

Editorial

The editors of *Theoria* feel especially privileged to present, as the opening contribution to this issue, a remarkable essay by the late great sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Not long before his untimely death earlier this year, Bourdieu entrusted the journal with the publication of this reflection on, and spirited re-affirmation of, the role of the intellectual and the nature of intellectual engagement. This essay is especially resonant in that it speaks so eloquently to, and by implication endorses, the underlying nature and purpose of *Theoria* as an editorial project. Thus, as we mourn the passing of this remarkable scholar, we take pleasure in communicating through this essay the passion, compassion, wit and commitment – as well as the vast and singular erudition so lightly worn – that were the hallmarks of his large and impressive *oeuvre*. We have departed from *Theoria*'s convention in this instance, and have elected not to provide a preliminary sketch of Bourdieu's argument. Instead, we invite readers to engage directly, without our intermediation, with his evocation of the "utopia of the collective intellectual"; it is to the realization of this "utopia" that we would like to believe this journal makes a modest contribution. We would thus like to believe Pierre Bourdieu would have taken pleasure in engaging, critically, with the contributions to this issue – contributions which provocatively address, among other things, the globally pressing issues of justice and democracy as well as the need to revisit the prospects of market socialism in the context of developing societies

"Good fences make good neighbours", penned Robert Frost in "Mending Wall", and in his contribution, David Archard takes Michael Walzer's discussion of this in *Spheres of Justice* as the starting point for his exploration of the relationship between membership and justice. Noting that Walzer can be interpreted as asserting both the priority of membership over justice and the converse, he shows that this apparent contradiction can be resolved by specifying an order of priorities such that justice determines membership that in turn determines justice. While such an argument appears to be circular, in fact even the slightest extension of membership will modify a community's understanding of what membership means, and in turn their sense of a just distribution of membership. Archard moves on to

examine in what sense membership is a social good, valuable in itself, which any full set of principles of justice should distribute. Unadorned civic status defines membership in the first instance; and membership also has value in that it is usually a precondition for the possibility of enjoying other social goods. However, the intrinsic value of membership derives from its association with the historical and cultural norms of a political “way of life”, and it is this which provides a necessary context for the making of political choices and the exercise of rights. Nevertheless, beyond the boundaries of any particular form of political life lie other communities, people and practices who are by definition excluded, to a greater or lesser degree, from membership; and Archard concludes, “good fences make both for just societies and international injustice”.

In most so-called democracies citizens feel vaguely dissatisfied with their political institutions but, like Churchill, believe that at least democracy is better than the alternatives. For Thomas Pogge this is not good enough. Arguing that existing democratic regimes represent but a tiny fraction of the possible range, he advances what he feels is a better version based on Self-Constituting Constituencies (SCC). The essence of this account is that constituencies are no longer defined by territory, but rather are defined virtually, through the free choice of voters themselves, over the Internet. Pogge goes on to develop a subtle and complex account of an electoral system based on this principle. In sum, he holds that a democratic system based on SCCs would erode the entrenched power of politicians by enhancing the freedom, equality and participation of ordinary citizens. No longer constrained by anachronistic geographic boundaries, citizens could form any constituency they choose, thus improving the representation of minorities and key interest groups. While Pogge’s vision of SCC democracy is complex and reliant on technology not globally available, it is intended as a practicable model and not just as a counter-factual critical argument.

Against formulations of democracy, which privilege consensus, Chantal Mouffe argues for an agonistic version of democracy, one which valorizes dissensus as integral to the political. For Mouffe, the consensual politics of the centre that has emerged in Western liberal democracies fails to concede the necessity for political disagreement, emphasizing instead the resolution or eradication of differences between antagonistic positions. By homogenizing genuine disagreements through the juridical discourse of human rights or through the expression of dissensus in a moral register – the hegemonic cast as

“us”, the dominated as “them” – disagreements are ironically reinstated in an antagonistic, which is to say, intransigent and pernicious form. This is so inasmuch as positions that deviate from the consensual centre reject, as their mode of expression, participation within the democratic polity, seeking expression of their disagreement through a discourse of essentialism and violence. By contrast, Mouffe’s “agonistic pluralism” version of democracy acknowledges the role of power relations and the inevitability of political disagreement. But disagreements in Mouffe’s formulation are voiced within the arena of democratic institutions, which prevents agonism from being transformed into antagonism. The article concludes by exploring post-national configurations for the accommodation of conflictual politics.

In his contribution to this issue, Paul Nursey-Bray notes that market socialism has been increasingly examined in Europe as a possible “third way” that would avoid the excesses of both Soviet-style state-controlled socialism and unfettered capitalism. Nursey-Bray contends that some of the structural problems associated with the deployment of market socialism in the developed West would not arise in underdeveloped economies like those in most of Africa, and that this therefore provides a motive for examining the application of this approach in the African context. Beginning with a brief account of the history of market socialism and its supporters and critics in the West, Nursey-Bray moves on to identify two models of market socialism that are representative of the major variations within the range of theories answering to that name, those proposed by Roemer and Arnold. Marxism has dominated the history of socialism in Africa, and the application of this form of socialism has largely been a failure. Nursey-Bray contends that Roemer’s model of market socialism would also be unlikely to succeed, due to its presumption of a developed economy, infrastructure and high levels of education. However, Nursey-Bray points out, the neo-liberal economic model preferred by the IMF and the World Bank has also not been successful, and has been instead “productive of debt and poverty”. It is argued, therefore, that market socialism may yet provide a valid alternative to the “reifying and disempowering practices of capitalist market society”. Nursey-Bray argues that Arnold’s model, adapted to recognize the realities of the African situation and applied progressively and pragmatically, could play this role. In particular, a revisiting of the nature and role of collectives is seen as crucial. Nursey-Bray closes by discussing some contemporary developments in South Africa that might intimate some movement in this direction.

In a wide-ranging essay Adam Sitze examines notions of truth and justice with reference to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission by re-reading Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche, and Foucault's reading of Heidegger. Sitze argues that the "unthought" in Foucault's philosophical project and his concept of power is his ambiguous relationship to the concept of the "eternal return". Sitze's methodology is to explore the consequences of this through explorations of not only Foucault's and Heidegger's work, but also Levinas, Deleuze, Klossowski and Arendt, by reading, misreading, bending, wresting – in a word *writhing* – with the history of philosophy in order to theorize the powers of truth in the foundation of post-apartheid South Africa. The starting point for such a theorization lies in what Sitze describes as the blind-spot between *zoe* and *bios*, between the eternal circularity of life and the linearity of the narration of a life.

THE EDITORS