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COMPARATIVE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY CATEGORIZING POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES USING TWELVE ARCHETYPES

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Abstract: Comparative political philosophy can be stimulated by imposing a categorization scheme on possible varieties of political philosophies. This article develops a categorization scheme using four essential features of political philosophies, resulting in twelve archetypal political philosophies. The four essential features selected are a political philosophy's views concerning human nature, the proper function of morality, the best form of society, and the highest responsibility of citizenship. The twelve archetypal political philosophies range from the communal (Rousseau), the democratic (J. S. Mill), the representative (Aristotle), the aristocratic (Plato), and the autocratic (Calvin), along with seven more archetypes: the aloof anarchy, social anarchy, contractarian, progressive, natural law, sage ruler, and tyrannical political forms. A wide variety of Western political philosophers are assigned their places within this categorization scheme to illustrate its utility and comprehensiveness.

Keywords: comparative politics, democracy, government, human nature, morality, natural law, political philosophy.

1. Categorizing Political Philosophies

Plato offered the first comprehensive political philosophy, in the *Republic*. He also outlined an intriguing categorization of five forms of government and indicated how philosophical justifications could be raised for each. Attempts to define and categorize possible forms of government have occasionally been attempted since Plato. Aristotle subsequently suggested six basic types and compared their justifications. Many political philosophers and political scientists have enjoyed this intellectual puzzle ever since. Rather than survey and judge these interesting efforts over the centuries, one more categorization is outlined here. This categorization attempts to be both exhaustive and penetrating. All significant political philosophies find a place in this categorical scheme, and the scheme relies on a small number of essential features common to all political philosophies.

Important features of any political philosophy are numerous, and deciding upon a select few for designing a categorization scheme can only be a hazardous venture. Inspired by the Greeks, we could include among essential features the quantity of people holding political power (the many, the few, the one, and so forth), or the quality of people wielding political power (the wise, the virtuous, the courageous, the greedy, and so on), or the distribution of political power within a government (by federated states, by competing parties, by separate branches, and so forth), or the size of the state to be optimally governed (a rural town, a small polis, a country, the entire world, and so on). These important traits of governments have remained useful for positive descriptions and classifications of observed political systems. The field of political science, of comparative politics in particular, has carefully surveyed these and many more conspicuous features of actual governments.[1]

This essay is about political philosophy; it is not an exercise in comparative politics and the categorization of states and political systems. Political philosophy is not reducible to political science, but the two are related. Political science pursues questions about why governments exist and evolve, how governments seek legitimization and citizen participation, how governments acquire and allocate political power, what goals governments pursue, how governments interact with wider society and with each other, which organizational structures and deliberative processes governments use, why governments succeed or fail in their aims, how governments can be compared and evaluated, and the like. Political science encounters highly theoretical issues while answering these sorts of questions. Examples found in political theory include: What is political power? How can political activity be distinguished? What is the purpose and value of citizenship? Is politics grounded in human nature? Is politics necessary and/or useful for human welfare? Does politics require ideology? How is morality relevant to politics? How is religion relevant to politics? This vital continuity between political science and political theory extends further to political philosophy, because highly theoretical issues bridge the "fact/value" division of labor between political science and political philosophy. Proposing answers to such theoretical questions can require normative evaluations of the rational, beneficial, ethical, and even spiritual dimensions of political activity. Political theory naturally generates political philosophies.[2]

[1] The field of comparative politics, once called "comparative government," has dramatically expanded in scope and influence since the 1960s. Guidance to exemplary texts in this field is beyond the scope of this essay, but the reader may usefully consult Scarrow 1969, Blondel 1990, Lane 1997, and Stepan 2001. The related field of comparative political economy is surveyed in Boettke et al. 2005.

[2] Freeden 1996 amply illustrates how the pursuit of political theory blends into the study of ideologies and then intersects with political philosophy. Freeden's thesis that the normative values of ideologies are essential to sophisticated political theories, and hence

Political philosophy proceeds further than political science or political theory by asking and answering the crucial philosophical questions, (1) On what grounds are governments justifiable? and (2) Are some governments preferable to others? Plato and Aristotle not only discerned some basic types of governments but also sketched various kinds of justifications that could be offered for them, and ranked governments according to the plausibility of these justifications. A classification scheme for political philosophies should usefully distinguish types of philosophical justifications for governments. Accordingly, the classification scheme developed here does not aim at classifying forms of government but aims instead at the classification of philosophical philosophies, or in brief, the identification of the basic "political forms." The categorization scheme offered in this essay provides for twelve basic, or archetypal, political forms. This scheme is radically new and therefore of possible intrinsic interest as an exercise in metaphilosophy. However, this effort also offers practical benefits to both political philosophers and political scientists.

Despite the robust academic activity in political science and political philosophy, there is little evidence that elaborating classifications of political theories is at present encouraged or rewarded.[3] Comparative politics is in healthy shape, while comparative political philosophy slumbers. During the early decades of the twentieth century, thinkers struggled to comprehend the burst of vast philosophical effort justifying varieties of communisms, socialisms, fascisms, and military dictatorships then erupting around the world. After World War II, by contrast, no significant political philosopher expended much effort on comparative political philosophy. Perhaps the cold war and its obsessive tensions

deserve as much scholarly attention as political philosophy itself, is congenial to this essay's aims. In my view, the political philosophy that disclaims any ideological prejudice only the more clearly reveals its own ideological norms. Ideology seems in this way like metaphysics: those who would bury metaphysics get trapped by their own metaphysical cages, even if they can't see the bars. Once the crucial role of ideology is recognized for all political thinking, there is little reason to deny that the construction and criticism of political ideologies is at the core of political philosophizing.

[3] Interestingly, the *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Boix and Stokes 2007) does not contain an essay devoted to the theoretical problem of classifying political systems. Indeed, works in comparative politics that bring nuanced and reflective thought to classifying political systems and philosophies are quite rare. Exemplary examples are found among the essays in Bebler and Seroka 1990. Academic journals for political science and political philosophy are almost completely devoid of any original work in comparative political philosophy. The greatest energy for classifying governments has been expended on distinguishing kinds of democracies. The impact of Dahl 1956 and Dahl 1972 has been enormous; see for example the chapters in Diamond and Plattner 2001. The field of political philosophy itself does not consider comparative political philosophy to be significant. For example, the authoritative Blackwell *Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy* (Goodin, Pogge, and Pettit 2007) has chapters on the obvious systems, such as anarchism, conservativism, liberalism, and socialism, but there is no evidence of reflection about the categorization of the basic political forms, even within modern Western political thought.

between democracy and communism undernourished further creative work. That might help explain current lack of attention to comparative political philosophy, but it does not reasonably justify such neglect.

Does it matter that comparative political philosophy is moribund? Political philosophy's complacency is unjustified and irresponsible. Comparative politics and political philosophy are now burdened with an outdated and inadequate manner of categorizing political theories. Regrettably, the extent of contemporary consensus about the categorization of political systems and philosophies does not go much further than the typical "left–center–right" spectrum found in textbooks. The more sophisticated versions usually look something like table 1.

TABLE 1

anarchism	communism	democratic socialism	constitutional liberalism	conservatism	fascism	monarchism

Almost everyone complains about the evident limitations of this linear scheme, but too few do anything about it. At the start of the twenty-first century, political thinkers are now surveying a global scene of rich political variety and an opportunity to sample and compare political philosophies originating in diverse cultures. The time is ripe for dramatically rethinking and globalizing the field of comparative political philosophy. Unfortunately, most work in comparative political philosophy now involves selecting two familiar political philosophies, or two rival traditions of political philosophy, for analysis and contrast.[4] Very few comprehensive schemes, more detailed or philosophically penetrating than the typical left–center–right spectrum, can be located in the literature.[5] The arena of comprehensive comparative political philosophy

[4] The paradigm examples in recent literature are *Border Crossings: Toward a Comparative Political Theory* (Dallmayr 1999) and *Comparative Political Philosophy: Studies Under the Upas Tree* (Parel and Keith 2003). *Border Crossings* contains chapters on Islamic, Indian, and Chinese political theories. Dallmayr's introduction laments the stultifying reliance of comparative politics solely on structures of modern Western politics, claiming that "reliance on these structures permits the comparativist or comparative political scientist to assume the stance of a global overseer or universal spectator whose task consists basically of assessing the relative distance or proximity of given societies to the established global yardstick" (Dallmayr 1999, 2). The chapters in *Comparative Political Philosophy* separately cover aspects of Western, Chinese, Indian, and Islamic political thought. Parel's introductory chapter, "The Comparative Study of Political Philosophy," echoes Dallmayr, warning that "no comparative study of political philosophy is possible within the framework of modern western political philosophy" (Parel and Keith 2003, 13–14).

[5] Only a couple of interesting comprehensive schemes for comparative political philosophy deserve mention. Neither *Border Crossings* nor *Comparative Political Philosophy* contains any comprehensive schemes. Lane 1996 does not offer a comprehensive scheme, but the major theoretical issues relevant to creating a scheme are amply discussed, in the course

is currently bereft of serious contestants, a lack remedied by this essay. Comparative political philosophy deserves a fresh start.

The classification scheme of twelve archetypal political philosophies developed in this essay is quite different from the outdated spectrum approach, avoiding several of its serious problems.[6] For example, the left–center–right spectrum conveniently locates constitutional liberalism at the center, lending it an air of moderate reasonableness that it may not deserve. My classification scheme brings the twelve archetypes into a rounded circle, eliminating any favored middle position, and forcing an archetype's proponents to return to direct arguments for their views. The spectrum uses the label "conservatism" as if it were self-explanatory, yet the meaning of "conservative" is entirely relative to one's own views, or to the mood of the times—for example, absolute monarchists once played the role of "conservatives" to the "liberal" advocates of strong parliaments to balance monarchs. My classification scheme eliminates relativistic labels like "conservative" and "liberal," again forcing archetype adherents actually to provide arguments for their views. The left–center–right spectrum is a model of its distinctive era, developing between the aftermath of the American and French revolutions and the rise of liberal democracies after World War II. My classification scheme is independent from historical or geographical contexts, avoiding the influence of convictions about political progress or historical inevitability that infect parochial political ideology. In this scheme, no archetype can enjoy undeserved placement as privileged or suffer undeserved denigration as "extreme." For a final example, the left–center–right spectrum cannot explain why these seven ideologies are the only primary political options. My classification scheme of twelve archetypes is theoretically comprehensive, explaining why the archetypes can be arrayed in a rational ordering, and showing how each archetype has a diametrically opposed archetype.

Twelve major Western philosophers are selected as close approximations to these twelve political forms, and in this sense they could be called "archetypal" political philosophers. It would be no criticism of my categorization scheme, however, to find discrepancies between an

of comparing numerous types of constitutions. Roger Masters's essay "Human Nature, Nature, and Political Thought" (in Pennock and Chapman 1977, 69–110) applies three primary dimensions ("relation of human action to cosmos," "relation of human law to cosmos," and "relation of human thought to cosmos") for distinguishing eight basic types of political theory, arranged as the eight points of a cube. Christopher Berry similarly emphasizes the modes of grounding political theorizing on views of human nature, discriminating a wide variety of political philosophies without supplying any categorization scheme (Berry 1986). David Dilworth's comparative hermeneutics has been inspirational for my own comparative project, but the degree of congruence between my categorization scheme with the archic matrix of his seminal *Philosophy in World Perspective* (Dilworth 1989) cannot be explored here.

[6] A survey of the problems mentioned here, and several additional problems, are described in Leach 1993.

archetypal philosopher and a political form. Such discrepancies are not only admitted at the start but are also occasionally highlighted in this essay. This scheme is not designed to fit historical philosophers but rather is designed to frame a comprehensive array of theoretically possible political forms. It should also be noted that only Western philosophers are mentioned in the essay, as any adequate attempt to categorize non-Western philosophers would require another essay. This categorization scheme was, however, designed with non-Western philosophers in mind as well. This scheme is by no means narrowly Western in scope, nor is it reliant on assumptions peculiar to Western philosophy or civilization.

Political philosophers have offered a bewildering variety of justifications for types of governments—where should categorization start?

2. Central Features of Political Philosophies

Politics in its broadest sense may be crudely defined as the technology of controlling large-scale human organization using persuasion and coercion. Political philosophy is therefore the intelligent justification and improvement of political technology. Any technology must carefully consider the fit between its techniques and its materials. Hence, it is irresponsible to recommend a type of politics without considering its fitness for the "human raw materials" with which a political system must deal. Accordingly, different political philosophies will have varying estimates of what human beings are like and how malleable they are to cultural and political influences. Political power can have an enormous influence on people, but no reasonable political philosophy would assume that political persuasion and coercion will be the only formative influences on human maturation. As political systems are primarily concerned about the use of power by adults and the use of power for the control of adults, political philosophies explicitly or tacitly rely on notions about the proper maturation and socialization of human beings. Since a political system must account for the kinds and amounts of coercion exercised by a government, a political philosophy has an obligation to explain why such additional coercion is required in order to control already socialized human beings.

Political philosophies can be expected to align with compatible social theories about the motivations of human beings, the socialization processes that developing human beings undergo, their capacity for kinds of moral duties and social relations, and their ability to responsibly maintain their social organizations. Many political philosophies undertake such theorizing, aiming at completeness by offering both a justification of a political system and also a justification of a corresponding social theory. The plausibility of a political philosophy to a large degree depends on its completeness and the coherence of its political and social components. No political conclusions can be deductively drawn from facts about

human nature, human morality, or human sociality, of course; yet a large degree of coherence between a political philosophy's theory and its understanding of human nature, morality, and sociality enhances its rational plausibility and practical influence.

Plato recognized these obligations of completeness and coherence, and he set high standards for a complete and coherent political philosophy. He elaborated sophisticated theories about human nature, the nature of morality, the normal mode of sociality, and the proper function of responsibility. Plato regarded these theories are crucial for justifying his own political philosophy, and his approach has been highly influential on subsequent political philosophers. Without apologies for crudely trimming a philosopher's views into narrow categories (necessary for initiating a categorization scheme), we can summarize Plato's views on human nature, morality, sociality, and responsibility as follows:

Plato on human nature	Human beings naturally have *composite* tendencies that can lead toward both good/virtue and evil/vice. Plato believed that these tendencies are highly relevant for explaining the forms of government attempted by human beings, and for justifying one form of government over the rest.
Plato on morality	Human morality should be rationally *principled* so that it can appeal to intelligence. Plato believed that reasoning is the best way to discern and justify the genuinely moral life. Many human beings are moral despite ignorance of principles, but the wise seek them, respect them, and try to teach them to others.
Plato on sociality	Human beings flourish best when socialized into culturally *traditional* ways. Plato believed that novel or alien modes of social life are dangerous to morality and social stability, and he preferred a static and closed culture of conformity to established ways of life.
Plato on responsibility	Human responsibility functions best when its priority is to be *just*. Plato believed that each person's highest responsibility is to respect the political order, and that personal responsibility is optimized when people ensure that the political order prevails over other interests.

Plato's combination of principled morality together with traditional sociality will seem strange to many at first glance. Modern Western philosophy, in the wake of the Enlightenment, more easily associates appeals to reason with criticisms of traditional ways, not justifications of tradition and custom. The notion that grounding morality on reason alone can only produce novel and unconventional moralities has but a recent and local provenance, when contrasted against the wider panorama of political philosophies across the world's civilizations during the past three millennia. Political thinkers who fall most closely into the Platonic archetype are comfortable with the alternative notion that intelligence and custom confirm the same truth, and that respect for traditional ways is the wisest and most justifiable course. These Platonic thinkers also tend to believe that their rationality, like their culture, has universal scope and superiority. They assume that their modes of reasoning are the only legitimate modes, and that they are discovering absolute and timeless truths about morality, culture, and government that will forever be valid for all humanity. Plato's political philosophy aims at justifying an *aristocratic* political form, recommending rule by the most excellent leaders, over the rival political forms that he considers. We will not mean by "aristocracy" only what Plato intended but will use the term more generally to cover political rule by a relatively small number of people who abundantly possess the required political qualifications. There are many specific kinds of aristocratic governments, depending on the sort of excellence required (some aristocracies are fascist or militaristic or theocratic, and so on). We can summarize this archetype as outlined in table 2.

TABLE 2

Philosopher	Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
Plato	composite	principled	traditional	just	aristocratic

Using Plato's categorization, we can proceed to expand on these selected essential features of any political philosophy. What are the basic modes of human nature, morality, sociality, and responsibility? Starting with human nature, the five logical options are as follows. Human nature naturally has (1) mostly good tendencies; (2) neither good nor evil tendencies; (3) varying ratios of good and evil tendencies across people; (4) a common composite mixture of good and evil tendencies; or (5) mostly evil tendencies. Natural good and evil in this political context means the presence in infancy of innate dispositions resulting in behaviors that are (a) appraised by adults as socially positive acts that should be encouraged by moral training, or (b) appraised by adults as socially negative acts that should be discouraged by moral training. Since the

terms ''good'' and ''evil'' carry some connotations that distract attention away from political philosophy, toward evaluative meanings valid only in some cultures but not others, ''good'' and ''evil'' are replaced by less pejorative terms in the final version of the categorization scheme.

Some philosophers do not provide a psychological theory on the question of innate morality, but their approach to moral education yields clues. For example, a philosopher who sees little difficulty with socializing most adults into lifelong moral actors has a much more positive view of human nature than a philosopher who believes that adults will eventually lapse into antisocial behavior without constant supervision and reinforcement. We must also be clear that most political philosophers, regardless of their divergent views about human nature, are of the opinion that many, if not most, human beings can become good (either through their own efforts or through socialization). When a philosopher announces that people are really good, this can be interpreted either as the view that human beings are naturally good at birth or as the view that human beings will be good if certain conditions are fulfilled (for example, if introspective meditation reveals to them their inner divinity, or if environing society during childhood promotes good conduct). A philosopher's pronouncements on human nature must be carefully interpreted to discover whether actual good or potential good (and likewise the converse, actual evil or potential evil) is being predicated of infant human beings.

The next essential feature is morality itself: How does morality best function for human beings? Let us consider what views about morality best pair up with the five modes of human nature. If human nature is mostly good, then it seems plausible that one's natural insights and motivations are mostly good, and therefore if a person wants to consult morality she need only to consult herself. No outside source or authority is needed, as each person is his own best *intuitive* guide to morality. On the other hand, if human nature has no significant tendencies toward either good or evil, the individual is not the source of morality, and instead morality is culturally constructed and maintained. This does not mean that anything goes; a constructed morality should still be constrained by the actual human beings and local conditions that it serves. Therefore, a morality should be carefully *designed* to fit the social situation. The third option holds that all people have some innate good and evil, but each person has a unique ratio of these tendencies, and many kinds of ratios are found distributed across society. Perhaps these ratios are distributed across society in a bell-curve pattern, or perhaps ratios are distributed by class or caste, where ''higher'' segments of society display ratios weighted more toward goodness. No single morality or way of life fits all people; a morality functions best when it is a *natural* match to people and their place in life. The fourth option is Plato's: he paired a view of human nature as a composite of good and evil, in pretty much the

same ratio for all, with a view of morality as functioning best when it is rationally *principled*. This pairing seems sensible because the human conscience, already deeply conflicted, cannot easily deliver a morality; while reason offers an alternative way, apart from emotion or desire, to justify a morality. The fifth option for morality is the view that if human beings are mostly evil, they can best understand and follow a morality if it is *commanded* by an authority figure. On this pairing, a sufficiently impressive authority figure can be an effective moral leader by somehow understanding a morality and imposing it on evil human beings who can be motivated to obey from respect for power, fear of punishment, greed for reward, and the like.

The five basic options regarding morality become these: Morality functions best when it is (1) internally intuited by a conscientious individual; (2) creatively designed for the social situation; (3) naturally matched to the classes' lifestyles; (4) rationally justified in a principled way; or (5) decisively commanded by an authority figure. We can summarize the categorization scheme thus far as set out in table 3.

TABLE 3

Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
good	intuitive			
neutral	designed			
distributed	natural			
composite	principled	traditional	just	aristocratic
evil	commanded			

We can fill in this scheme by completing the other four archetypes besides Plato's. Let us begin by considering a political philosophy that proceeds from the view that human beings are naturally good and can discover morality by intuition. In the real world, not all human beings have intuited the same morality, although some philosophers hold out hope for a future moral unification. Human beings that have discerned a common morality would most easily live together, and not want to have much social interaction with human beings who follow a quite different morality. An obvious social pairing with intuitive morality is therefore *sectarianism*: let human beings divide themselves into separate communities according to their moralities. For a political philosopher who believes that there is one superior morality, sectarianism is additionally appealing because the truly moral can segregate themselves apart from the immoral, minimizing bad influences caused by contact with evil human beings. If such segregation were achieved, the moral human being would achieve in practice what nature ideally intended: that the good human beings would attain the liberty to be what they were always meant to be. The primary responsibility of each moral person is to be *free*: to

exercise one's liberty to follow the moral conscience. For this archetype, the ideal political form is *communal*, in which only minimal political organization and coercion is necessary to preserve a social order that is sustained by the community's common moral values and principles. We can summarize this as outlined in table 4.

TABLE 4

Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
good	intuitive	sectarian	free	communal

The next archetypal political philosophy holds that human beings have no natural tendencies toward good or evil robust enough to help justify any particular form of government, and that human beings design moralities pragmatically to fit their situations. Since morality is entirely a cultural artifact, there are no innate guidelines for human decisions about social relationships. Human beings will form various social associations for the ends of life: the innumerable and ever-changing cooperative ventures that yield desired goods. Morality thus serves sociality: morality must be judged by its utility for advancing overall social welfare, and morality must try to keep up with the *pluralistic* flux of sociality. Some modes of social organization are traditional and operate by traditional moralities, but even these older ways must undergo modification, especially where new modes of human association are experimentally invented. What does this multitude of partially overlapping and constantly shifting social groups look like from the perspective of an individual human being who is a member of many social relationships and groups and has opportunities to join more? Managing the responsibilities that come with social relationships is not easy under the best of circumstances; managing a pluralistic flux of social relationships without either an intuitive, natural, principled, or commanded morality is even harder. People must therefore take *autonomous* responsibility for designing their own unique set of social relationships, for creatively managing their attendant responsibilities, and for prioritizing moral duties accordingly. For this archetype, the ideal political form is the *democratic*, in which the government enforces those laws that protect and enhance basic liberties, healthy toleration for pluralism, and robust political participation by citizens. We can summarize this as in table 5.

TABLE 5

Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
neutral	designed	pluralistic	autonomous	democratic

The third archetypal political philosophy holds the view that people are endowed with varying ratios of good and evil, and that they need a morality that is *natural* for their way of life. This view could (and does) lead some philosophers toward sectarianism, but for a political philosophy that respects nature, sectarianism seems forced and unnatural. Why does nature distribute good and evil, and other key talents and virtues, so unevenly? For a thinker attuned to the biological realm, such distributions are good evidence that nature intends human beings to live together for the good of all. Each person should contribute her own particular excellences to the *organic* life and happiness of the whole society. If a virtue is understood as just that sort of personal excellence which enlarges the social good, then the highest responsibility of everyone is to be *virtuous*. For this archetype, the ideal political form is the *representative*, in which all social classes have a share of power proportional to their social significance and/or their political wisdom. The term "representative" is easily associated with the type of government called "representative democracy," but in this categorization scheme, representative democracy is but one type of government that is classed as having the representative political form. We can summarize this as outlined in table 6.

TABLE 6

Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
distributed	natural	organic	virtuous	representative

The fifth archetypal political philosophy holds that human beings have a dominating natural tendency toward evil, and that they can best understand and follow a morality if it is *commanded* by a powerful authority figure. In large-scale human societies, it is impractical for any single authority figure to directly give commands to everyone about all of the duties for everyday life. The simplest solution is to systematize authority into *hierarchical* social relationships where each person has an assigned level and area of responsibility for (1) obeying the commands of a higher-level person, (2) relaying higher-level commands to people at lower levels in their area, and (3) giving additional commands to people at lower levels in their area that refine or supplement the higher-level commands. In such hierarchies, people exercise their responsibility best through *obedient* deference to proper authority. For this archetype, the ideal political form is the *autocratic*, in which ultimate responsibility for the law and the enforcement of the law rests on a single authority (perhaps a monarch or a supreme deity). We can summarize this as set out in table 7.

TABLE 7

Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
evil	commanded	hierarchical	obedient	autocratic

3. Archetypal Political Philosophers

We have so far completed the categorical scheme of five fundamental archetypes for political philosophy. Plato is a good example of the fourth archetype, and his preferred political form of aristocracy can be viewed as an archetypal form. Which political philosophers, and which political forms, exemplify the other four archetypes?

Let's consider another four major political philosophers and their political forms in order to complete the categorical scheme: Rousseau's communalism, John Stuart Mill's democracy, Aristotle's representative polity, and John Calvin's autocracy. In table 8, as promised, the pejorative and misleading terms "good" and "evil" are replaced by "simple" and "obstinate," which better carry the meaning intended by these archetypes and translate better across cultures.

TABLE 8

Philosopher	Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
Rousseau	simple SIMP	intuitive INT	sectarian SECT	free FREE	communal
Mill	neutral NEUT	designed DES	pluralistic PLUR	autonomous AUTO	democratic
Aristotle	distributed DIST	natural NAT	organic ORG	virtuous VIRT	representative
Plato	composite COMP	principled PRIN	traditional TRAD	just JUST	aristocratic
Calvin	obstinate OBST	commanded COMM	hierarchical HIER	obedient OBED	autocratic

In light of this article's opening remarks about political philosophies having to justify the scale of political control, it should be no surprise to observe the archetypal ordering of the five basic political forms: the communal, democratic, representative, aristocratic, and autocratic. This ordering represents a decreasing confidence in the human capacity for political authority, an increasing desire for the narrowing and centralization of political power, and an increasing dependence on special individuals possessing political knowledge and skill. There should be no surprise that Aristotle takes the middle ground between extremes on this scale of archetypes. His preferred form of government, the representative

polity restrained by constitutional laws, distributes a measure of political power to each social class and incorporates democratic, aristocratic, and autocratic features. Modern representative democracy has added the feature of mass voting, distributed across geographic regions, for elected representatives.

The ascending quantity of available coercive power for communal, democratic, representative, aristocratic, and autocratic political forms is clearly correlated, as is commonly recognized by political philosophers themselves, with the descending quality of innate human morality. This categorization scheme does not assume that political philosophy ultimately rests on moral philosophy, or that politics itself rests on morality. Politics can proceed quite independently of morality, and political conclusions need not depend on moral premises. However, sound political philosophy is directly or indirectly steered by views about morality, and ultimately grounded in theories of anthropology. If human nature is mostly good, then moral education is a matter of self-reliance with little social formation needed (so long as evil influences are shunned), and political coercion of mostly good adults can be minimized. If human nature is neutral, then moral education through proper socialization is necessary, but this socialization is not struggling against any innate evil; relatively good adults can be produced who still need a measure of political supervision and occasional coercion. If human nature is some sort of mixture of good and evil, then strenuous moral socialization for the young, and continued political coercion for adults, has a decent chance of ensuring stable social order. If human nature is mostly evil, strenuous moral socialization combined with relentless political coercion is necessary for social order.

Selecting Rousseau, Mill, Aristotle, Plato, and Calvin as five archetypal political philosophers is even more hazardous than selecting humanity, morality, sociality, and responsibility as four basic features of a political philosophy. To start with Rousseau, he was convinced that humanity was for the most part naturally good, but is he the best example of a philosopher who argued that morality is acquired by intuition? Perhaps not; Ralph Waldo Emerson would be a more obvious modern representative of that view, although Rousseau did strenuously defend personal innate conscience as a genuine guide to morality in several of his major writings. Emerson, however, did not offer a political philosophy to justify one form of government (he is more of an anarchist), while Rousseau's political philosophy is designed to justify the sovereignty and laws necessary to provide a community with a state while preserving the citizens' natural freedom and moral virtue. We can also notice that even though Rousseau was an influential inspiration for many later communal political philosophers among the socialists, communists, and utopian commune founders (and some contemporary communitarians), Rousseau's mature social contract theory does not sound like the

communal archetype. But we must recall that Rousseau maintained his conviction that the best state will encompass a smaller community of citizens largely agreeing on morality, rather than encompassing a larger aggregation of citizens having more diverse views on morality. Rousseau is not a good example of a social contract theorist, because social contract theory is designed to apply the solution of a legal neutral government to the problem of a large state encompassing diverse moral partiality.

The status of John Stuart Mill as an archetypal political philosopher seems obvious, thanks to his reputation as one of the staunchest defenders of pluralistic and participatory democracy. It is true that Mill defended a set of rights and liberties as foundationally definitive for modern democracy, but for Mill, these rights and liberties were based neither on any social contract, on the one hand, nor on some universally valid moral principles, on the other. For Mill, basic rights and liberties must be justified by their long-term utility to society, and they can be modified in the future if deemed necessary for the greater good. As for Aristotle, there may be better examples of this third archetype among the Stoics or eighteenth-century conservatives, though Aristotle was not unknown to them. We understand that Plato's views on politics underwent development from the *Republic* to the *Laws*, bringing into question the degree of his commitment to aristocracy. And Calvin's political philosophy distinguishes church government from secular government, recommending types of aristocratic governments for each, although the supreme autocrat for both governments is God.

It must be admitted that alternate minor thinkers may better exemplify these five archetypal political philosophies than do Rousseau, Mill, Aristotle, Plato, and Calvin. Nevertheless, among the greatest political philosophers, these five thinkers serve as the closest Western exemplars of these five archetypes.

4. Twelve Political Archetypes

The five archetypes do not by themselves organize all political philosophizing. Most political philosophizing consists of thinkers exploring various possible combinations of the sixteen basic features of political philosophies. Furthermore, much of the territory of political philosophizing falls between the five archetypes discerned so far, because many significant thinkers have borrowed and blended neighboring archetypal views.

The paradigm case of creative blending is the natural law approach to politics, which was formed by those impressed by both the representative and the aristocratic archetypes. Natural law political theorists typically have the following five features in common: (1) they believe that people naturally need a fitting place in society in order to become fully human; (2) they hold that moral and political principles are ultimately justifiable by the universal order of things; (3) they affirm that human beings are

happiest when they assume roles available in customary institutions; (4) they discern close affinity or even identity between justice and virtue; and (5) they defend aristocratic governments that follow the universal principles of right and duty.

Six more political forms can be identified as adjacent to the first five archetypes: the "social anarchy," "contractarian," "progressive," "natural law," "sage ruler," and "tyranny" forms, as outlined in table 9.

There is one additional political archetype that must be added for

TABLE 9

Philosopher	Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
people are naturally amicable and live best as authentic individuals in social anarchy					
Rousseau	simple	intuitive	sectarian	free	communal
people are naturally diverse and live best with maximal liberty arranged by social contract					
Mill	neutral	designed	pluralistic	autonomous	democratic
people are naturally adaptable and live best with civil rights in a progressive socialism					
Aristotle	distributed	natural	organic	virtuous	representative
people are naturally partial and live best in corporate institutions conforming to natural law					
Plato	composite	principled	traditional	just	aristocratic
people are naturally emotional and live best as dutiful subjects under a sage ruler					
Calvin	obstinate	commanded	hierarchical	obedient	autocratic
people are naturally egotistical and live best as antagonistic competitors trying to be tyrants					
Emerson	divine	mystical	atomic	original	aloof anarchy

completeness before we proceed further: Ralph Waldo Emerson's philosophy of "aloof anarchism." This archetype falls between social anarchy and tyranny, which brings this categorization scheme into a rounded circle. I am speaking of Emerson's self-reliant individualism, which refuses to endorse any common morality or scheme of formal social organization, much less an optimal form of government. Standing exactly opposite from Aristotle, Emerson denied that people are made for social

life, and he notoriously proclaimed that neither intuition, reason, nor nature can guarantee human alignment on moral, social, or political matters. For Emerson, it suffices that one's independent lifestyle is authorized by one's own true nature, in a pure state beyond mere good and evil, however that nature may be judged by anyone else. For this archetype, *people are naturally divine and live best as self-reliant creators in aloof anarchy*:

For better comparison, we can now assemble all twelve primary political philosophies, attached to twelve archetypal philosophers and compressed into their characteristic slogans.

Emerson	People are naturally divine and live best as self-reliant creators in aloof anarchy.
Kropotkin	People are naturally amicable and live best as authentic individuals in social anarchy.
Rousseau	People are naturally simple and live best in collective freedom within a communal organization.
Locke	People are naturally reasonable and live best with maximal liberty arranged by social contract.
Mill	People are naturally neutral and live best in plural groups utilizing participatory democracy.
Dewey	People are naturally adaptable and live best with civil rights in a progressive socialism.
Aristotle	People are naturally distributed and live best in social harmony enforced by representative polity.
Aquinas	People are naturally partial and live best in corporate institutions conforming to natural law.
Plato	People are naturally composite and live best in traditional culture controlled by wise aristocrats.
Machiavelli	People are naturally emotional and live best as dutiful subjects under a sage ruler.
Calvin	People are naturally obstinate and live best in fearful obedience to a supreme autocrat.
Thrasymachus	People are naturally egotistical and live best as antagonistic competitors trying to be tyrants.

Because the six additional archetypes fall into the logically available intervals between the first five archetypes, they will share family resemblances with their adjacent neighbors. Indeed, advocates of one archetype may frequently appeal to the philosophies of neighboring archetypes for good arguments and sound wisdom. Similarly, an advocate of one archetype may try to increase that archetype's plausibility by representing it as the best combination of the two other neighboring archetypes

between which that archetype logically falls. For example, traditional advocates of the natural law archetype frequently borrowed and blended views from Aristotle and Plato, and modern advocates of the progressive archetype have praised its combination of the best features of the democratic and representative archetypes. The evident close relationships and similarities between archetypes may arouse questions about the value of refining political philosophies so carefully. Have our distinctions become excessively refined?

Three sufficient answers to this issue are the following. First, each archetype does rely on quite distinctive views about the nature of humanity, morality, sociality, and responsibility, which are not satisfactorily reducible to those of any neighbor. Second, the peculiar combination of an archetype's four distinctive views possesses an inherent coherence of mutual support that lends them a much higher level of reasonable plausibility than they would enjoy separately, or in any combination with neighboring archetypal views. Third, because each archetype does enjoy that cohesive plausibility, they all have many significant advocates across the history of philosophy, and most of these advocates understood themselves to be advocating for that archetype and not any neighbor. Natural law theorists were not confused about the distinctiveness of their tradition; social contract theorists would protest classification with Mill's manner of utilitarian calculation; and social anarchists put great effort into preventing their views from inflating into Rousseau's manner of political organization, or from deflating into disorganized aloof anarchy. The fact that these twelve archetypes are robustly represented in the history of political philosophy lends further confidence to this essay's thesis that political philosophy logically and historically has these twelve archetypal forms.

The selection of representative philosophers for all the archetypes remains hazardous and tentative. Space considerations forbid any lengthy justification for my choices; it must suffice here to disclaim precision and admit that any number of lesser figures might be more fitting representatives.

The example of John Dewey is instructive and can be briefly discussed to illustrate this lack of precision. Dewey is rightly remembered as a major force for the progressive socialist movement in America, but did he not endorse cultural pluralism and participatory democracy? Why does he not properly fall under Mill's archetype, considering that Mill was the philosophical predecessor closest to Dewey's own political theory? The answer is that Dewey departs from Mill in two crucial respects. First, Dewey defended a small number of moral ideals about human dignity and value which he refused to subject to utilitarian calculations of happiness. He instead regarded them as essential for human coexistence as naturally interdependent beings, so that these ideals are more about a practical fit with nature rather than being entirely artificial and variable depending on current human happiness. Second, Dewey appealed to a civically educated

and community-spirited body of citizens living in organic interdependence (the Great Community) in order to ensure that pluralistic democracy could actually function in practice. Dewey hence devised a compromise between the organicism of Aristotle and the pluralism of Mill, by advocating multiculturalism as the best type of sociality for human beings. In Dewey's vision of multiculturalism, social groups overlap in various ways, because people enjoy being members of multiple groups, and they should freely share cultural ways to enhance their individuality. In this vision of multiculturalism, mere democracy is insufficient because it cannot ensure a high level of participatory civility and concern for the welfare of the whole society. Dewey does exalt the noble aim of personal autonomy, like Mill, but Dewey ultimately requires the supreme responsibility of civility from all citizens, as he looks ahead to a cosmopolitan theory of political obligation at a global level. Hence the political form of progressive socialism (not Marxist or Leninist communism) is preferred by Dewey, although he is happy to utilize democratic government to bring about socialist results, often advocating "democratic socialism."

The other additional archetypes can be briefly explained. Standing opposite to Dewey's progressivism is Thrasymachus's tyranny: human beings are selfish to the extreme and naturally unadaptable to society. Socialization can occur, of course; when morality does its work, humans are reduced to servile status as sheep readied for the slaughter by the wolf. The wolf is that rare human being who realizes that one's supreme responsibility is to dominate the competition and to survive for as long as possible as a tyrant.

The political form of social anarchy starts from a view of human nature as amicably disposed toward all people (although a corrupt society or the state can override this natural sympathy). Inspired by moral ideals of fulfilling this natural demand for human equality, people will live cooperative and authentic lives without any need for coercive government. Standing exactly opposite from social anarchy is the political form of natural law, which views human nature as partial in a double sense: human beings are partial creatures that become complete only when brought into static social relationships fixed by customary institutions; and human beings are also partial in the sense that they are not favorably predisposed toward all, only to a few. Human beings must not try to become authentically themselves but must instead be normalized. Moral and social norms are knowable through the study of the natural order of things, ensuring that these norms are universal rather than culturally relative. The natural law political form usually results in the approval of an aristocratic form of government (or a representative government having strong aristocratic elements) that is answerable to, and reformable by, natural law.

The political forms of contractarianism and sage ruler are the opposed forms that complete the classification scheme. For contractarianism, humanity can be relied on to be naturally reasonable, whatever else human nature entails. Reason supplies the political boundaries of liberty under

minimal but potent government, and these boundaries protect personal moral life and mobile social structure. Contractarian political philosophers tend to approve constitutional democracies with substantial representation by the people. The contrary political form to contractarianism is the sage ruler political form, which views human nature as fundamentally controlled by the passions. To control an unstable and unruly population, morality is of supreme public concern, and some sort of rigid caste system is recommended, so that everyone knows his proper place and obligations of duty. The sage ruler political form seeks a special and rare type of autocrat, who possesses the great wisdom to rule in a way that preserves the social caste system. Sage ruler political philosophers tend to approve a highly centralized and totalitarian government (such as a fascist state of military supremacy, an oligarchic state of hereditary wealth, or a noble state of virtuous officials) headed by a clearly defined supreme leader.

The full categorization scheme of the twelve archetypes of political philosophy can be seen in table format in table 10, and also in a circular diagram in figure 1, which more clearly displays the interrelations among the twelve archetypes.

TABLE 10

Philosopher	Humanity	Morality	Sociality	Responsibility	Political Form
Emerson	divine	mystical	atomic	original	aloof anarchy
	DIV	MYST	ATOM	ORIG	
Kropotkin	amicable	inspired	egalitarian	authentic	social anarchy
	AMIC	INSP	EGAL	AUTH	
Rousseau	simple	intuitive	sectarian	free	communal
	SIMP	INT	SECT	FREE	
Locke	reasonable	personal	mobile	liberated	contractarian
	REAS	PERS	MOB	LIB	
Mill	neutral	designed	pluralistic	autonomous	democratic
	NEUT	DES	PLUR	AUTO	
Dewey	adaptable	practical	multicultural	civil	progressive
	ADAP	PRAC	MULT	CIV	
Aristotle	distributed	natural	organic	virtuous	representative
	DIST	NAT	ORG	VIRT	
Aquinas	partial	universal	corporate	normal	natural law
	PART	UNIV	CORP	NORM	
Plato	composite	principled	traditional	just	aristocratic
	COMP	PRIN	TRAD	JUST	
Machiavelli	emotional	public	Caste	dutiful	sage ruler
	EMOT	PUBL	CAST	DUT	
Calvin	obstinate	commanded	hierarchical	obedient	autocratic
	OBST	COMM	HIER	OBED	
Thrasymachus	egotistical	servile	antagonistic	dominant	tyrannical
	EGO	SERV	ANT	DOM	

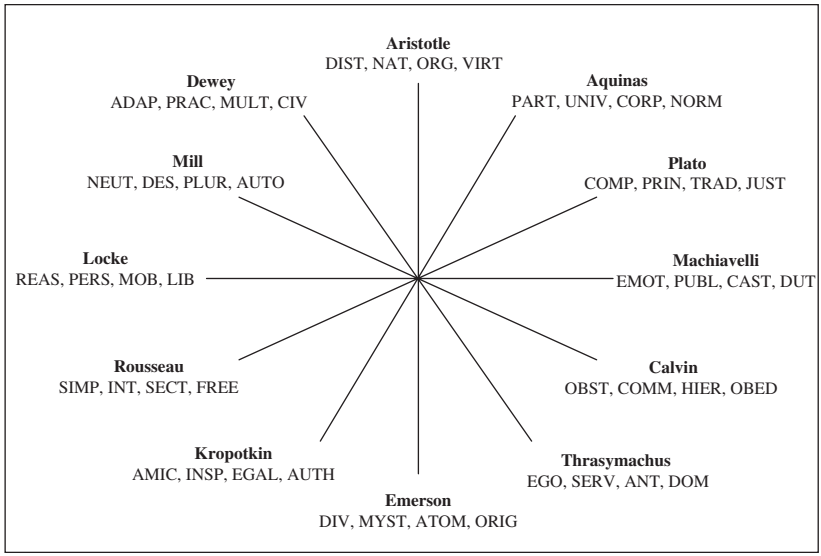

FIGURE 1

5. Categorizing Additional Western Political Philosophers

Concluding this essay, we may ask how the categorization scheme may be applied to additional Western philosophers. The list below includes the twelve archetypal political philosophers, and is organized in the order presented by the categorization scheme, from aloof anarchy to tyranny.

R. W. Emerson	DIV, MYST, ATOM, ORIG	aloof anarchy
Peter Kropotkin	AMIC, INSP, EGAL, AUTH	social anarchy
P.-J. Proudhon	REAS, NAT, PLUR, FREE	
William Godwin	REAS, PERS, EGAL, FREE	
J.-J. Rousseau	SIMP, INT, SECT, FREE	communal
Karl Marx	AMIC, PRAC, EGAL, LIB	
Immanuel Kant	REAS, PRIN, EGAL, FREE	
John Locke	REAS, PERS, MOB, LIB	contractarian
Thomas Jefferson	REAS, NAT, EGAL, FREE	
John Rawls	NEUT, PERS, PLUR, AUTO	
John Stuart Mill	NEUT, DES, PLUR, AUTO	democratic
Isaiah Berlin	NEUT, DES, PLUR, AUTO	
Jürgen Habermas	NEUT, UNIV, PLUR, CIV	
John Dewey	ADAP, PRAC, MULT, CIV	progressive
Bernard Bosanquet	DIST, DES, ORG, AUTO	
G. W. F. Hegel	ADAP, PUBL, ORG, AUTO	

Aristotle	DIST, NAT, ORG, VIRT	representative
John Adams	DIST, NAT, CORP, VIRT	
Cicero	PART, UNIV, CORP, VIRT	
Thomas Aquinas	PART, UNIV, CORP, NORM	natural law
Hugo Grotius	PART, UNIV, CORP, JUST	
Edmund Burke	PART, UNIV, TRAD, JUST	
Plato	COMP, PRIN, TRAD, JUST	aristocratic
Richard Hooker	COMP, UNIV, CAST, DUT	
Augustine	OBST, COMM, TRAD, JUST	
Niccolò Machiavelli	EMOT, PUBL, CAST, DUT	sage ruler
Thomas Hobbes	OBST, PRIN, PLUR, OBED	
Carl Schmitt	EMOT, COMM, HIER, OBED	
John Calvin	OBST, COMM, HIER, OBED	autocratic
Thrasymachus	EGO, SERV, ANT, DOM	tyrannical

These assignments are made with all due humility. Scholars devoted to each figure can ponder their accuracy, as inevitable concerns about which treatise, or which period, and so on, of a philosopher's career are raised. Stimulating further such deliberation is a primary goal of this essay. The field of comparative political philosophy can progress under the twin proddings of demands for careful exegesis and lucid categorization. Valuable clarity will result even where improved scholarship successfully explains why a political philosopher's theories cannot so easily be categorized or compared with rivals.

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