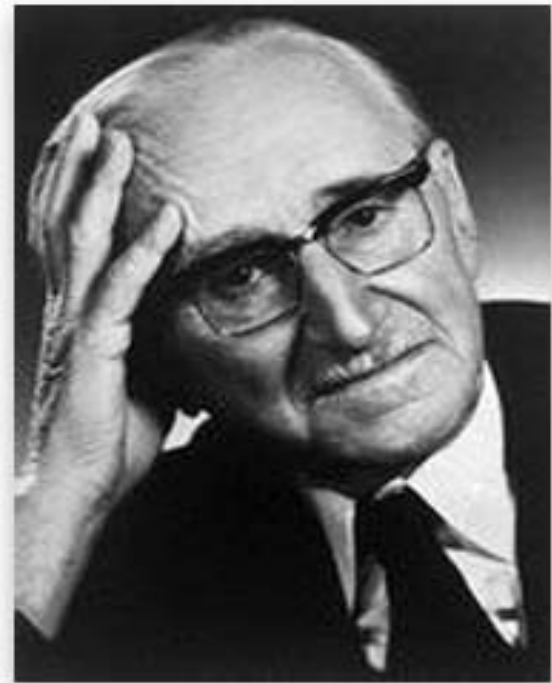
heteronomy: rule by an other

Condition of autonomy (negative)

a person who rules him or her self cannot be physically constrained (prevented) or coerced (forced) by any other person or by any social system of rules etc external to her/him;



Isaiah Berlin 1909-1997



F A Hayek 1899-1992

What is the relationship between 'being free' and 'being able'?

That I cannot do something does not mean I am not free to do it.

Freedom and Ability:

[Cannot] does not imply [is not free];

but [is not free] does imply [cannot]

(*counterfactual*: if I were free, I could).

(*complication*: what is the relation between [cannot] and [may not]?)

Condition of autonomy:
(positive)

appropriately in control of him or
her self;

lives under rules that are hers/his or
that s/he has adopted as hers/his;

Democratic Principle

*2: People together should
organise the structures that
govern them*

1. The question of external boundaries:

who should be included in the self-governing collective?

2. The question of internal relationships:

what must be the nature of the ties between members such that a collective can be self-governing?

Collective Self Government

1. Aggregation of autonomous individual decisions and actions

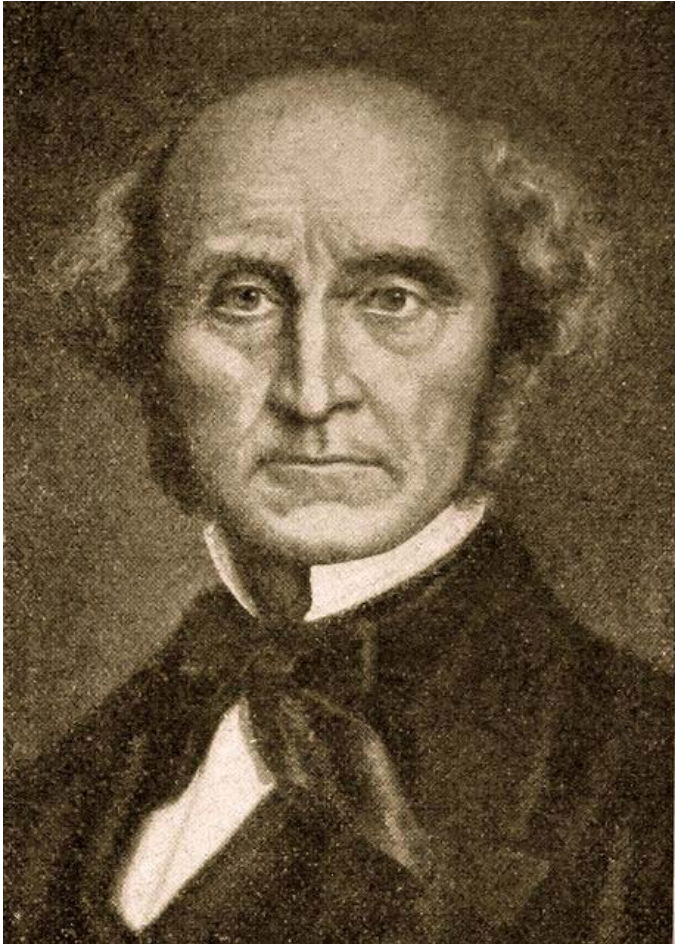
Coordination problem:

Individual self-interested decisions can add up to suboptimal (evil, disastrous) outcome for all or some

2. Cooperative collectively oriented decision and action

Justifications of Democracy

1. Outcome oriented: public good or avoidance of bad
consequential, or *teleological* (goal oriented)
2. Derived from prior value of autonomy:
deontological (derived from duty or right)
or *inferential*



J. S. Mill 1806-1873

It has long ... been a common saying that if a good despot could be ensured, despotic monarchy would be the best form of government. ...

'What should we then have? One man of superhuman mental activity managing the entire affairs of a mentally passive people. Their passivity is implied in the very ideal of absolute power. The nation as a whole, and every individual composing it, are without any potential voice in their own destiny. They exercise no will in respect to their collective interests. All is decided for them by a will not their own, which it is legally a crime for them to disobey. What sort of human beings can be formed under such a regimen?

Representative Government 1861 Ch.3

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3. *Virtue centred*: argument in terms of character

A portrait of John Stuart Mill, a man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat. The portrait is on the left side of the slide, with a vertical white line separating it from the text on the right.

J. S. Mill:

There is no difficulty in showing that the ideally best form of government is that in which the sovereignty, or supreme controlling power in the last resort, is vested in the entire aggregate of the community; every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of the ultimate sovereignty, but being, at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in government, by the personal discharge of some public function, local or general.

Representative Government Ch.3.

