

Structure of the Political Field: Right-Left Dichotomy

بنية المجال السياسي: ثنائية يمين يسار

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Abstract:

This paper seeks to shed light on one of the unique concepts within the structure of the political field, namely the dichotomy of the right and the left. Representation in the political sphere through its right-wing and left-wing dimensions reflects distinct orientations and ideologies. The paper aims to elucidate the true meaning of these two terms by examining the most significant aspects associated with each. Additionally, it investigates how political dynamics, such as elections and social movements, contribute to shaping the structure of the political field.

Keywords: *Political field, Political sphere, Duality, Right-left.*

المُلخَص:

نحاول من خلال هذه الورقة تسليط الضوء على أحد المصطلحات المتفرّدة في بنية المجال السياسي، ونخصّ هنا ثنائية اليمين و اليسار على اعتبار أن التمثيل في الحقل السّياسي بشقّيه اليميني و اليساري يُمثّل جانبًا من التوجّهات و الأيديولوجيات المتميّزة، حيث تستعرض الورقة إبراز المعنى الحقيقي لهذين المصطلحين من خلال رصد أهم الجوانب المرتبطة بكليهما من جهة، و كيف يُمكن للديناميات السياسية كالانتخابات والحركات الاجتماعية أن تُؤثّر في تشكيل بنية المجال السياسي من جهة أخرى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المجال السّياسي، الحقل السّياسي، ثنائية، يمين يسار.

INTRODUCTION

*When the French thinker and philosopher **André Comte-Sponville** asked his father at a young age what "Right" and "Left" meant, his father responded with both simplicity and depth: being on the right means wanting greatness for France, while being on the left means wanting happiness for the French people.*

*In this brief yet profound reply, the father managed to distill the essence of the ideological divide represented by these two terms an opposition that first emerged in **France** during the Revolution of 1789, and subsequently spread across political life in Europe and much of the world, persisting to this day. (Jouri, 2024)*

The problematic

In the dichotomy of the right and left, right-wingers often perceive left-wingers as superficial, emotional, and naïve. In contrast, the ideological foundations of the left reveal that right-wingers cling to tradition and resist openness in order to preserve their customs. All of this may lead an observer of politics, or other fields, to believe that the divide between the right and left is merely an instinctual one. (Alwan, 2019)

In the same context, those who identify as either right-wing or left-wing often carry with them the symbolic beliefs associated with these positions. Even an individual who appears indifferent to politics or lacks deep knowledge of it may be seen as aligning with a particular stance. For instance, being a left-winger could be interpreted as expressing hostility towards employers, while being a right-winger could indicate distaste for employees. According to this view, the left is associated with generosity, and the right with realism. Conversely, an individual's strong political alignment whether left or right can signal deeply rooted convictions and well-grounded reasoning in their ideological traditions, with a thoughtful approach to their social or economic analyses.

*To clarify the vision further, it is necessary to raise the following question: **What is meant by the left-right dualism as a dimension of the structure of the political field?***

To answer this question, the following steps will be considered in addressing this paper. Accordingly, the structure of the research is organized around the following themes:

- 1. Defining Concepts.*
- 2. The Structure of the Political Sphere between the Term and its Essence*
- 3. Concepts Related to the Political Field.*
- 4. Origins and Emergence of the Political Spectrum: Right and Left.*
 - 5. The Dialectic Right and Left.*
 - 6. Globalization and Nationalism Extremist*
 - 7. Threats and Political Violence*
 - 8. Reciprocal Extremism.*
 - 9. Democracy between the Right and the Left.*

Conclusion

1. Defining Concepts

1.1 The Concept of Dualism

The term "dualism" refers to any variable that denotes only two categories. Theoretically, each of these categories denies or excludes the other. For instance, the variable of sex, which includes the categories of "male" and "female," serves as a clear example to illustrate this concept. In this context, each sex reflects specific characteristics that distinguish each category from the other. (Marshall, 2007)

The term "Duality" is defined in the dictionary as a feminine noun derived from "duo" Duality refers to the idea that posits two opposing principles, such as good and evil, mind and body, or matter and spirit. It is contrasted with unity.

As for linguistic duality, it refers to the phenomenon of speaking one language while writing in another. The term is also used to describe the coexistence of two languages within a particular community, such as some African countries that speak "Swahili" and "English" or "Swahili" and "French".

Duality is a term that describes the phenomenon of bilingualism, such as the coexistence of formal and colloquial languages, or color duality, where an object has two colors, or a summit meeting, which is a gathering between the leaders of two countries. (Dictionary of Meanings)

1.2 The Concept Right Left Term

In the general political context, the term right-wing refers to a political group, political party, or political parties whose members support the general policy of the existing system of government and its preservation, and call for the rejection of political extremism, violence, and revolution. (Labsir, 2010, p. 480)

The left is a term used to describe a political group, political party, or several parties that adopt the principle of opposing the existing political system and call for its overthrow by all means, including violence and revolution. (Labsir, 2010, p. 479)

*The origins of these terms generally trace back to the seating arrangements of politicians during the French Revolution. In the summer of 1789, as members of the French National Assembly gathered to begin drafting the constitution, a debate arose regarding the powers of **King Louis XVI**. When discussions intensified, the politicians divided into two groups in the assembly hall: the revolutionary opponents of the monarchy sat to the left of the president of the session, while the more conservative members who supported the king sat to his right. (Right and Left... Terms in the World of Politics, 2022)*

1.3 The Concept of Structure

In political sociology, structure refers to the institutional systems that form the foundation of the state and society, such as political, economic, and social institutions. These systems operate collectively to distribute power and resources and to regulate relationships among individuals and groups.

*According to **Pierre Bourdieu**, structure consists of networks of social relations through which patterns of power and resource distribution within society are defined. The political field is considered one of the most prominent of these structures. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 72)*

1.4 The Concept of Politics

In terminology, politics is defined as the management of all state affairs, both domestically and internationally. It is also described as the distribution of power and influence within a specific community.

Others have defined it as the relationship between rulers and the ruled within a state. Additionally, politics is characterized as the methods and procedures leading to decision-making for societies and human groups.

1.5 The Concept of the Political Field

The political field is a public space that constitutes a set of foundations and determinants that enter into its formation within two scopes, namely, the political field and the civil field, and this is in order to achieve specific goals. (Farzouli, 2017-2018, p. 36)

2. The Structure of the Political Sphere between the Term and its Essence

In his seminal book (1994) titled the **Left** and the **Right**, Italian philosopher **Norberto Bobbio** defines the left as favoring equality, while the right favors inequality. While this distinction retains its intellectual value, the division between left and right subsequently re-establishes itself based on the creation of a new center. To explore this, he examines the origin of the left-right divide, specifically the French Revolution, arguing that it was not the only or even the dominant opposition at that time. He then shifts to the 2017 French presidential elections, where **Emmanuel Macron** faced **Marine Le Pen**, highlighting how the opposition between the center and extremism continues to shape modern politics. (Drochon, 2022)

It may be appropriate to start with one of the fundamental concepts, given the difficulty in precisely defining these two terms. The crux of the matter, according to **Bobbio**, is that equality and rights hold significant importance for the left. This position should not be portrayed in a way that suggests the left is for equality while the right is against it.

The idea, then, is that not everyone places the same emphasis on this issue. On the right, conservatives believe that equality of opportunity is sufficient to ensure collective welfare and is more demanding, while the left argues that equality of opportunity must be accompanied by equal outcomes. And he distinguished division between right and the left and since revolution french all shades struggle social the great, where it was completed getting started with terminology it self, no especially that the caller the need to develop

parties, and with truth in voting, and ascension in unions labor, and by strengthening political action, and building support nation luxury, and the appearance movement feminism. And in the footsteps both **Anthony Downs** and **Anthony Giddens** to **Renee Raymond**, stressed many layers the educated woman widely known on the necessity of centralization opposition right and left bipolar, the reason for this is that this division provides a summary analytically peerless around position the people from sentence from issues politics.

Considering that the terms left and right have western origins, it is noteworthy that in various countries, such as Chile, India, and South Africa, the division between the right and the left is quite entrenched. In fact, numerous opinion polls conducted across the five continents indicate that this divide between progressives and conservatives is merely a secondary or incidental outcome of democracy. As democracy establishes itself as the only legitimate political system, the division between right and left tends to take on a global character.

The distinction between left and right is, of course, merely a metaphor, as in the real world, political opinions are expressed more as a spectrum than as a strict division. Moreover, the meanings of left and right vary over time and across contexts. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that despite all the surrounding ambiguities, the left-right opposition remains central to discussions that engage political sociology, comparative politics, and political philosophy.

In this context, the near-complete absence of leftist and rightist concepts in the field of international relations is surprising. After all, the issues of equality and social justice that define the divide between the two poles are also at the heart of many international concerns. For instance, few would dispute that the left and right have interpreted the conflicts between East and West, as well as North and South, quite differently in recent decades. It is certainly time for this anecdotal observation to lead to more systematic thinking, focusing on the key aspects of globalization. (Thérien)

The concept of a political structure can be simplified as a horizontal fabric connecting various political spectrums that are vertically interrelated. This structure allows for cooperation and understanding among different groups, while also leading to oppositional

relationships at times. Ultimately, this gives rise to what is known as the political system, which is entirely distinct from the administrative system.

The political system consists of a set of legal and organizational foundations at different levels, along with practical tools for managing the state. The integration of the political system with the administrative system, along with other systems and institutions, forms the state.

One implication of this idea is that the success of a state and its distance from the status of a failed state fundamentally relies on its political system. This system is a product of its political structure, which heavily depends on the maturity of relationships among the various political spectrums and formations. (Moufti, 2023)

The concepts of left and right generally revolve around the opposing duality of conservative/progressive. The right, in its religious form, symbolizes the preservation of economic and social hierarchy and adherence to a divine moral order. In its liberal form, it represents a market economy. On the other hand, the left emphasizes values of justice in social and economic realms, advocating for the adaptation of rules to serve society as a whole.

However, the distinction between left and right based on economic orientation has become less clear, especially after the fall of socialist regimes that emerged in the twentieth century and the global spread of the liberal system. As a result, the differences between left and right, despite their diversity, have faded. (Saadi, 2015)

Defining the terms left and right prompts us to consider two fundamental questions that are, in a way, inseparable from any set of concepts presented as a potential spectrum. The first question is whether left and right are absolute or relative designations. This means asking whether each can be meaningfully defined on its own or if their definitions depend on the existence or proximity of one another to gain significance. The first perspective presents a view of the left as sitting in an ideological space completely isolated from the right, functioning as a systemic semantic duality existing in parallel.

Undoubtedly, the structural content of this duality interacts and may even overlap or touch the margins. In light of this, the idea solidifies that the right exists only because of its opposing position to the left,

and the content of both relies on how they differ from one another, thus recognizing that they belong to a single structure. Their clarity is derived not from affirming what they are but rather from defining what they are not.

The second question is whether these terms, when presented as "left-right," are intended to be separate or connected designations. This raises the issue of whether the definitional boundaries between them are solid, fortified walls or permeable, nebulous membranes. (Ostrowski, 2023)

3. Concepts Related to the Political Field

Include the political field many related concepts to him, and the most important of which is we can mention:

3.1 Authority

This is the most common and circulated concept in the political field. **Khalil Ahmed Khalil** defines it in his work "Basic Concepts in Sociology" as a relationship that pertains to interactive analysis. It is a more complex phenomenon that emerges from the assembly or composition of diverse interacting patterns. This authority takes the form of an unbalanced relationship between at least two actors, one being a follower and the other a leader. The follower executes the instructions and suggestions of the leader, while the leader responds to the requests and desires of the follower. Authority cannot be imagined without power, and the relationship between the two is highly complex; one should not be reduced to the other except in extreme cases. (Khalil, 1984, pp. 121-122)

Some see authority as the official and legal right to influence others through the issuance of decisions, orders, and directives, including punitive commands. Authority is engaged based on voluntary compliance; it is the power that legitimizes the belief among superiors and subordinates in the necessity of adhering to it. (Ettayeb, 2007)

Michel Krouzi argues that authority is based on four core elements. The first is the possession of skill or specialization. The second is the relationship between the organization and its environment. The third is control over internal communications. The fourth is the use of organizational rules. (zeouaoui, 2021, p. 582)

3.2 Political Authority

Every country consists of three main political authorities, which work to establish the internal laws of the state, oversee their implementation, and punish anyone who dares to violate these laws. These authorities are divided into:

- a. **Authority Legislative:** She is authority authorized by legislation and enacts laws.
- b. **Authority Executive:** She is Authority that supervises on application laws that legitimated by the authority legislative.
- c. **Authority Judicial:** It is the highest authority in the state, responsible for holding lawbreakers and senior corrupt officials accountable.

3.3 Political Parties

A party is an organized group that shares common trends and is connected to political activity. Parties are formed for several reasons. They may be formed through the efforts of one individual or those around him, or on the occasion of a historical anniversary, but their first and last goal is to achieve and establish the highest ideals or simply to exercise authority more completely. (Badawi, 1982, p. 306)

The concept of a political party also refers to a group that adopts a specific political approach, aiming to reach power through elections. Each political party has a set of principles and ideologies that guide its operations, as well as a political program that includes its economic, military, and international vision.

According to the **French dictionary Le Robert**, a party is a political organizational formation whose members engage in joint action to enable an individual or a group to assume power or maintain their position for the purpose of promoting a specific doctrine or ideology. (Farzouli, 2017-2018, p. 65)

3.4 Political Ideology

The word ideology has its roots in the Greek era, and the term consists of two parts: *Idea* meaning idea, and *Logos* it means science or study, that is, to indicate the science of ideas.

The definition indicates political ideology is a set of beliefs, ideas, values, and opinions that exhibit a recurring pattern in presenting

plans of action for making public policy, or an attempt to justify or explain the social and political arrangements and processes of a political society. (Al-Khalfan, 2024, p. 03)

This concept also refers to the doctrines and principles adopted by a political party, which may be national, ethnic, or class-based. Many ideologies have become prominent in the world, such as Marxist ideology, Communist ideology, Islamic ideology, and Capitalist ideology. (Hammash, 2023)

3.5 Democracy

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines democracy as a system of governance in which decisions related to laws, policies, leadership, and major projects for the state or any political entity are made directly or indirectly by the people.

Democracy means "rule by the people". The term is derived from the Greek word "demokratia," where "demos" mean the people and "kratos" means judgment. This term prominently emerged in the mid-fifth century BCE as a marker of political systems in some Greek cities, particularly Athens. (Shapiro & Robert A Dahl, 2025)

And democracy, as a form of governance in modern politics, relies on the principle of public participation in ruling. This is achieved through the election of representatives from all segments of the population who have a role in government, with the aim of ensuring the protection of their freedoms. (Hammash, 2023)

4. Origins and Emergence of the Political Spectrum: Right and Left

The birth of the political right and left occurred in 1789 in the *Salle des Menus-Plaisirs in Versailles*, when **King Louis XVI** called for a meeting of the Estates-General. Louis was facing a severe financial crisis and urgently needed help to overcome it.

On May 5, two days after the official opening, two important proposals were put to vote after a heated discussion during the session. It was necessary to choose between two visions regarding the verification of the representatives' credentials: Should each estate verify the credentials of its members, as was customary, or should this be done for all representatives in a joint session of the three estates? Given the large number of representatives, which exceeded 500, a roll-call vote would take too long. Therefore, it was decided, apparently in

the hope of achieving a clear majority for one side or the other that supporters of **Honoré-Gabriel Mirabeau** would gather on the left of the session president, while supporters of **Baron Pierre Victor Malouet** would sit on the right.

And i continue this division in reflection on the method that sat with it Actors in the council. And gather those who commit more with principles revolution in a way growing on left president, while pool supporters order old more on right.

This division continued to reflect in the seating arrangement of the representatives in the council. Those who adhered more closely to the principles of the revolution increasingly gathered on the left of the president, while supporters of the old regime congregated on the right.

On September 11, 1789, an important vote on royal veto power took place. It was defended by a somewhat royalist minority sitting on the right of the president, while the overwhelming majority on his left rejected it. The ideological division into two opposing groups was so clear at that time that many consider this date to be the official beginning of the political split between the left and the right. (Bienfait & Van Breek, 2014)

As the world, especially Europe, closely observed the **French Revolution** and its developments, the terms "right" and "left" began to emerge as fundamental concepts in France in the eighteenth century. These terms quickly spread throughout the world. This division remains a legacy of the French Revolution, specifically from the constitutional assembly during the vote on the king's powers on August 29, 1789. The assembly had to discuss the royal veto as a privilege, and when voting commenced, supporters of the **royal veto** (the conservatives) were asked to stand on the right side of the hall, while the opposition (the progressives) stood on the left. This led to the emergence of what could develop into a new political division. After this division was established in the French political arena, the terms "right" and "left" spread across Europe, becoming symbols of political identity and descriptions of the political ideologies of individuals and groups. Since that time, the debate between the right and the left has posed a clear challenge for thinkers in the political field. (Tiflati, 2022)

According to what has been circulated, the adoption of the terms "Right" and "Left" for the purpose of classifying political leanings was a result of the seating arrangement in the National Assembly or the French Parliament. Supporters of the king gradually moved to the right of the president, while advocates of liberty and equality positioned themselves on his left.

However, according to **Marcel Gauchet**, this binary classification did not become a significant political metaphor until later, particularly with the emergence of socialism in the late nineteenth century. (Jouri, 2024)

Although one can trace the components of right and left in nearly all previous civilizations, including primitive ones, the intellectual and genuine crystallization of these terms was a result of the French Revolution. (Alwan, 2019) This binary classification had not entered common usage before 1789, as its actual and true usage emerged during the 1820s. Historians trace its real birth to the restoration of monarchy in France after **Napoleon's** defeat, particularly during the parliamentary session of 1819-1820. (Ali, 2023)

Under those circumstances, the transformation of these terms into fundamental, systematic, and official concepts of political identity took a long time-over a century. They did not acquire institutional significance until the first decade of the twentieth century, when right and left came to have specific and clear meanings.

For example, opponents of the **Stalinist** era (In reference to Joseph Stalin, former President of the Soviet Union), who broke away from the Communist Party, were labeled as either rightists or deviant leftists. At that time, leaning toward the left meant advocating for the adoption of a global revolutionary labor movement with fundamentalist tendencies, while a rightward inclination indicated a conviction in embracing a form of nationalist foundational sentiments.

These definitions were characterized by flexibility and often changed with the ruling party and the political situation. In this context, we can differentiate between those who seek a literal framing of the meanings of right and left and those who focus on the historical essence of the core meanings of terms that remained rigid for

centuries, considering new political definitions such as conservative, liberal, progressive, and reactionary. Based on these insights, it can be said that the terms right and left describe more of a cultural national orientation than a fixed political landscape.

In the 1920s and 1930s, particularly in Europe, it was nearly impossible to discuss politics without referencing right or left, as they represented some of the most prominent political identities of the time.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the **Cold War** significantly contributed to the persecution of all those associated with the left. Citizens lost their government jobs and could face legal action if they expressed socialist or communist leanings or declared their affiliation or sympathy with the Eastern bloc. This had a substantial impact on leftist activism. During this period, conservative thinkers began linking the growth of the liberal state to what they termed leftism and its communist associations, thereby casting liberalism in a negative light among them.

During the **Vietnam War**, the terms resurfaced, and discussions about right and left became important as people needed a way to express their differences regarding government policies, both domestic and foreign. They found these terms to be suitable for their needs.

Today, in the modern era, it can be said that the right is often a clear indication of distorted nationalism and conservatism, while the left signifies liberalism and progressivism. As for the center, it continues to experience ongoing change and development. (Tiflati, 2022)

5. The dialectic Right and the Left

The polarity of the right and the left is the product of a long historical process shaped by debates and confrontations. The theorists and politicians on both sides have loudly proclaimed their values, cited their references, and declared their beliefs, only to be refuted, attacked, and denounced by their opponents. What remains today from these battles are emotional legacies nurtured by the original architects, who aim to reap the benefits of the positive connotations these concepts evoke while casting the negative ones onto their adversaries. In other words, the system of emotional concepts remains

sufficiently rich and capable of mobilizing individuals to determine their positions, whereas the practical implications of positioning oneself on the spectrum remain obscured. (Bro, 1998, p. 318)

In light of these indicators, the following question must be raised: Why do the majority of far-right parties reject the traditional distinction between the right and the left, positioning themselves outside the boundaries of this division? According to experts in the field, there are several reasons behind the far-right's efforts to classify themselves as being beyond the right and the left, including:

- *The intellectual orientation of these parties, which views both the right and the left as political adversaries, making it necessary to distrust them and avoid alliances with them.*
- *The far-right's policies and its monolithic worldview, which do not recognize any legitimacy, political value, or meaningful significance in the distinction between the right and the left.*
- *The rejection of the negative connotation associated with the term 'far-right,' which is often linked to racism and ethnic discrimination. This drives them to question the division altogether.*
- *Neither left nor right'-this is how far-right groups define themselves, a stance that enables them to distinguish themselves from other political spectrums and claim that they do not subscribe to the current traditional political system. For instance, during the 2017 French presidential elections, the debate surrounding this distinction between the right and the left resurfaced. Far-right leader **Marine Le Pen** asserted that these two terms are meaningless and argued that the real division is between globalists and nationalists. (Tiflati, 2022)*

*In the same context, **Hazem Saghie** argues that, in the Third World where the primary, albeit not the sole, conflict occurs between regimes that monopolize and suppress their societies, and peoples or groups seeking freedom and equality right-wing figures like **Mobutu Sese Seko** and left-wing figures like **Laurent-Désiré Kabila** become indistinguishable. A microscope of immense power would be required to differentiate between **Abdel Fattah Ismail** and **Ali Abdullah Saleh**. As for 'centrist' leaders who oscillate between the right and the left, their sole concern is to secure and consolidate their authority. Their*

position itself is evidence of the marginalization of this long-standing dichotomy and its reduction to a convenient, utilitarian tool.

Anti-imperialism, in all its populist forms whether nationalist or religious has come to define the broad direction of policies and orientations that are almost impossible to classify as either 'right' or 'left.' This is only partially new, as even during the Cold War, alignment with the **Soviet Union** (and, to a much lesser extent, with China) often replaced strict ideological or class-based positions in labeling a party or faction as leftist. However, the presence of Soviet communism and relatively strong communist parties provided this classification with a degree of validity that expired following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the decline of its communist parties.

As for parties that align with the conditions of international economic organizations, it is likely that a long list of parochial and sectarian determinants (religious, sectarian, ethnic, etc.) precedes any classification of them as right or left. If we were to cite the Lebanese experience as an example of which there are countless similar cases considering the Future Movement as a right-wing party (implying that the “Sunni” population of **Akkar** are neoliberals) is no less absurd than labeling **Hezbollah** or the **Free Patriotic Movement** as left-wing. This recalls the flawed categorization adopted by some during the **Lebanese Civil War**, where “Muslims” were labeled as leftists and Christians as right-wingers. Such concepts fail to provide any meaningful understanding of the realities on the ground. (Saghieh, 2018)

In light of the above, it becomes clear that the rejuvenation of both the right and the left was a product of the early conflict between the concepts of systems and the concepts of institutions. This rejuvenation was accompanied by a series of errors that failed to align with the role, flourishing, and well-being of humanity. These errors, it should be noted, have historically governed and continue to govern various societies and systems that have chosen to adopt the ideologies of the right or the left. (Khalil I. A., 2014)

6. Globalization and Nationalism Extremist

*If the generator of right and left polarities in France exists, it is not surprising that the discord between the two factions in this country is very wide. Many politicians have attempted to transcend the duality of right and left by resorting to higher national and democratic principles, such as the challenge posed by former French President **Charles de Gaulle** to these terms, and his relentless pursuit to eradicate this ideology and direction that led to a clear rift in French society and even within his own government.*

*In 2011, **Marine Le Pen's** ascension to the leadership of her party, the National Front, represented a gradual return of the French far-right, albeit in a different form. This trend should be understood in the context of the far-right party's aspirations to become an officially accepted governing party among all French citizens, regardless of their orientations, making the struggle for this goal the party's strategic priority.*

*Thus, **Le Pen's** dual strategy emerged, characterized by lifting the veil of demonization from her party and working to bring it closer to public opinion on one hand, while attempting to recruit outside the regular party framework by introducing a new division behind right and left, where globalization and national sovereignty remain the dividing line. It is worth noting that the far-right has been the force behind keeping the idea of the left alive in the political arena in the minds of its supporters, as its existence is tied to the existence of the left.*

In the same context, the results of the first round of the French legislative elections, held on Sunday, June 6, 2024, showed a significant advance for the French far-right led by the National Rally party.

*After more than fifty years since its founding, the National Front, established by **Jean-Marie Le Pen** and renamed the National Rally by his daughter Marine in 2018, achieved a remarkable victory, garnering 34 % of the votes, surpassing the left alliance, which came in second with 28 %, and President **Emmanuel Macron** and his Renaissance party, which finished third with 20 % and thus exited the race for the second round.*

On June 9, **Macron** decided to dissolve the National Assembly (the legislative council) after his party lost to the National Rally in the European Parliament elections, where it secured first place. (Jouri, 2024)

7. Threats and Political Violence

Since the emergence of left-right polarization after the **French Revolution**, all discussions related to the left or right camps have essentially been European debates. In the first half of the twentieth century, this division between left and right manifested itself between the two superpowers that recently emerged on the global stage: Russia, which adopted the name **Soviet Union** after the revolution and became the largest representation of the left in the world, and in contrast, the United States, which represented a center of attraction for the right globally. Thus, this European debate extended beyond the European continent, transforming into a global issue.

On the other hand, the twentieth century witnessed the birth of a new phenomenon in the world of diplomacy. European countries realized they could not overcome all their adversaries alone, leading them to establish diplomatic unions. Consequently, we began to witness the emergence of various alliances among these countries, which further reinforced the two superpowers more than ever before. (Abbasi & Harandi, 2017, pp. 80-81)

Contrary to what was discussed in numerous media reports during 2020 and 2021, far-right extremists were not the sole perpetrators of the riots and acts of sabotage witnessed in several western countries. Far-left extremist groups also emerged, seeking to disrupt protests by other opposition groups. Understanding the potential threats posed by these movements from both the far right and the far left, as well as analyzing the interactions between them, is crucial. It is essential to study the activities of these groups in both the physical and digital spheres. This examination requires an assessment of their extremist activities on the digital platforms where they are active.

Nin short, far-right and far-left extremist groups share common foundations, manifested in nihilism and chaos. Both sides seek to achieve their goals at any cost, even if it leads to civil war, as they view the chaos they hope to create as a prerequisite for such a conflict.

For example, **the Youth Liberation Front in Portland** describes itself as a decentralized network of independent youth collectives, actively engaged in direct action toward the complete liberation of state institutions from government tyranny and capitalism. Far-right groups, on the other hand, saw former U.S. President **Donald Trump** as a crucial ally in the White House, believing he could restore order on one hand and eliminate "traitors" and the far left on the other. In 2019, after **Trump** directed federal law enforcement to downplay far-right activities and focus solely on the threat of the far left which he deemed the greatest danger to the nation the far right was allowed to grow and recruit openly, with alarming consequences. The scale and intensity of this threat became starkly evident during the events of January 6th, when news outlets and social media platforms were flooded with images of far-right extremists, **QAnon** conspiracy theorists, and **white supremacists** storming the Capitol Hill building.

8. Reciprocal Extremism

Amid the crises and conflicts facing the world today, there has emerged a pressing need for a new global awareness to understand far-right extremism, which claims to preserve white identity and culture or to counter far-left progressive extremism. Activists perceive the latter as a destructive and rebellious force against traditional values and local culture. Despite their political differences, extremists on both the right and the left share psychological and behavioral characteristics. While right-wing authoritarians tend to strongly support the existing hierarchy, left-wing authoritarians insist on vehemently opposing it. Both, however, share a psychological essence that unites them more than it divides them.

9. Democracy between the Right and the Left

Democracy, in its broad concept, represents a form of governance distinct from systems led by a single individual or a specific group. In a democratic government, it is the citizens who rule through their public participation. However, among the enduring questions raised is this: Who are these citizens? And how should their rule be exercised?

The diverse answers to these questions have given rise to various forms of democracy throughout history. Broadly speaking, three types of democracy can be identified, as follows:

*a. **Athenian Democracy:** This form of democracy inspired many thinkers during the Enlightenment and beyond. Known as direct democracy, it is based on the direct participation of citizens in all decision-making processes. It represents the ideal type of democracy according to many thinkers, though it is considered impossible to achieve in practice.*

*b. **Electoral Democracy:** This is one of the most significant forms of democracy in the western world and is a cornerstone favored by the right-wing spectrum. In this system, citizens participate in governance through representatives they elect as deputies. These representatives hold power for a specified term, and at the end of this term, all the powers and privileges granted to them are revoked. The people also retain the right to remove their elected representatives. This demonstrates that while citizens delegate their choices in governance to these representatives, they remain the true holders of power. According to liberals, this mechanism promotes societal welfare and happiness. Additionally, tyranny can be eradicated if the government is properly aligned with free-market institutions, while simultaneously addressing the issue of freedom. Prominent liberal philosophers such as **John Stuart Mill** and **Jeremy Bentham** were key advocates of this form of democracy.*

Perhaps the question of which groups among the citizens possess the right to vote and participate in elections is one of the most critical issues of this form of democracy, which became widespread during the 20th century. A heated debate has long surrounded this issue, as for a significant period, only those who met a certain threshold of wealth and property or enjoyed a particular social status were granted the right to vote. Women in many governments were not granted voting rights until the mid-20th century. Similarly, racial minorities, such as Native Americans and African Americans in the United States, were unable to exercise their voting rights until after prolonged struggles.

*Leftists, led by figures like **Karl Marx**, believed that the liberal struggle against tyranny and the relentless efforts of liberal democrats to achieve political equality represented an important and progressive step in modern civilization. However, they also argued that this was not the end of the road. In reality, elements of oppression, exploitation,*

and power persist within the capitalist system. Achieving true equality through genuine struggle requires critically examining the economic relationships that govern the free market, as well as targeting the institutions tied to power.

c. **Party Democracy:** Party democracy is the form of democracy that the leftist movement considers obligatory. Marxists opposed liberal democracy, which they viewed as too limited. They believed that liberal democratic institutions were merely tools in the hands of the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. These thinkers went so far as to believe that the socialist assembly structure should be replaced by a democratic liberal state system, whereby the smallest socialist groups would elect their representatives, who would then be sent to larger electoral units. These representatives would, in turn, elect other representatives to send to even larger units, and so on until ultimately selecting representatives responsible for managing the state on behalf of their constituencies.

According to this view, the right-wing never regarded this model as true democracy. Another noteworthy point regarding democracy is that far-right movements throughout these years such as monarchists completely rejected democracy from the outset. **Fascism** and **Nazism** explicitly denied its legitimacy at its roots. Moreover, conservatives generally did not engage with democracy positively. Conversely, the most radical leftist groups the communists claimed to be more democratic than the democrats themselves. (Abbasi & Harandi, 2017, p. 151 and following)

And today, there is a clear bias towards framing political life in Western societies as a conflict between liberal democracy, electoral democracy, and populist anti-liberalism. It may be accurate to say that the economic dimension remains somewhat unclear within liberal discourse not necessarily within neo-liberalism but what is correct, on the other hand, is that any societal liberation program concerning rights and differences attains a level of obviousness comparable to fundamental truths in any radical discourse rooted in liberalism. (Saghieh, 2018)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed to explore significant aspects of a deeply rooted concept within the political domain. We hope that we have succeeded, even to a modest extent, in clarifying the ambiguities surrounding the issues raised by the article's central problem. Additionally, we aspire for this paper to serve as an inspiration for researchers in this field to continue engaging with the topic through innovative approaches and fresh perspectives.

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