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## *Editorial*

### **Cultural Diversity and Value Pluralism in European and Global Politics**

The modernisation thesis implied that inevitable social progress will result in cultural, religious and value pluralism becoming largely irrelevant as a factor in domestic and international politics. The plausibility of such a prediction was further strengthened by an expectation that the process of globalisation and the information revolution is bound to lead to growing cultural homogenisation, which in turn will facilitate the global spread of liberal democracy as the default political model. However, the developments of the past 15 years have made it clear that these predictions were unfounded and that the end of the Cold War, which at that time seemed like the end of the age of ideologies, in fact created an ideological vacuum in which such cultural “primordial ties” as ethnicity, language, land of birth or religion continue to constitute the essential aspect of the narrative identities of peoples and as such inform their political preferences.

The new international context in which the eclipse of the hegemonic power of the United States and the growing tendency towards multi-polarisation has been accompanied by a rising tide of populist and nationalistic tendencies, as well as growing popularity of claims to cultural exceptionalism, makes the problem of cultural and value pluralism politically more relevant than ever before. Moreover, the processes of globalisation and the information revolution lead to growing trans-nationalisation of the problem of pluralism, highlighting the limitations of the theories of multicultural accommodation, which do not appreciate the impact of non-domestic factors. Hence the need for a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary analysis of the political implications of cultural diversity and value pluralism.

The present monothematic issue of *Acta Politologica*, which consists of five papers written by moral philosophers, political theorists as well as empirically oriented political scientists, aims to contribute to such analysis. The first two papers critically examine the potential, as well as the limitations, of John Rawls’ theory of *political liberalism* from the point of view of ethical theory. Martijn Boot’s paper “Does Value Pluralism Prevent Consensus on Justice?” discusses the consequences of value pluralism for the possibility of achieving consensus on justice. Stressing the incommensurability of various aspects of justice as well as other human values, it argues that an overlapping consensus on more than basic justice is unlikely to arise, because in many cases there is no universally valid and single right ranking and ordering of the various human values. Disagreement on matters of justice is therefore unavoidable.

Jill McArdle in her paper “Alternative Approaches to Public Reason in Pluralistic Societies” takes a different perspective on Rawls’ theory of political liberalism. Drawing upon the work of Onora O’Neill, Rainer Forst and other authors, she argues that Rawls’ theory of political liberalism is actually not pluralistic enough, insofar as it rests upon the assumption of a shared political identity of liberal citizens. McArdle argues that this objection points ultimately to Rawls’ understanding of practical reason and proposes that Onora O’Neill’s

interpretation of Kantian practical reasoning presents a more viable approach to public reason in pluralistic societies.

The next two texts shift attention to the issue of the construction of collective identities. Angela Roothaan's paper "Political and Cultural Identity in the Global Postcolony: Postcolonial Thinkers on the Racist Enlightenment and the Struggle for Humanity" examines the problem of the construction of political and cultural identity in the postcolonial condition. Drawing on the works of Frantz Fanon, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, Amílcar Cabral, Achille Mbembe and Michael Onyebuchi Eze, she explores the relations between political and cultural identity on the one hand and humanity on the other. Roothaan's main contention is that coming to terms with the inheritance of colonialism requires an adoption of a more inclusive conception of humanity and historical agency by both the formerly colonised and the former colonisers.

Olena Lyubchenko in her article "The Ukrainian Crisis: A Case of 'New Orientalism'" critically examines the mainstream narrative of the 2013 Euromaidan uprising as a pro-Western and liberal grass-roots democratic movement. Focussing on the role of the radical-right nationalistic forces in the uprising as well as the subsequent political developments in Ukraine, she argues that the liberalising project launched by Euromaidan relies on a specific form of a friend-enemy distinction that can be described as 'New Orientalism', insofar as it portrays the (internal) enemy as backward, anti-democratic, and essentially non-Ukrainian.

Finally, Giorgos Bithymitris' paper "Socio-cultural Aspects of Neo-nationalism in Crisis Contexts: An Empirical Analysis of Liminal Workers' Perceptions in Greece (2011-2015)" examines the emergence of nationalistic sentiments among the Greek liminal working-class communities in the context of the country's economic crisis. Drawing from case studies of two different working-class communities, it examines the conditions under which the liminal workers' economic frustration becomes expressed in a neo-nationalist narrative, which construes the workers' collective identity in terms of nation rather than class.

*Jakub Franěk*