

democracies will most likely be unable to live without some form of utopia. The question is which new type of utopia will appear on the horizon.

Furet refused the posture of a prophet and ended his Lisbon lecture, his true political testament, by leaving this question open. His entire work makes it clear that understanding our present condition requires that we reflect back on the complex legacy of hope and suffering bequeathed by the twentieth century. François Furet is one of the best guides we can follow on this journey of self-understanding and this short volume confirms it.

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Tzvetan Todorov: *The Inner Enemies of Democracy*. Trans. Andrew Brown. (Malden, MA: Polity, 2014. Pp. 200.)

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In some of his early writings, Todorov established a reputation in structural linguistics, semiotics, and poetics. But more recently he has moved impressively into historical and cultural interpretation and critique. This book offers a lucid and penetrating diagnosis of the inner ailments and congenital pathologies of democracy—a diagnosis intended not to downgrade democracy but to restore it to a more robust and healthy mode of public life.

The main challenges to democracy arise no longer from rival regimes (as in antiquity), nor even from recent hostile competitors, but from the fact that democracy “secrets within itself the very forces that threaten it” (6). “The people, [individual] freedom, and progress are constituent elements of democracy; but if one of them breaks free from its relations with others, thus escaping any attempt to limit it and erecting itself into a single principle, they become distinct dangers: populism, ultraliberalism, and messianism, these inner enemies of democracy” (10). The three derailments or pathologies are analyzed in detail, preceded by an introductory chapter dealing with the “ancient controversy” between Pelagius and St. Augustine—the former a champion of unlimited willpower and the second of pliant submission to divine grace—and the historical repercussions of their teachings.

The first major derailment and “inner enemy” of democracy is “political messianism.” Todorov distinguishes between three “waves”: the French Revolution and its aftermath; the “Communist project” after 1917; and the externally induced “regime changes,” especially after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990. In the aftermath of the French Revolution, the millenarian

aim was to spread its ideas beyond France's borders. In the words of Saint-Just in 1792: "The French people is voting for the freedom of the world" (33). As in all crusades, the triumph of liberty was secured through military violence, a method fully endorsed by Danton: "The hirelings of despotism will be vanquished by the exterminating angel of liberty" (34). These ideas became the backbone of French colonial ventures in Africa and beyond. With regard to non-European populations, Condorcet is reported to have said that European countries need "to civilize them or cause them to disappear" (36).

The second wave is the "Communist project." In this regard, Todorov writes from some personal experience. (Born in 1939 in Bulgaria, he emigrated to France in 1963.) His account traces the project back to Babeuf's "conspiracy of equals" and its transformation in the hands of "scientific" socialists like Saint-Simon and Louis Blanc. The new doctrine of "scientism" claimed "that the world can be fully known and be transformed in accordance with a [scientific] ideal." The doctrine, however, presented problems by suggesting that social change was automatic and predictable. Communism accepted the thesis that "history has a predetermined and unchangeable direction"; but the need for class struggle put pressure on the thesis. Marxism tried to hold on to both ends: it was "not only a deterministic theory, but also an intransigent voluntarism" (41). With Lenin, voluntarism took the upper hand, but with curious results. The Soviet Union gave rise to a fully planned "totalitarian state" which left little or no room for individual will or initiative. "I lived under this regime for twenty years," Todorov comments (45). What is "most deeply engraved in my memory" is not so much the total "lack of freedom" but this paradox: that "all this evil was done in the name of good, was justified by a goal presented as sublime."

Most attention is devoted to the third wave: "liberal" millenarianism or "imposing democracy by bombs." The wave is loosely connected with the earlier period of French expansionism because the policy consists "in imposing democracy and human rights by force" (45). The linkage with the second wave is more complicated because of the anti-Communist zeal of the new policy. However, Todorov detects some uncanny connections. To a considerable extent, "the ideologues of military intervention on behalf of human rights are drawn from the formerly pro-Communist intelligentsia that has in the meanwhile converted to anti-Stalinism" (46). Todorov reflects on the "hubris" of messianic interventionism. He also indicates two reasons why such ventures are bound to fail: "The first is that the violence of the means cancels out the nobility of the ends. There are no humanitarian bombs or merciful wars: the populations who suffer them count the bodies and have no time for sublime rhetoric." The second reason is that democracy can only be achieved democratically: if we assume that others, in order to be freed, must first submit, democratic values are "permanently compromised" (72–73).

The second internal corruption of democracy is private selfishness or "the tyranny of individuals." For Todorov, there has been a historical change in

liberalism's conception of individuals: namely, from a socially constituted agency to an atomistic autonomy. A major role in this transformation was played by the capitalist economy where individual prosperity became "a goal in itself" (80). For the sake of private prosperity, public action and commitment had to be reduced to a minimum. As in the case of Marxism, Todorov detects in laissez-faire economics a mixture between trust in "nature" and in willpower or voluntarism. The development reached its peak in the doctrine of "neoliberalism" triumphant during the last half century. In the financial crisis of 2008–9, the doctrine revealed its real character: "While profits remain individual, risks are socialized" (90). Like the earlier Communist project, neoliberalism is a fundamentalist creed: "Outside the market, there is no salvation" (92). By contrast to classical or traditional liberalism, where individual interests and the common good were held in balance, the new creed "wants to prevent the general will [the people] from limiting the actions of individuals, as it does not recognize the existence of a common interest" (93–94).

The third major derailment of democracy is "populism." Todorov presents a distressing picture of the rise of chauvinism and xenophobia in some European countries today. The trend has given rise to a stress on national-cultural "identity" over general citizenship. A particularly prominent aspect is the widespread attack on "multiculturalism." The main targets or victims of the antimulticultural invectives were Muslims. Todorov offers a sensible discussion of the issue of "head scarves," asking pointedly: can citizenship really be fully cleansed of cultural customs and religious beliefs? "The secular individual we imagine here is an abstract being, devoid of cultural characteristics, even though culture is part of human nature" (159). The chapter reflects on the feasibility of multicultural political life, stating two requisites: first, a shared rule of law with equal citizenship; and secondly, cross-cultural learning "allowing the multiple cultures of society to communicate with each other" (169).

The constituent features of democracy—people, individual freedom, and vision—have been disassembled and turned into engines of decay. The critique of "internal enemies" is not meant as a summary indictment; least of all is it meant to promote political cynicism, nihilism, or defeatism. Rather, Todorov's argument is inspired by hope, by the desire for democratic "renewal." Pursuit of this goal requires some structural changes; but most of all it requires a renewed humanization, a "change of mentality that would allow us to recover the sense of the democratic project and to balance its principles better: the power of the people, faith in progress, individual freedoms, natural rights, the sacredness of the human sphere" (184–85). With these words, Todorov pays tribute to one of his chief mentors, Montesquieu, whose idea of "separation" of powers should better be called "balance of powers" and whose "golden rule" is repeatedly invoked: "all unlimited power must be unlawful" (98).

This is a great and timely book which deserves the widest readership. Like all great books it is not free of flaws. The opening chapter is too heavy for the theological competence of most readers. (Who was Pelagius?) Another qualm

has to do with the term “messianism,” whose religious overtones seem ill suited for the laicism of the French Revolutionaries and the atheism of Communists. (Maybe “millenarianism”?) On the other hand, the term captures well the spirit of American interventionism (with some mercenaries being trained to “kill for Jesus”). These points clearly pale in comparison with the book’s major virtues. Todorov emerges as representative of an admirable but nearly extinct breed: the French “moralists” (Montaigne, Chamfort, and La Rochefoucauld). Writers in this genre were not “moralizers,” but intent on scrutinizing and improving the *moeurs* (habits of conduct) of their society. By way of conclusion I cite a passage which beautifully reflects this French moralist tradition (77): “Morality and justice placed at the service of state policy actually harm morality and justice, turning them into mere tools in the hands of the powerful. ... Messianism, this policy carried out on behalf of the good and the just, does both a disservice. Nothing seems better to illustrate the famous words of Pascal: ‘he who would act the angel, acts the brute.’”

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Carol C. Gould: *Interactive Democracy: The Social Roots of Global Justice*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. 303.)

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In *Interactive Democracy* Carol Gould integrates previous work into a coherent theory of global democracy, human rights, and justice. The book is an insightful contribution to the global-justice literature and should be read together with the touchstone texts of global justice.

According to Gould, global justice is made possible through solidarity and democratic decision-making among those engaged in activity in common. Each of us is engaged in multiple such common activities. Thus democracy is interactive within and among spheres of common activity. Three regulative ideals define Gould’s interactive democracy: the view that human rights require “equal positive (effective) freedom,” the view that human life is essentially relational, and the view that if those who share in a common activity participate democratically in decision-making about that activity, the activity will be accountable to them. Gould defends each of these on its normative merits. She also gives them an ontological status and associates these regulative ideals with practices that imperfectly approximate them in contemporary global politics.