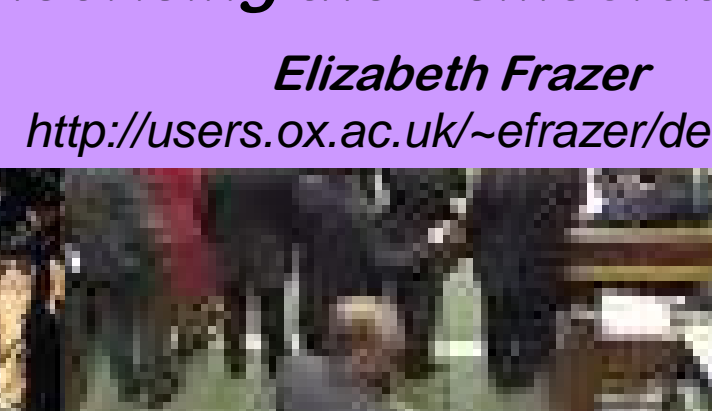


Theorising the Democratic State
Elizabeth Frazer
<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~efrazer/default.htm>



Lecture 5
Who Rules? 2





*State and
Power*

A large crowd of people is gathered at a night concert. The stage is in the foreground, and the crowd extends into the background. The scene is illuminated by stage lights, and the city skyline is visible in the distance.

Democratic Principle 8:

**The principle of popular
sovereignty**

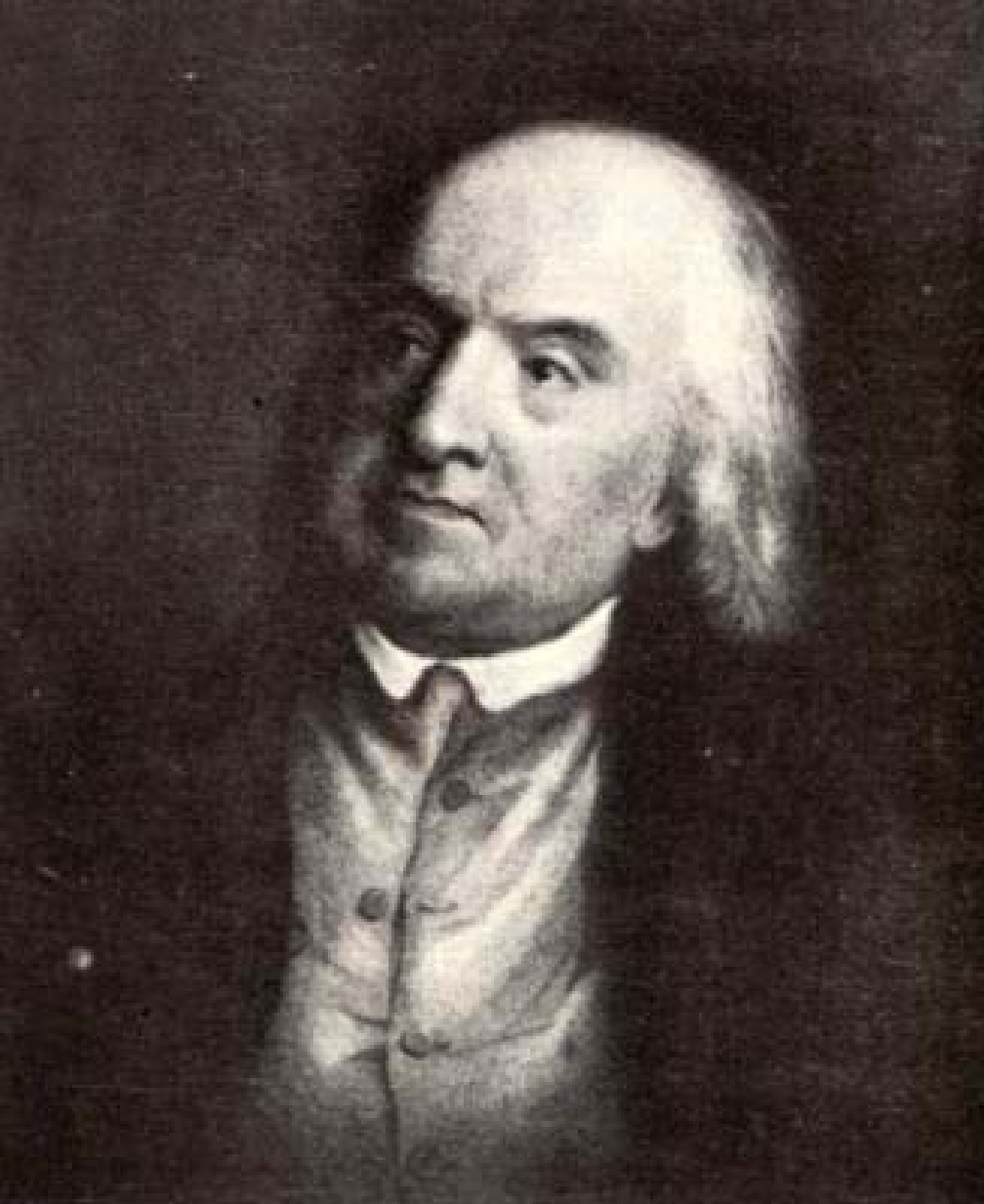


8. The principle of popular sovereignty

***Sovereignty should lie with the people
(not with a king or with God)***

9. The principle of democratic equality

Every one (each) is to count for one and no one is to count for more than one



**The utilitarian
principle of
individuality and
equality:**

*Each to count for one
and none to count for
more than one.*

Jeremy Bentham 1748-1832



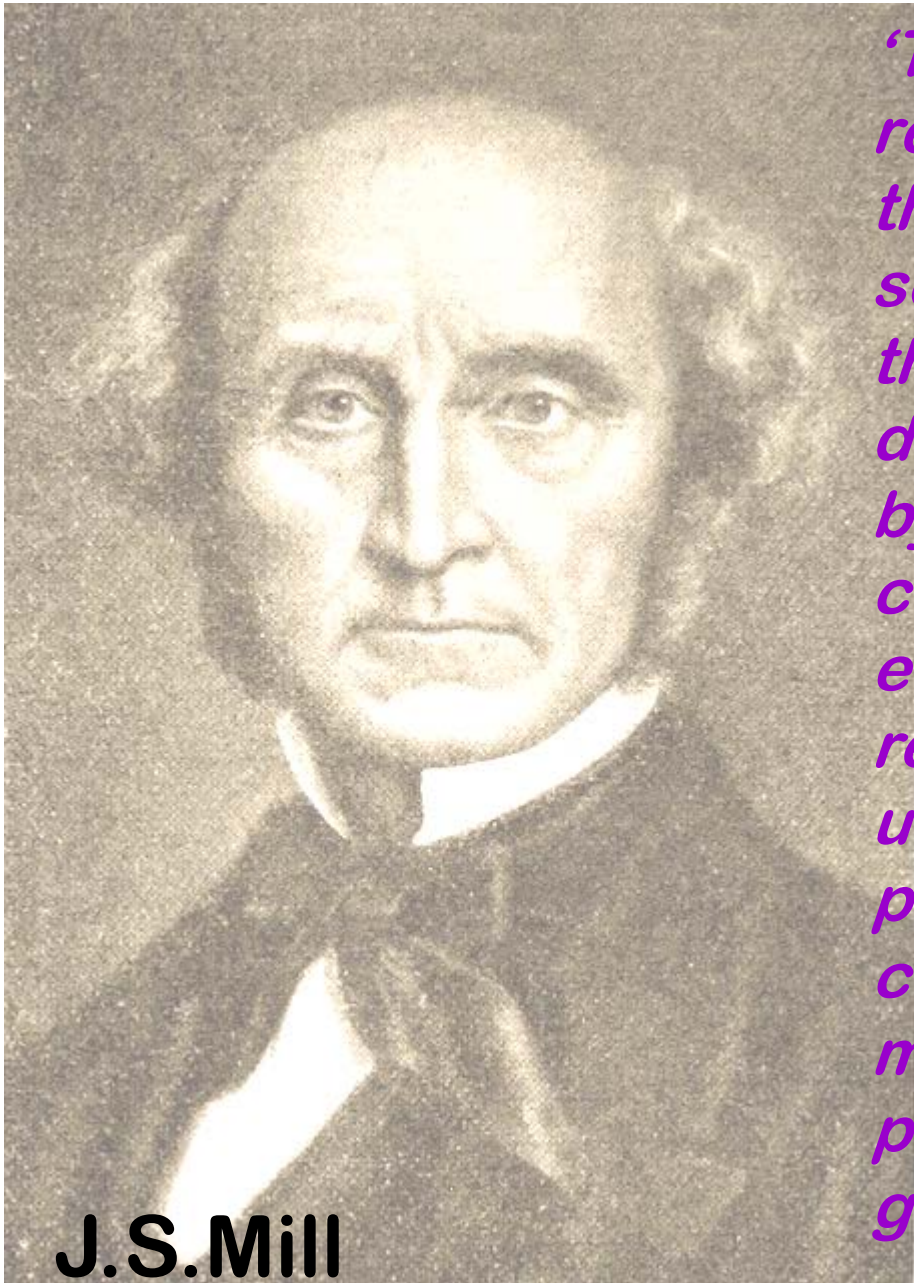
Rousseau:

The people collectively constitute the body politic

The body politic is made up of citizens, not natural individuals

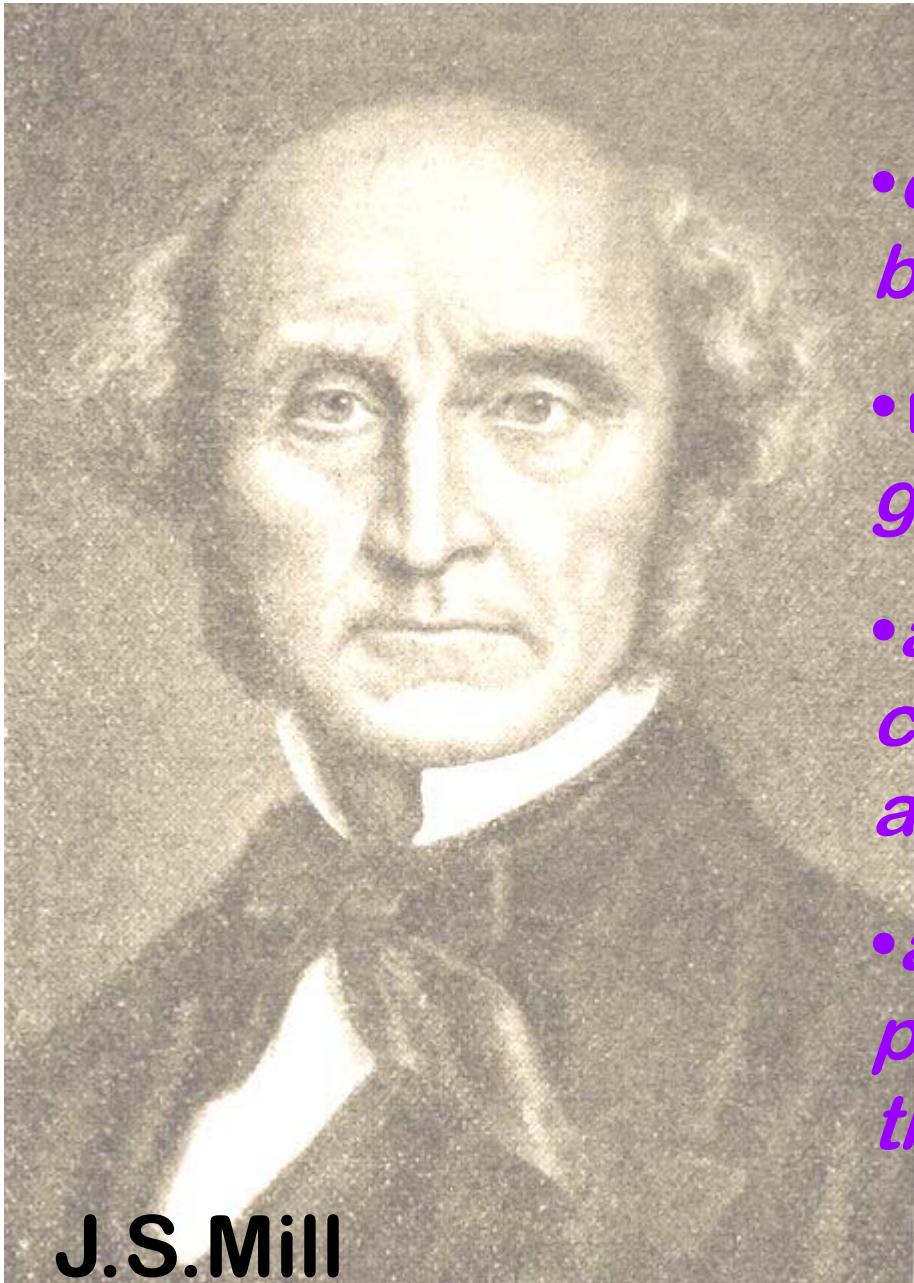
When assembled, the people are sovereign

The central political freedom: freedom of assembly.



'The meaning of representative government is that the whole people, or some numerous portion of them, exercise through deputies periodically elected by themselves the ultimate controlling power, which, in every constitution, must reside somewhere. This ultimate power they must possess in all its completeness. They must be masters, whenever they please, of all the operations of government.'

J.S. Mill



J.S.Mill

Representative bodies:

- *ought not to administer, but deliberate;*
- *watch and control the government;*
- *are the 'nation's committee of grievance and congress of opinion';*
- *are the place where people talk in the face of their opponents*

Boundary Questions

1. External boundaries:

Where does the boundary of the sovereign body (polity, democracy) lie?

1. Classical republicanism: the body politic
2. C18: natural society
3. C19: emerging discourses of nationhood
4. Shared political institutions (laws, representation, administration)

Boundary Questions - External boundaries: Problems

- 1. Constructed, hence contestable, nature of 'nation', 'society', etc*
- 2. Exclusion: colonialism/ imperialism – rule without popular sovereignty*
- 3. Socially marginal groups formally or informally excluded;*
- 4. People affected by laws of a state but not members of it – exports, externalities*

Boundary Questions 2:

Internal boundaries:



Robert Dahl b.1915
Who Governs? (1961)
Pluralism Revisited (1978)

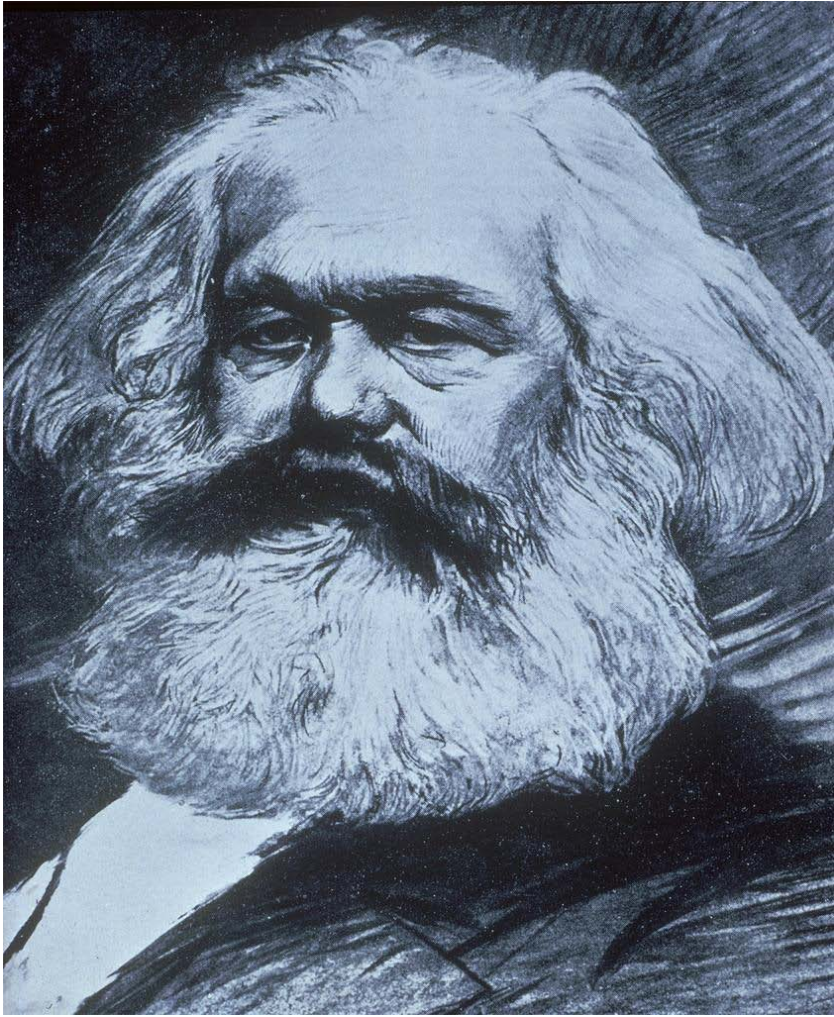
The pluralist theory of democratic decision making

Civil rights, and diverse sources of social and political power, give everyone the capacity to form an 'interest group';

Different interests will pursue different policies;

Decision outcomes will vary, depending on the interest group formation and relations, and the issue at hand.

Boundary Questions 2 - Internal boundaries:



Karl Marx 1818-1883

Theory of class and state

Capitalist production centres on the exploitation of labour power

There is a close relationship between the dominant economic and the dominant political classes:

- *‘state as executive committee for the whole bourgeoisie’ [Communist Manifesto 1848]*
- *‘state as relatively autonomous but acts in the interests of capital (even if opposed by capitalists) [18th Brumaire 1852]*



Theories of power

1.

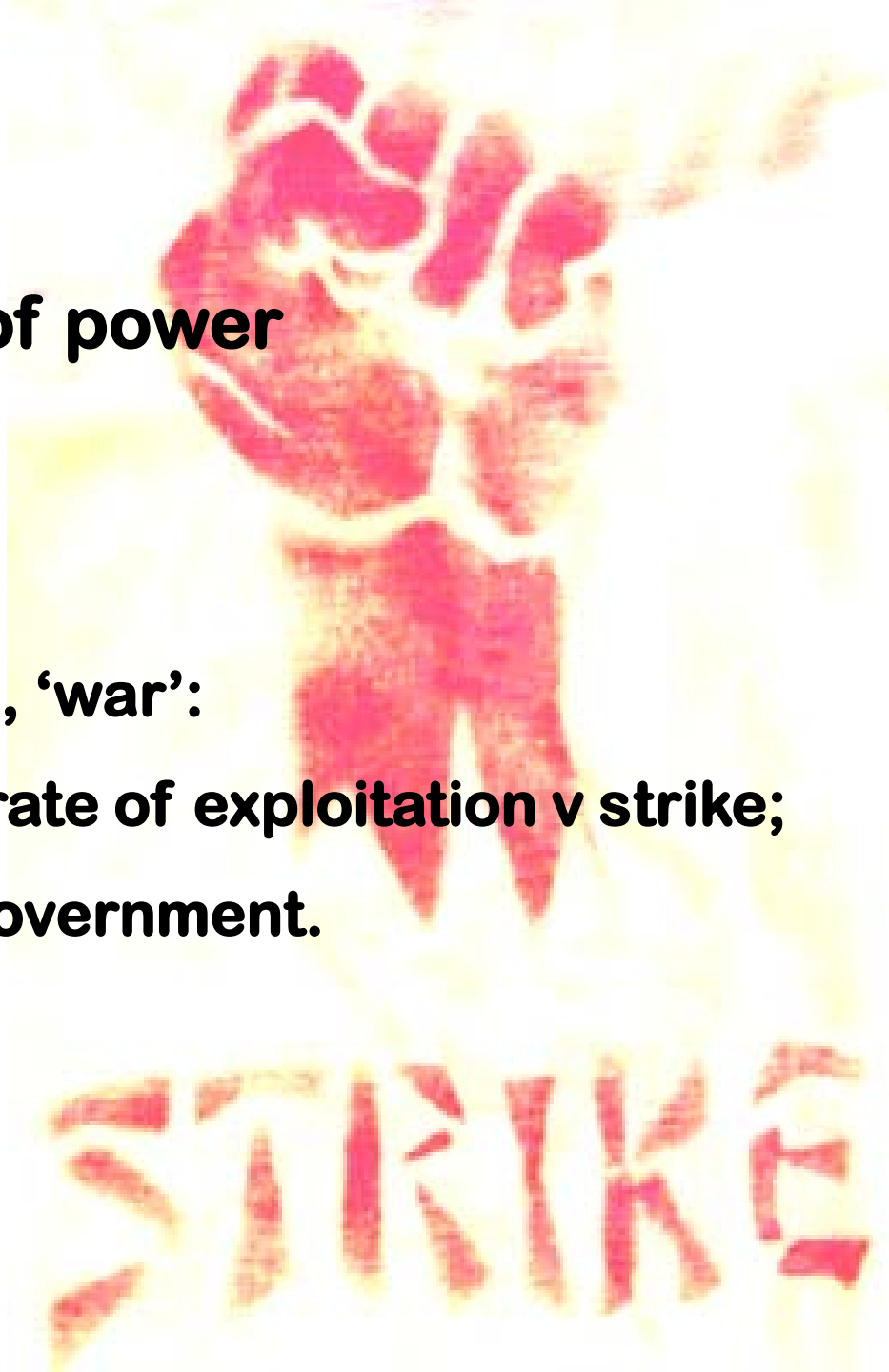
Coercion, 'war':

zero sum game – increasing rate of exploitation v strike;

枪杆子里面出政权 class party government.

热烈祝贺印度支那
三国人民抗美救国
战争的伟大胜利！

'Power grows out of the barrel of a gun' –
Mao Tse-Tung



Theories of Power 2

Dominant ideology thesis:

- *Societies need and have a 'dominant ideology'*
- *This secures voluntary compliance by way of norms, values, and understandings of the world*
- *A more efficient way of securing social order than coercive violence*

'Dimensions of Power'



Steven Lukes b.1941

- 1. Overt disagreement, contest, and eventual resolution (decision) (A has power over B if A wins)*
- 2. Power to prevent disagreement occurring, eg by keeping issues off the agenda (A has power over B if A can further his interests without B having a chance to resist)*
- 3. Power to prevent B understanding that her/his interests are opposed to A's (A has power over B if A's interests are furthered at the expense of B's; and B does not realise this)*

Matthew Crenson *The UnPolitics of Air Pollution*, 1971;
P Bachrach and M Baratz '2 faces of power' *APSR* 1962

Power of the State

- 1. Dahl: power to organise and maintain the institutions within which competition over policy is conducted**
- 2. Marx: power to maintain a preferred (capitalist) social and economic system of inequality**

Power of the state

The traditional view: the power to punish or kill: to take away life or to let live;

Modern power:

to discipline - to educate, to socialise (via schools, welfare, medicine, and surveillance)

to govern - to classify, to tax

Biopower: the power to give life: via new technologies of engineering, of production and reproduction, but also via discipline and government.



Michel Foucault
1926-1984

