



# Political Judgement

Essays for John Dunn

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# Contents

<i>List of contributors</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
Introduction	1
RICHARD BOURKE AND RAYMOND GEUSS	
<b>Part I The character of political judgement</b>	<b>27</b>
1 What is political judgement?	29
RAYMOND GEUSS	
2 Sticky judgement and the role of rhetoric	47
VICTORIA MCGEER AND PHILIP PETTIT	
3 Theory and practice: the revolution in political judgement	73
RICHARD BOURKE	
<b>Part II Trust, judgement and consent</b>	<b>111</b>
4 On trusting the judgement of our rulers	113
QUENTIN SKINNER	
5 Adam Smith's history of law and government as political theory	131
ISTVAN HONT	
6 Marxism in translation: critical reflections on Indian radical thought	172
SUDIPTA KAVIRAJ	
<b>Part III Rationality and judgement</b>	<b>201</b>
7 Pericles' unreason	203
GEOFFREY HAWTHORN	

8	Accounting for human actions: individual agency and political judgement in Montaigne's <i>Essais</i> BIANCAMARIA FONTANA	229
9	Nehru's judgement SUNIL KHILNANI	254
	<b>Part IV Democracy and modern political judgement</b>	<b>279</b>
10	Democracy, equality and redistribution ADAM PRZEWORSKI	281
11	Democracy and terrorism RICHARD TUCK	313
	<i>Bibliography of the works of John Dunn</i>	333
	<i>Index</i>	344



# Introduction

RICHARD BOURKE AND RAYMOND GEUSS

## I

Something happened in the West when Socrates began to confront the politicians of his day, the men who spoke in the assemblies and led the armies and navies of Athens, stopping them in the marketplace and asking them to give an account of what they were doing and why they were doing it. It was not exactly a new form of inquiry that was being invented, but a new style of investigation. It is not as if this were a complete and radical break with the past or the absolute initiation of an inconceivably new practice, because as long as there have been human societies there have been problems of coordinating action, resolving disputes, and planning for the future; and planning for the future in any detail means envisaging in words alternative eventualities and courses of action. Once one specific possible future has been put into words, it is open to others to describe a different one. And how is discussion then ever to end? The oldest document of Western civilisation, the *Iliad*, begins with a group of men engaged in a common pursuit – the war against Troy – deliberating about how they should act in the face of an unexpected event, a plague. The real plot begins when Achilles refrains from putting an end to the public discussion by killing the reptilian king, Agamemnon, out of hand, and instead insults him.

Individuals and groups; envisaging the future whilst acting in the present; merit as opposed to status; speaking as against doing; cooperation versus conflict; intentions and their results; success and failure: these and other related contrasts mark out a terrain which humans learn to negotiate with as much dexterousness as they can muster. Three centuries after Homer, immediately before the advent of Socrates, during the generation of Thucydides and Protagoras, human beings had not merely accumulated a certain amount of rough-and-ready skill in this area, but had also begun to reflect

carefully about politics – about its nature, and its demands. Still, for better or for worse, Socrates' mode of questioning, systematically eschewing any reference to traditional practices, received authorities or institutional contexts, and devaluing the cognitive, practical or aesthetic ability of those who are unable to give a sufficiently explicit, abstract and consistent definition of the basic terms they use, does represent the first faltering step down a path which European thought has pursued ever since. Socrates opens what many have thought represented yet another contrast in the domain of collective human action, a contrast between practical skill and a theoretical grasp of 'politics'.

The sequence of transformations which the concept of politics and of what it means to have an understanding of politics has undergone from late fifth-century BC Athens to the early twenty-first-century international *oikoumene* is too complex to trace here in detail, but in the most recent past, say during the last fifty years or so, there has been a significant institutionalisation of the study of politics in universities and related research institutions. This development had two important consequences for the cognitive structure of the enterprise of understanding politics. First, it was associated with a shift from looking at politics from the viewpoint of participants – that is, of political agents – to that of studying political processes from the point of view of notionally impartial observers. Thucydides, the author of the first great work of politics in the West, was, as he tells us himself, a failed and consequently exiled Athenian general who knew of what he spoke from first-hand experience; something similar was true of Cicero, Grotius and Machiavelli. But by the end of the twentieth century studies of politics were being conducted by purportedly neutral, politically detached experts in area studies, psephology, international relations and rational choice theory. The second consequence was that the study of politics came under pressure to conform to certain pre-given conceptions of what a proper academic discipline must be like. Ideally, a respectable academic subject had to have an ontologically distinctive subject-matter ('living things' for biology, specifically designated rules of social coercion for law, texts for philology) or use one of the recognised methods (observation, some form of deductive reasoning, experiment, interpretation, and so on) or, best of all, both. A reputable academic discipline had to have a distinctive theoretical vocabulary of agreed-on, well-defined,

universally applicable concepts, and some recognised core body of systematically established doctrine. Beyond this, a distinction was recognised between empirical and normative disciplines.

The empirical study of political institutions and processes ideally comprised an interconnected system of facts, generalisations, and universally applicable theories that could be used for explanation and prediction. The practical relevance for politics of the ability to predict, if such an ability actually existed, is obvious; if it is an established 'law' that 'democratic states do not go to war with one another', then this would be of great importance in helping decide what kind of military preparations a democratic state should make, and against whom.<sup>1</sup> This supposed law, of course, is useful only if it is possible to identify which states are democratic and which are not, and this requires the exercise of at least a rudimentary kind of judgement, the ability to discern under which concept a given actual state falls. There is not much question about the fact that it is possible to study politics in *some* sense as a low-level empirical or descriptive subject; and although this does not preclude great theoretical unclarity about exactly what it is that one knows when one asserts that Angela Merkel is the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany or that the United Kingdom uses a 'first-past-the-post' electoral system based on geographically defined constituencies for the House of Commons, there is not really any genuine, or non-philosophical, disagreement that in both these cases one *knows something*.

It is less clear that this is the case when one considers what can be thought of as purely normative approaches to politics, except perhaps where norms are embodied in doctrines and backed by commands. Directives about how social and political life ought to be organised, and how individuals ought to act, have in the past been derived from Scripture or the teachings of Churches, but also from philosophical disciplines like ethics, for example in its utilitarian or Kantian variants, and most recently they have been derived from kinds of economic prescription, including forms of decision theory. That such

<sup>1</sup> For prominent examples of the diverse academic literature on 'democratic peace', see Dean V. Babst, 'A Force for Peace', *Industrial Research* 14 (April 1972), pp. 55–8; Michael Doyle, 'Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12 (Summer/Fall 1983), pp. 205–35; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p. 29.

directives can offer a kind of orientation and guide for action is not in doubt: 'Always do what the Pope says (when he is speaking *ex cathedra* on a matter of faith or morals!)' is a clear enough way to structure one's life, although adopting this norm will require the exercise of some judgement to determine when the Pope has been speaking *ex cathedra*, and when not, and, of course, also judgement about how to apply to particular cases papal injunctions that have been enunciated in a general form. Whether, however, any of these purely doctrinaire approaches can satisfy the expectations they themselves raise as guides to a satisfactory, much less a good, life, is, to say the very least, unproven, and for many of them the suspicion that they are masks for interests other than those they acknowledge is hard to resist.

## II

Is this, then, what politics is about at its best – the exercise of judgement to subsume individual cases under explanatory and predictive general laws, or under universal principles of reason and morality? Over the course of a long and productive career John Dunn has made important contributions to a wide variety of areas of politics, and to the history of thinking about politics as well. Not, perhaps, the least of these contributions has been his break with some of the main constitutive features of the tradition of thinking about politics that has just been described. His work stands orthogonal to this tradition in a number of significant ways. Among these, two of his attempts to undo the impact of what can be seen as a Socratic paradigm of political understanding stand out. The first is his attempt to rehabilitate the standpoint and the cognitive and practical skills of the political actor, and this means recognising the importance of understanding the judgement of real political actors – where 'judgement' most definitely does *not* mean simply the subsumption of individual cases under pre-given concepts or rules.<sup>2</sup> Dunn's second and related innovation is his emphasis on the historical variability and context-specificity of political concepts, once again in opposition to the tacit Socratic and Platonic assumption that key political terms – 'justice', 'happiness',

<sup>2</sup> This of course is one of the core ambitions of John Dunn's *The Cunning of Unreason: Making Sense of Politics* (London: HarperCollins, 2000).

‘freedom’ and the like – designate in each case something that is definably the same *hic et ubique*. Both of these moves on Dunn’s part have been intended as a challenge to traditional normative and cognitive approaches to the understanding of politics. Together they prompt us to reconsider how political action is standardly conceptualised, and how the judgement of political value is ordinarily understood.

‘Property’ did not mean ‘the same thing’ for Locke as it did for Hayek,<sup>3</sup> and ‘democracy’ very definitely did not ‘mean’, or even designate, ‘the same thing’ for fifth-century Athenians as it does for any of the European societies of the early twenty-first century.<sup>4</sup> In order to resolve the resulting semantic confusion, the strategy that comes most naturally to much contemporary analytic philosophy is that of distinguishing conceptually between the ‘direct democracy’ of the ancients and the ‘representative democracy’ associated with much modern political practice. Each of these might be supplied with some kind of ‘Socratic’ definition, but neither has anything inherently to do with the other. From this perspective, the fact that both phrases contain the same component (‘democracy’) is no more relevant than the fact that ‘cat’ and ‘catapult’ share their first three letters. Recognition of this fact has some signal cognitive advantages, but it also in some sense misses the point, because part of what it is to understand the *political* meaning of representative democracy is to see in what way it derives its motivational attractiveness and persuasive power from a historical transformation of the semantic potential of the Athenian original. Understanding ‘representative democracy’ politically in the contemporary world means, in part, seeing why it can present itself as the appropriate modern version of the project of collective self-rule which expressed itself more vividly and emphatically under the ancient system of direct democracy. The form such understanding takes will have to be one of a complex history of words and concepts, and of

<sup>3</sup> See John Dunn, *The Politics of Socialism: An Essay in Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 9–10; John Dunn, ‘Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy: Compatibilities and Contradictions’ in John Dunn, ed., *The Economic Limits to Modern Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and John Dunn, ‘Property, Justice and the Common Good after Socialism’ in John Dunn, *The History of Political Theory and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> See John Dunn, *Setting the People Free: The Story of Democracy* (London: Atlantic Books, 2005).



the human actions these seek to capture – and, more particularly, of the human use of such words and concepts under conditions of potentially large-scale social and economic change. The provision of such complex historical perspectives was never part of the Socratic programme, or of any of its direct or indirect successors. But adopting it as the appropriate prerequisite for understanding politics promises to transform our sense of what political judgement involves.

Politics will always happen where human societies interact and struggle, and social life will always require the activity of judgement. A historical understanding of political action, and the judgements of value that accompany it, is forced to proceed in the absence of guiding norms or determinate concepts. Political judgement may not be a constant mayhem of disorientation and confusion, but neither is it an activity of applying rules or ascertaining norms. Diagnosing an error or thoughtfully avoiding a clearly discerned cul-de-sac is not tantamount to having a firm grasp on ‘the truth’ or a comprehensive map of the terrain that we inhabit. John Dunn has consistently pressed the question of how such practical judgements relate to wider theoretical claims about politics. The papers collected in this volume were written by historians, philosophers and political scientists who have been in one way or another inspired by the perspectives Dunn’s work has opened up. They are all centred in various ways on the question of what political judgement is, and what the prospects are for our coming to an understanding of it that might enable us to enlighten our own political practice.

The first section of the volume, comprising chapters by Raymond Geuss, by Victoria McGeer and Philip Pettit, and by Richard Bourke, deals with general issues about the nature of political judgement. Geuss begins by discussing what it might mean to construe ‘judgement’ not on the model of a human individual who entertains and then affirms or denies a proposition, but rather as a kind of action which is always located in a social, usually an institutional, context. His aim is to show how attempts to construe political judgement in the traditional terms of epistemology are bound to miscarry. The peculiar nature of the kinds of practical imagination involved in the formation of even the most straightforward political judgements ought to encourage us to consider political reasoning on its own terms, rather than as some sort of beleaguered extension of human reasoning as such. McGeer and Pettit, in chapter 2, examine how a focused analysis of the ways

in which judgements are actually produced might help to improve its flexibility and reduce its pathological results. They underline the psychological vulnerability of human cognitive powers, and indicate how some of the perils of perception, particularly its in-built dogmatism and tendency towards inertia, are paralleled by problems associated with judgement. Judgement is in this sense resistant to change. How, McGeer and Pettit ask, can it be rendered comparatively open to innovation? They explore the idea that the techniques of rhetoric may have a useful cognitive role to play in freeing up the dogmatism of judgement, enabling people to entertain alternative perspectives.

Political innovation must aim at practical improvement. It is not some kind of inspired inventiveness, an idle search for a new style. It requires a sense of the stakes involved in seeking progressive change, an appreciation of the gravity of affairs. The flexibility needed in judging possible change requires a grasp of the significance of change. It depends on imagination and the cultivation of historical sense. It depends on a capacity to imagine the motivational force driving one's opponent's political values, an ability to conceive what is not present in one's own experience. Political judgement is therefore dedicated to imagining the world as it might be, but it must also be adept at assessing practical consequences as they would obtain in that hypothetical situation. In this sense it is a form of historical judgement. Richard Bourke addresses some of the issues that arise from taking seriously the claim that judgement is a *historically* located phenomenon, and the relation between the explanatory and justificatory ambitions of theories of judgement. The distinction between explaining and justifying political action has traditionally been rendered in terms of the difference between historical and philosophical approaches to politics. Taken together, the first three chapters in this collection illustrate how these distinct senses of what practical affairs involves affect how the role of judgement in politics is evaluated and analysed.

### III

The second section of the volume explores the confrontation between philosophical and historical modes of understanding politics through the history of political thought itself. The chapters by Skinner, Hont and Kaviraj examine the fraught relationship between causal and normative judgements about political life. Together they illustrate

the historical tensions that have existed between the demands of political theory and political practice. The formulation of the tension in these terms extends back as far as the Socratic monologue with which Plato concludes the *Crito*. But the recurrence of this ancient philosophical vocabulary has a tendency to obscure the emergence of new problems in modern contexts still depicted in traditional idioms of thought.

We began this Introduction by recalling that a dominant strain of Western thinking about politics in some sense originated with Socrates. But despite the powerful influence of Socratic argument on philosophy, his importance to the history of political philosophy in particular has always been susceptible to distortion: his vital presence has been mistaken for a central position in the field. This commitment to the centrality of Socratic political theory is itself as old as Plato. But the assumptions underlying Plato's characterisation of the Socratic project are controversial. Can an ethical and epistemological vocation, of the kind that Plato ascribed to Socrates, be properly described as political in its orientation? In the *Gorgias* Plato has Socrates utter the remark that he saw himself as rare, perhaps unique, among the Athenians insofar as he was a practitioner of the only true political craft (*politikê technê*). Socrates' profession of political expertise is based on his claim to aim in life exclusively at what is 'best' instead of fitting in with the common sense of popular opinion.<sup>5</sup> Political judgement is identified with philosophical discrimination, and philosophy with the criticism of prevailing norms. The Socratic legacy to the early political thought of Plato thus assimilates the art of statesmanship to the pursuit of moral theory.

One cumulative effect of the attempts pursued in this volume to deepen our understanding of political judgement is to cast doubt on the tenability of Socrates' claim to statesmanship. But doubt should not be mistaken for sceptical complacency. Scepticism about Socratic and Platonic political pretensions must always be on its guard because its target is so resourceful. When Plato has Socrates describe himself as a politician in the *Gorgias*, there is a sense in which the remark is supposed to be taken as ironic. The irony is not intended as a mere decorative display of wit; it is deployed instead as a provocation and

<sup>5</sup> *Gorgias*, 521d6–e1.

a challenge. Socratic irony has long been recognised as an instrument of fundamental criticism.<sup>6</sup> In presenting Socrates' mission as *political* in nature, Plato wanted to expose the degraded values driving current affairs – to attack the prevailing norms of Athenian political culture. Since the reigning justifications for political arrangements at Athens were based in Plato's view on the emptiest of claims to justice, the principled rejection of such hollow pretences could be characterised as an exercise in true politics.

In the *Republic*, the Socratic claim to statesmanship is restated, but further complicated. In Book VI of the dialogue Adeimantus responds to Socrates' definition of political justice in terms of the coincidence between philosophy and practical skill by subjecting the ambition of philosophical politics to ridicule: in practice philosophers are known to be either vicious or plain useless, Adeimantus protests. However, the appearance of vice among the pretenders to philosophy cannot be blamed on the love of wisdom itself, Socrates responds; the uselessness of philosophers is the fault of the failure to make good use of them. The blame here must be understood to lie with popular prejudice, not upright philosophers.<sup>7</sup> Philosophical judgement should in principle be seen as an expression of genuine political judgement, we are obliged to conclude, but under current circumstances it is disabled by the corruption of morals and the debasement of wisdom. What code of behaviour ought then to govern the conduct of philosophy towards practical affairs under conditions of moral and political corruption? The variety of possible responses to this question has given rise to an assortment of opposing schools of thought, but none of them has convincingly engaged the pressing demands of politics. This lack of theoretical purchase on the distinct characteristics of political struggle poses a challenge to the adequacy of our inherited notions of political judgement.

<sup>6</sup> On the historical and philosophical import of Socratic irony, see, variously, G. W. F. Hegel, *Geschichte der Philosophie* in *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Werke: Vollständige Ausgabe*, ed. Phillipp Marheineke et al. (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 1832–45), XIV, pp. 59–67; Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 259–71; and Gregory Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 21–44.

<sup>7</sup> *Republic*, 487b1–491b1.

In Book IX of the *Republic* Socrates lays out for Glaucon what the implications of developing a philosophical paradigm of justice might be for the morally responsible citizen forced to act in a city pervaded by injustice. Should enlightened citizens neglect political affairs, Glaucon pointedly wonders? They should orientate themselves in terms of the best city they can imagine, Socrates answers, not the country in which they happen to have been born. The philosophical citizen will therefore focus on the care of his own soul – unless ‘chance’ presents the opportunity for radical reform.<sup>8</sup> John Dunn has argued that the various strands of Platonic political argument arising out of the confrontation between philosophical enlightenment and political injustice have developed into three theoretical options since the original composition of the *Republic*.<sup>9</sup> Each of these is distinctly anti-political in its orientation, while the third in addition entails the corruption of its underlying principles. This intricate set of statements formulated in connection with the responsibilities that confront the critical moralist in Plato’s thinking can be interpreted as enjoining three different programmes of action.

The duty to care for one’s soul or develop inner ethical harmony could be interpreted, on the one hand, as promoting an attitude of disengagement from practical affairs. Moreover, disengagement can in reality amount to unacknowledged complicity in the political arrangements which disengagement was designed to reject. But since the Platonic programme of ethical self-development is geared towards the formation of true principles of justice, it is prone on the other hand to promote a critical posture towards prevailing values. While straightforward complicity might be avoided here, the precise import of social criticism remains problematically inchoate. As a result, both of these options can be seen as at bottom anti-political in nature – the first, insofar as it is definitively removed from ‘the practical dynamics of political conflict’, in Dunn’s words; the second, insofar as it is aimlessly dissenting, a directionless form of ironising complaint.<sup>10</sup> Neither approach offers a secure basis for the exercise of political judgement since politics is evidently absent in each case.

<sup>8</sup> *Republic*, 592a1–592b5.

<sup>9</sup> John Dunn, ‘The History of Political Theory’ (1992), repr. in *The History of Political Theory and Other Essays*, p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

But what of the third theoretical possibility, of the case where criticism might actually prove effective – where chance, as Plato put it, brings about the ‘opportunity’ for decisive action? There is an old charge frequently levelled against the moralising programme of Platonic political philosophy to the effect that any inkling of an opportunity for change would be sufficient to tempt the philosopher to grasp at immoderate power. Temptation of this kind is prone to trigger a style of politics bearing an anti-political character of its own. The captivating hope of realising a scheme of justice predisposes its possessor to sacrifice all realistic sense of practical possibility to the enthusiastic desire for comprehensive change. The seductive image of the philosopher-politician is at this point unmasked to reveal the reality of the hapless adventurer in political affairs. For a utopian political adventurer of this kind, the attraction of an irresistible political objective thwarts judgement of the causal means to achieve it.

The relentless pursuit of an ethical ideal of justice is standardly unravelled by developments on the ground. This bleak fact of human history testifies to the frailty of individual judgement forced to navigate a course between ideals and their realisation. The projected scheme of improvement is betrayed by the necessary means to its fulfilment. In practice, as Dunn analyses the situation, the purity of the project itself acts as a stimulus to the development of a form of politics subversive of the goal originally advertised. In place of radical reform in the name of justice, a revolutionary overhaul of political relations delivers all hope of reform into the hands of violent reaction.<sup>11</sup> This pattern of relationships offers a grim illustration of the cunning of unreason whereby the unintended consequences of a moral course of action lead to an unambiguous political deficit. Viewed in this light, the search for an easy correspondence between moral enterprise and

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* On this theme see also John Dunn, *Modern Revolutions: An Introduction to the Analysis of a Political Phenomenon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972; 2nd edn, 1989), pp. xv–xxix; John Dunn, ‘The Success and Failure of Modern Revolutions’ (1977), repr. in John Dunn, *Political Obligation in Its Historical Context: Essays in Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); John Dunn, ‘Understanding Revolutions’ (1982), repr. in John Dunn, *Rethinking Modern Political Theory: Essays 1979–83* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Dunn, *The Politics of Socialism*, pp. 12–14; John Dunn, ‘Revolution’ (1989), repr. in John Dunn, *Interpreting Political Responsibility: Essays 1981–1989* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

political process begins to look both misplaced and naïve. Platonising accounts of political judgement have always felt themselves vulnerable to this charge. They depend on somehow happening upon a practical vehicle for ethical insight: on chancing to find, as Plato expressed it, a sufficiently powerful political agent disposed to put moral knowledge into practice.

The story of Plato's luckless adventure in being induced by his companion, Dion, into assuming responsibility for the political education of the Syracusan Tyrant Dionysus II illustrates the precariousness of any such undertaking.<sup>12</sup> The philosophical expert is at the mercy of the bearer of political power. Virtue depends on favour, and favour requires trust. The clear message arising from the tale of Plato's effort to train Dionysus points at once to the treacherousness of relations of trust and to the extent to which the moral expert depends upon its offices. Despite this, there is a long tradition of political thought of basically Platonic provenance, extending at least from Erasmus to John Stuart Mill, which managed to trade on the prospect of educated expertise delivering up dependable political judgement. In each case trust formed the bond of union linking expertise with political power. However, it is in the nature of trust that its terms of exchange can be negotiated with various biases in view.

The dilemma is a general one: the exercise of political judgement often involves an assessment of the circumstances in which it is prudent to entrust the security of political rights to the guardianship of executive power. The trust implicated in this transaction is both an epistemological and a social relationship, conducted between individual agents and institutions. Most simply it involves an assessment of the likely intentions of other people, but it is often the case that the assessor is somehow obliged to the individuals under scrutiny. Under these circumstances, perception itself will be structured by social deference or dependence. Quentin Skinner's chapter in this

<sup>12</sup> The story has been handed down to us in the form of the Seventh Letter. This document is obviously Platonic in character, although it is doubtful that Plato actually wrote it. For recent responses to the place of the Seventh Letter in the Platonic corpus, compare Malcolm Schofield, 'Plato and Practical Politics' in Christopher Rowe and Malcolm Schofield, eds., *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) with Rainer Knab, 'Einleitung' in Rainer Knab, ed., *Platons Siebter Brief* (Zurich: Georg Olms Verlag, 2006).

volume dramatises the dangers that accompany any act of political credulity. The most primitive form of political trust involves crediting the judgement of a ruler without security against the abuse of the resulting authority relation. It involves licensing the arbitrary initiative of a superior, releasing political prerogative from all dependence on consent.

The idea that consent imposes restraints upon the exercise of authority has always been a sufficiently indeterminate concept as to be capable of a variety of doctrinal applications.<sup>13</sup> John Locke has often been identified with a potent version of the doctrine, at least in part because of his association with the founding ideas of American constitutionalism. But, as John Dunn originally began to argue in the late 1960s, that association is largely a result of belated historical construction. Moreover, the theory of consent as actually formulated by Locke placed fewer limits on political action than has commonly been supposed.<sup>14</sup> Skinner's contribution underlines the relative weakness of the Lockean thesis in comparison with the more stringent criteria for consent publicised by republican and parliamentary activists in the decades before Locke began to draft his *Two Treatises of Government*. By these criteria, consent ought to be construed as implying ongoing, active and explicit agreement to legislative measures in addition to evincing a basic acceptance of the terms of government.

Set alongside the principles adumbrated by John Milton in his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* for the legitimate exercise of authority, Locke's doctrine of popular consent appears to offer a means of justifying rather than disciplining the systematic alienation of individual judgement required by the division of political labour in civil society. Locke's theory of the state does still seek to

<sup>13</sup> For a sceptical analysis of the operation of popular consent extending as far as the 'face to face' societies of Ghanaian village life, see John Dunn and A. F. Robertson, *Dependence and Opportunity: Political Change in Ahafo* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 326–7, 384n44.

<sup>14</sup> On Locke's impact on political argument in the American colonies in the eighteenth century, see John Dunn, 'The Politics of Locke in England and America in the Eighteenth Century' (1969), repr. in Dunn, *Political Obligation in Its Historical Context*; on Locke's theory of consent, see John Dunn, 'Consent in the Political Theory of John Locke' (1967), repr. in Dunn, *Political Obligation in Its Historical Context*; and John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), Part III.



ground legitimate sovereignty on normative principles, but the rights to which the norm of legitimacy gives rise are only exercised at the point of violent rebellion. Short of this drastic option, popular consent lacks any means of practical expression.<sup>15</sup> The abstract formality characteristic of Locke's doctrine of political right is a product of the hiatus separating his historical argument in Book VIII of the second *Treatise* from the analysis of political principles presented in Book VII. As a result of this separation, Locke's account of the acquisition of popular rights in the *Two Treatises* drives a wedge between the theoretical duties of authority and the limits imposed by institutional accountability. As David Hume was to argue, by casting the obligations of rulers in the form of a promise of responsibility to the ruled, political power on Locke's model was in practice freed from restraint.<sup>16</sup>

Hume's objection to the core conception of Locke's thesis was to form the basis of Adam Smith's attempts to advance a historical theory of government. Hume had pointed out that the Lockean effort to found the obligations of authority on a contractual promise implied a historically insupportable account of the origins of European governments whilst at the same time entailing a practically ineffective theory of government more generally. Istvan Hont's chapter examines the impact of Hume's critique on the design of Smith's history of jurisprudence. He shows how the historical argument painstakingly elaborated in Smith's Glasgow lectures on the science of government pointed to a rejection of Locke's assumption that constitutional government was a product of revolutionary resistance. It also challenged the notion that the possibility of resistance

<sup>15</sup> The precise political implications of Locke's moral principles have been intensively debated since Dunn's 1969 study. For the range of subsequent interpretations, see John Dunn, "Trust" in the Politics of John Locke' (1984), repr. in Dunn, *Rethinking Modern Political Theory*; Richard Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics and Locke's Two Treatises of Government* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), *passim*; James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 9–68; and John Marshall, *John Locke: Resistance, Religion and Responsibility* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 205–91.

<sup>16</sup> David Hume, 'Of the Original Contract' in *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1985). On Hume's response to Locke, see John Dunn, 'From Applied Theology to Social Analysis: The Break between Locke and the Scottish Enlightenment' (1983), repr. in Dunn, *Rethinking Modern Political Theory*.

was a guarantor of legitimacy. In place of both these suggestions, Smith proposed an account of the historically variable forms of trust which determine the submission of individuals to distinct systems of political rule.

Smith's account of the emergence of modern European systems of government was designed to provide a historical explanation for the compatibility between political specialisation and practical limits on the exercise of power. This in turn was intended to show how the concentration of sovereign political judgement in modern states coexisted with constitutional restraints upon power. From this perspective, the modern advent of absolute sovereignty did not have to entail a form of arbitrary rule. Modern political organisation enabled the most ferocious concentration of the power of decision. But it also separated this power of decision from deliberation and arbitration. In this way, political judgement under constitutional government could be rendered coherent and effective, while the processes by which that judgement was formed checked monopolistic control. Political decisions within constitutional governments were not therefore exposed to the arbitrary whims of individual judgement. They could be disciplined by processes of institutional regulation. Modern prudence ought to be seen not as an attribute of the wise statesman, but as a happy yet contingent by-product of constitutional organisation.

Smith's critical intervention is an example of a more widespread Enlightenment ambition to develop a historical political theory in lieu of resuscitating the ancient ideal of the philosophical statesman. But however much the reflective historian might be able to demonstrate the deficiency inherent in the idea of a sage lawgiver, however much such a figure might illustrate the comparative wisdom involved in trusting in the unintended consequences of social process, the need for an exercise of individual judgement on the part of rulers in the midst of affairs could never be dispensed with altogether. Reflecting late in life on the complex demands imposed on the conscientious legislator, Smith recalled the salutary case of Solon, whose judiciousness had been notoriously celebrated in Plutarch's *Life*, as exemplifying the virtue of political prudence. Questioned at the end of his career as to whether he had conferred the best system of laws on the Athenians, Plutarch reports how Solon responded that he had provided them with 'The best laws

they would receive'.<sup>17</sup> Solonic reform was modified with reference to the expectations of its recipients. For political improvement to succeed, Solon's argument suggests, it has to be translated into a framework of acceptable change.

But what of the constant risk of mistranslation in political affairs? Sudipta Kaviraj's chapter focuses on the permanent threat of systematic mistranslation that is bound to afflict attempts to apply political judgements in today's world. The languages deployed to describe, evaluate and analyse the vast complex of social experience distributed across the globe are derived from a limited stock of modes of understanding about how politics actually is, or how it ought to be, organised. The unavailing character of Western political theory, and in particular its inadequacy as a guide to action in the face of the future, has been a persistent theme of John Dunn's work since the 1970s.<sup>18</sup> Kaviraj captures the misalliance between synoptic theory and actual practice by exploring attempts to put Western political ideas to work in India. His primary interest lies in an assortment of failed attempts to apply Marxist schemes of class analysis to the unlikely terrain of caste society on the Indian subcontinent. The comparatively successful fate of Nehruvian politics in India points to an important lesson. Practical politics stands in need of organising schemes of interpretation, but still judgement is required if theoretical schemes are to be meaningfully translated into practice.

#### IV

It would be easy to enumerate a succession of failed historical attempts to make reality out of implausible programmes of political improvement, and to show how judgement, in Solon's phrase, too often disregarded how laws might be 'received'. But the question then arises of the qualities of political intelligence that are necessary to preclude catastrophic failures of this kind. The third section of this volume examines what might be expected of successful political judgement, and of the characteristics of leadership required to put it into effect.

<sup>17</sup> Plutarch, 'Life of Solon', XV. Smith's reference to Solon appears in Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1982), p. 233.

<sup>18</sup> See, in particular, John Dunn, *Western Political Theory in the Face of the Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

The chapters by Geoffrey Hawthorn, Biancamaria Fontana and Sunil Khilnani range across a broad historical canvas, extending from Periclean Athens through early modern France down to modern India. In the process, they broach the topics of democracy in the ancient and modern worlds, the politics of empire in fifth-century BC Greece and twentieth-century India, and the problem posed by popular sentiment for the leadership of states. Their emphasis is on the fragility of human psychology under stress, and on the dexterity and ingenuity required to manage the impact of public opinion.

If Montaigne was the supreme analyst of the pathologies of public opinion, Pericles was the great master of its successful manipulation. This at any rate, as Geoffrey Hawthorn shows, was the assessment of his leadership intimated by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Pericles, as Thucydides pictured him, was ‘first’ among the Athenians, both partisan and manager of democracy during the city’s greatest period of prestige – a representative of the *dêmos* in all senses, and so a champion of its imperial pride. The perfect embodiment of judgement in affairs, an exemplar of the practical virtues, he nonetheless ended his career as the chief architect of a war that undid the world he had done so much to produce. How can one explain such a phenomenal fall coming so fast upon the heels of a glorious rise to power? In the *Menexenus*, and again in the *Gorgias*, Plato strongly implies that the seeds of Athens’ tragedy long pre-dated the 420s, and more particularly that decline pre-dated the untimely death of Pericles. Much like Cimon, Miltiades and Themistocles, Pericles was a victim of the populism he helped to foster.<sup>19</sup>

Athens is now ‘bloated and festering’ because of celebrated figures from the past like Pericles, Socrates complained to Callicles in the *Gorgias*.<sup>20</sup> Instead of the consummate artisan of practical wisdom, as Thucydides painted him, Pericles is presented as an exemplification of the systemic problems that only a philosophical statesman was fit to resolve. The loss of the Peloponnesian war, the descent into civil strife, and the slow decline of Athens in the fourth century stood in need of explanation, and Plato pointed to the democratic constitution of the Athenians as bearing the primary responsibility. Periclean prudence was still democratic prudence, leading to the corruption of responsible rule. The shortcomings of judgement characteristic

<sup>19</sup> *Gorgias*, 515d.    <sup>20</sup> *Gorgias*, 518e5–519a1. See also *Menexenus*, 234c–d.

of Athenian demagoguery were attributable to structural causes rather than to individual failures of nerve. However, Plato could have extracted precisely this conclusion, although not his own distinctive set of proposals for staging a recovery, from the text of Thucydides' *History* itself.

Hawthorn remarks how Thucydides seems to have cast Pericles as the prisoner of a situation that he was nonetheless able to exploit more skilfully than any of his competitors – as a source of encouragement for the very patriotism that limited his room for manoeuvre. Patriotism is at the mercy of its own intemperate passions, and so also in the end are those representatives who seek to exploit it. Politics is naturally an affair of passion – democratic politics above all others, especially democracies infatuated by the pride of empire. But while public life is moved by a combination of passion and interest, their alliance is neither harmonious nor controllable. Political judgement can strive to anticipate the probable consequences of this combination, but it is never in a position to alter the materials which compose it. In her contribution to this volume, Biancamaria Fontana emphasises the extent to which Montaigne remains the unsurpassed student of the whimsical life of the passions. But since passion for Montaigne disturbed all sense of common interest, judgement in public affairs had to place its trust in customary authority.

It is Socrates rather than Pericles who stands as the most consistent inspiration behind the *Essais*. Throughout the work, Montaigne brings together an engaging mix of cosmopolitanism and stoical apathy, both of which have their sources in the transmission of Socratic values. But at the same time he displays a fascination with the extremes of passion capable of deranging national politics. Montaigne was a close observer of the role of interests in social life, and of the formative significance of habituation to their constant presence. To that extent, he was an advocate of the utility of custom in sustaining conventions, an exponent of the 'stickiness' of judgement. But Montaigne was also strongly aware of the malleability of interests, of their government by the transient world of opinion. Passion and imagination hold sway over opinion, and so conventional beliefs are never truly secure.

One consequence of Montaigne's Pyrrhonian attitude to beliefs in society was recourse to a separation between the exercise of private judgement and the obligations of public allegiance. As a precedent for this commitment he cited the example of the 'bon et grand Socrate'

as presented at the close of Plato's *Crito*. Refusing to save his life by disobeying the magistrate, Socrates chose outward conformity over the satisfaction of public protest.<sup>21</sup> But his choice at the same time pointed to the benefits of contemplation, which could only be enjoyed under conditions of civil harmony and obedience to authority. Such benefits included the rewards of philosophical self-mastery, sceptical detachment from the turbulence of the world, and the refinement of taste and judgement amid the commerce of private life. But Montaigne's emphasis on the availability of consolations of this kind was a product of reflection on a basic existential predicament. Since imprudence begins with the self, politics must begin with the care of the self, first in the form of a philosophical assault on vanity, and second in the form of psychological preparation for the slings of fortune. As he put it in his important essay 'De la præsumption': 'not being able to control events, I control myself'.<sup>22</sup>

However, in the face of such an attempt at self-control, the obvious fact asserts itself that events will happen anyway and others will seek to capitalise on how they chance to progress. The renunciation of affairs as serving self-regard and glory may have its compensations in terms of personal edification, but politics in the meantime still demands a response, and since worldly actors will continue to rise to try to meet its challenges the question of how these challenges can best be met must occupy a central place in human concerns. This, in other words, is the question of leadership, which is the subject of Sunil Khilnani's chapter. The virtues and vices of leadership that Khilnani itemises in connection with the exercise of judgement on Nehru's part bear some striking resemblances to the old Stoical repertoire resuscitated by humanist philosophers like Montaigne – the dangers of pride and presumption, the integrity of conviction, and the need to place passion under the control of calculation. But the nature of the relationship to the world is completely different in each case.

In a suggestive essay 'De la solitude', Montaigne sought to overhaul the old antithesis between the virtues of solitary self-cultivation and the virtues of public commitment. Withdrawal from affairs was

<sup>21</sup> *Crito*, 51e5–54d5. For Montaigne's comment on this section of the dialogue, see Michel de Montaigne, 'De la coustume et de ne changer aisément une loy receüe' in *Les Essais*, ed. Pierre Villey (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1924, 1992), 3 vols., I, p. 118.

<sup>22</sup> Montaigne, 'De la præsumption' in *ibid.*, II, p. 644.

simply not enough, Montaigne protested against the advocates of philosophical *otium*: 'it is not enough to withdraw from the populace ... one must withdraw from the democratical constituents within oneself'.<sup>23</sup> The *topos* of the statesman's retreat from the bustle of the world, either to reflect on accumulated experience or to prepare for future engagements, is as old as that of the meditative philosopher immersed in solitude – Solon on his travels, Cyrus in his garden and Cicero in retirement are examples of the genre. Momentary distance from the pressure of events seemed a positive preparation for a rude encounter with them. It helped to nurture that indispensable characteristic of the capable politician, the sense of responsibility. But responsibility of this kind is precisely what the contemplative philosopher lacks, and what the Platonising tradition inevitably dissipates by succumbing to the desire – in John Dunn's phrase – of 'thinking politics away'.<sup>24</sup>

Khilnani's chapter recovers the aspiration to 'distance' in Nehru's stance, how he strove to find detachment from the cause that might have consumed him. But this distance was never equivalent to a rejection of affairs; he never spurned the passions of politics as distasteful, nor longed for the kind of spiritual guide that Gandhi found through his 'inner voice'. Together with distance, Nehru possessed conviction, and awareness that others were driven by conviction too. This awareness also fed his sense of responsibility. It imposed upon him a feeling for the gravity of judgement, an appreciation of the stakes involved in calculation and decision. The weight of responsibility is most keenly felt at moments of crisis, and Khilnani's analysis accordingly begins with the critical encounter between Jinnah and Nehru in the late summer of 1946, a year before the partition of India and Pakistan. The meeting was a failure; the next day brought the violence of the Calcutta killings; the path towards partition was now probably unstoppable. How should one anatomise the conflict of expectations that brought things to such an unfortunate pass?

In mid-August 1946 Jinnah pushed for the creation of separate self-governing territories for the protection of the subcontinent's Muslims. The demand was tantamount to a declaration of Pakistani secession from a prospectively independent India. The proposal was an

<sup>23</sup> Montaigne, 'De la solitude' in *ibid.*, I, p. 239.

<sup>24</sup> Dunn *The Cunning of Unreason*, p. 194.

affront not only to Nehru's immediate plans, but to his political and intellectual formation as well. Jinnah was driven at once by communal pride and popular fear. Security for the Muslim minority could only be provided by the (notionally) intimate bond of trust between mutually identifying rulers and ruled collected into a self-governing political unit. Nehru on the other hand expected the minority to find security in the scale of his preferred model of a Hindu–Muslim conglomeration. Jinnah's fears in this light seemed both unreasonable and a betrayal of principle – the principle of moderation through diversity.

Judging the fears of others to be unreasonable raises the problem of how one's opponents could consider this verdict to be itself reasonable. In trying to capture the various attributes of Nehruvian prudence, Khilnani cites Weber's lecture of January 1919 on the requirements of the successful politician. Passion (*Leidenschaft*), Weber contended, is first of all essential. But the sense of responsibility (*Verantwortungsgefühl*) is also vital. By the first of these we are moved to reason about politics, and by the second we are moved to reason politically. But to reason politically requires moderation, or the achievement of distance from the cause in which one is passionately involved. Distance therefore includes a kind of distance from oneself, without which judgement would be a mere vehicle for passion. Such distance must be informed by a sense of proportion (*Augenmass*).<sup>25</sup> In its absence the politician will be mastered by daily passions and become incapable of calculating the most propitious options or of taking the measure of the passions of one's opponents.

The great topics of twentieth-century politics – productivity and social justice; constitutionalism and nationalism; democracy and empire – crowded in upon Nehru's political judgement. In addressing these matters at large, the figure of the modern statesman has been condemned to bear the same burdens that Nehru bore in an exemplary fashion. Responsible modern legislators have had to struggle to balance passion with political feasibility, and to anchor the judgement of feasibility with an adequate sense of proportion. However, modern statesmanship has not been conspicuous for its successes in this

<sup>25</sup> Max Weber, 'Politik als Beruf' in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Wolfgang Schluchter (with Birgitt Morgenbrod), eds., *Wissenschaft als Beruf 1917/1919 – Politik als Beruf 1919, Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1981–), p. 17, pp. 73–4.



ongoing venture. Political judgement has in fact left a trail of sizeable disappointments. But academic reflection on these disappointments has been equally dissatisfying. We still lack a political theory of practical reasoning and judgement. Dunn's project has been to remind us of the seriousness of this lack and to warn against complacency in anticipating its continuance.

## V

The pressing issues of democracy, equality and the best available forms of authority, first recognisably debated in the period between Thucydides and Plato, persist as challenges facing contemporary political prudence. The final section of this volume is devoted to showing that it is precisely these issues that demand to be explored in any serious treatment of the way in which political judgement is exercised in the contemporary world. Much of contemporary politics has been driven by the collision between ideals of popular justice and institutional limitations on public affairs. Indeed, a highly striking feature of current political discussion is its insistent concern with distributive justice and with the relation between economic inequality and the (postulated) political equality that is an integral part of the ideological carapace of Western democracies. Political judgement here must, arguably, strike a balance between contemporary aspirations and the realistic chances for attaining any significant amount of real equality in existing societies. Adam Przeworski's essay is a sober, and sobering, investigation of the limits within which that balance might be found. The struggle for democratic equality has been a potent force shaping both social and political expectations for two centuries and more. But the tantalising suggestion that those expectations stand in conflict with the structural realities of social and political organisation has haunted the landscape of politics at least since Tocqueville. This conflict has provided modern political judgement with its most persistent problems. Przeworski highlights the tension between the promise of equality and the demands of economic responsibility, between passion on the one hand and practical reason on the other – the very dilemma articulated by Weber.

At the beginning of this volume Raymond Geuss emphasises how even the realm of human passion – the realm of *wertational* action, the politics of pure conviction – is itself subject to the demands of practical reason. The commitment to values is never completely divorced

from an assessment of viability and a weighing up of consequences. But the results hoped for from dedication to values and the actual consequences which follow from the commitment to them are never very easy to match up. Indeed, they frequently collide with or contradict one another, as is so often the case with the contest between democratic ideology and democratic politics. Przeworski examines this contradiction as it afflicts the integrity of democratic ideals at the intersection of modern economics and politics. Democratic ideals have long been fed by a range of protean aspirations to equality, not least among these aspirations having been the struggle for equality of rule. Hobbes was perhaps the first modern political thinker to observe this connection between the struggle for popular power and the idea of an equality of rule. The legitimacy of modern democracy has been largely grounded on this notion. But while Hobbes appreciated the seductions of this alluring promise before the advent of modern forms of democratic government, he also pointed to the implausibility of the underlying idea. Przeworski's chapter stands in this same tradition of political scepticism. However, for him the implausibility of radical equality stems less from the instability inherent in the value than from its remoteness from the world of practical politics.

While the ideas informing democratic politics are in this sense remote from the practical functioning of public life, they are also in important ways alarmingly close. Richard Tuck's chapter is a timely reminder of how they have been brought close to the centre of Western political preoccupations since 9/11. Earlier in this Introduction, we cited the purported 'law' that democracies do not wage war on each other, sometimes claimed as the only true universal law in political science. But the existence of this 'law' would have been news to the ancients, who tended rather to think that democracies were inherently predatory and oligarchies more inclined to a peaceful enjoyment of what they had.<sup>26</sup> Under the impact of international terrorism politics today has been forced to consider anew the vintage association between popular political responsibility and predatory ambition. Tuck discusses some of the issues that arise when contemporary states are brutally confronted by the legacy that ancient democracy has left to modern ideas of legitimacy. The most dramatic confrontation of this kind was recently staged by the charge allegedly brought by Osama bin Laden to the effect that

<sup>26</sup> See Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, I, xix.

the citizens of the United States should be held responsible for their governments since in terms of their own national ideology they ought to be recognised as the sovereign arbiters of its actions. If this charge is taken seriously, the underlying claims of democratic legitimacy must be seen as exposed to unprecedented provocation, coming from an antagonist that Western democracies had been accustomed to view as posing a military threat but certainly no kind of moral challenge.

Tuck's method is to explore the implications that follow from 'bin Laden's' announcement. If a people does indeed share in the democratic voice of its state, does it not also share in what the state's opponents might construe as its democratic guilt? Bin Laden's alleged intervention, together with Tuck's meditation on some of the consequences that follow from it, are both made possible by the equation of allegiance with responsibility in democracies. We might choose to consider this equation as spurious, or just overly neat. But the fact remains that the roots of this identification lie deep in the historical self-conception of Western democracy. Particularly since the advent of mass enfranchisement, mass canvassing and mass organisation in the mid to late nineteenth century, the identification has been as pervasive as its implications have been controversial.

Modern democracy is based on the idea of a correspondence between rulers and ruled. At a bare minimum this implies that the rulers are charged with addressing themselves to the interests of the ruled. But to discharge the duty of serving the popular interest, rulers must to some extent bear the people's passions. Democratic leadership must somehow represent the *ira et studium* of the population it leads. But in leading, leadership must at the same time strive for impartiality; it must therefore proceed *sine ira et studio*. In striving towards this ideal, statesmen implicitly absorb one of the goals of Western scientific procedure as one of their own principles of action. In his 'Wissenschaft als Beruf' of 1917, Max Weber pointed to key elements of a process of intellectualisation already present in Plato as marking a vital step in Western progress along the path of science. The core commitment arising out of Book VII of the *Republic*, Weber contended, was the commitment to theory, which insisted that standards of conceptualisation independent of the influence of power and status were at least possible.<sup>27</sup> However,

<sup>27</sup> Max Weber, 'Wissenschaft als Beruf' in Mommsen and Schluchter (with Morgenbrod), eds., *Wissenschaft als Beruf 1917/1919*, p. 17, pp. 10–11.

by comparison with mathematical reasoning, political reasoning is susceptible to conflicts of value. For that reason, it may not be very useful to think of the ingredients of practical reason as behaving like rational counters or concepts. Disputed ideas in the realm of politics give rise to arguments, not 'concepts'. This fact in itself points to the need for leadership in practical affairs. But what then could act as a guide to political leaders themselves?

Weber was adamant that there could be no science of leadership. However this did not rule out the achievement of clarity (*Klarheit*) about moral choices.<sup>28</sup> A crucial question for the science of politics concerns the conditions under which leaders in possession of clarity might emerge. This question has a singular importance for democracy, since all democracies by definition contain a demagogic component. Demagoguery is not a recipe for confusion in political decision-making – 'it was Pericles, not Cleon, who first bore this title', as Weber reminds us.<sup>29</sup> But it is disposed to gratify the short-term preferences of its audience, above all the moral dogmatism of popular prejudice. Modern demagoguery made possible the emergence of charismatic leadership driven by a single-minded moralising vocation. Moral enthusiasm of this kind poses a threat to prudence, but it can be tamed by the calling of responsibility. Responsibility (*Verantwortlichkeit*) is an essential ingredient of competent political judgement. Political theory by itself is powerless to cultivate such a virtue. However, it can usefully study the conditions of its emergence.

John Dunn once raised the question of how far the legacy of ancient Greece to modern politics is modern politics itself.<sup>30</sup> The question was intended first and foremost as a spur to thinking. In one sense, in its conception the question is an offence against historical intelligence, but it contains the germ of two important truths. The Greeks bequeathed to posterity political theory and democracy, both of which proved impossible to erase from successor civilisations. Certainly the problems of political theory and democracy have been at the centre of Dunn's concerns for a number of decades. The question of what it means to be a political theorist has occupied him since the beginning of his career, and the relationship between democracy and political theory has played a central role among his preoccupations. This

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.   <sup>29</sup> Max Weber, 'Politik als Beruf' in *ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>30</sup> Dunn, 'The History of Political Theory', p. 29.

volume draws attention to the ways in which these issues converge on the problem of political judgement. Theory is a tool for the refinement of judgement, but it brings with it the risk of distortion too; democracy amounts to a claim about the equal rights of judgement, but it is continually forced to decide between popular rights and the dictates of reason. For modern politics the contest between theory and democracy persists as an enormously challenging problem, perhaps the central problem that political judgement has to face.