

LIBERTARIANISM

Session 1: Introduction

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THINKING ABOUT IDEOLOGIES

Wittgenstein on Games

Consider for example the proceedings that we call “games”. I mean board-games, card-games, ball-games, Olympic games, and so on. What is common to them all?

Don't say: “There must be something common, or they would not be called ‘games’” – but look and see whether there is anything common to all.

For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that. To repeat: don't think, but look!

(Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §66)

Wittgenstein on Games

- **Exercise:** How would you define “game”?
- Does your definition account for card games, computer games, football, hide and seek, puzzles, LARPing, Sudoku, ...
- **Result:** giving a conclusive definition of “game” looks very hard, if not impossible
- Does this mean that the concept “game” doesn’t have a clear meaning?

Approaching a Concept

- One way to define a concept: give necessary and sufficient conditions

X is C if and only if X has features F₁, F₂, F₃, ..., F_n.

- More complex concepts: family resemblance

X is C if and only if X shares *some* of the *paradigmatic* features F₁, F₂, F₃, ..., F_n.

- An implication:

X₁ has F₁, F₂ and F₃, and therefore is C; X₂ has F₄, F₅ and F₆, and therefore is C; so while X₁ and X₂ have few shared features, they are both C.

Ideologies

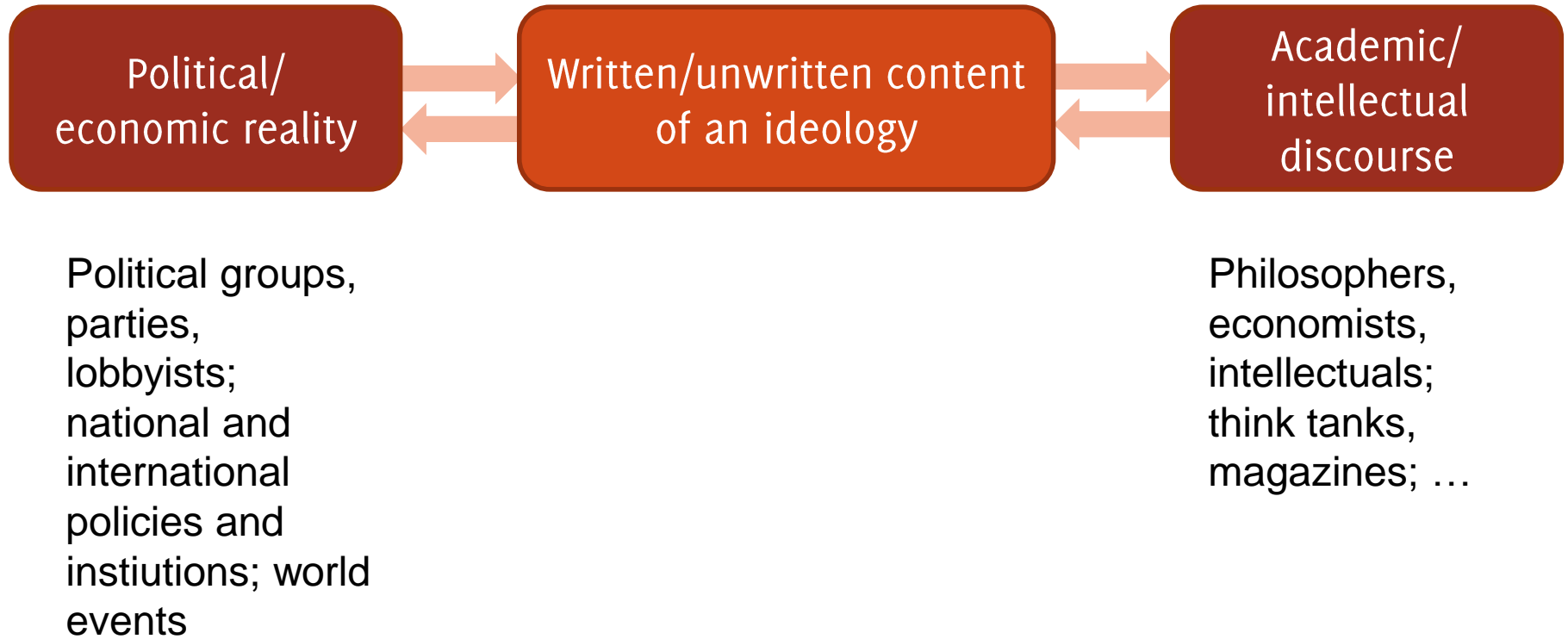
- Conservatism, liberalism, etc. are **family resemblance concepts**
 - What do you need to believe to be a conservative, liberal, socialist ...?
 - There are some paradigmatic elements in these isms, but two types of socialism might have very little in common
- Conservatism, liberalism, etc. are **ideologies**
 - Ideology is used as a neutral term
 - Ideologies have both a philosophical-conceptual content, and a historical-political reality (example: socialism)
 - Ideologies are complicated bodies of thought that structure political movements, ...

Freeden's Definition of Ideology

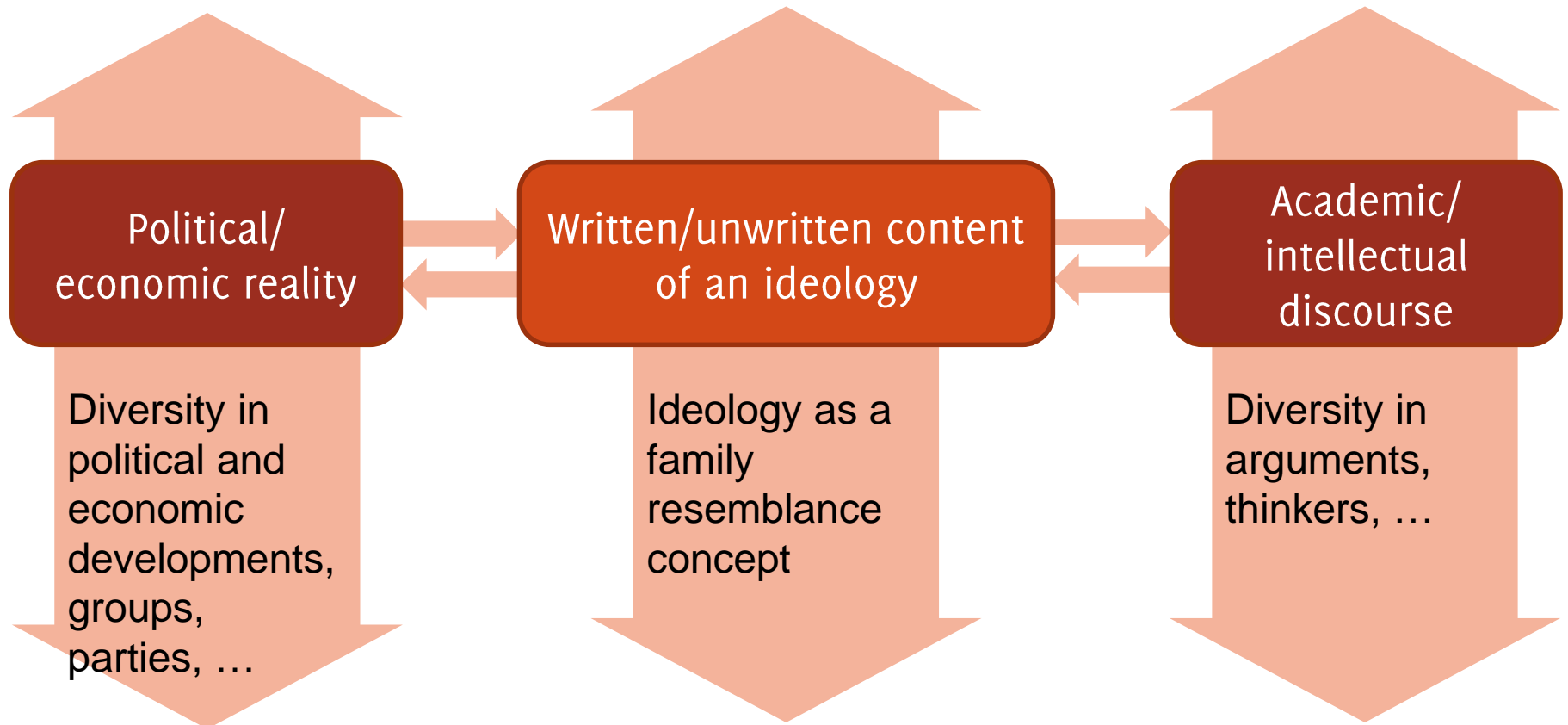
A political ideology is a set of ideas, beliefs, opinions, and values that

- (1) exhibit a recurring pattern
- (2) are held by significant groups
- (3) compete over providing and controlling plans for public policy
- (4) do so with the aim of justifying, contesting or changing the social and political arrangements and processes of a political community.

Ideologies: History and Philosophy



Ideologies: History and Philosophy



LIBERTARIANISM: GUIDING IDEAS

A Brief History of Libertarianism

- 17/18th century: Locke, American founding fathers
- 19th century: British economists and philosophers (Smith, Spencer)
- 1930s/1940s: Austrian economists (Mises, Hayek)
- 1960s/1970s: Libertarianism is popularised (Rand, Rothbard), formation of a political infrastructure (Cato, IHS, LP, *Reason*)
- 1980s: “Neoliberal” revolution (Reagan, Thatcher), various market-friendly reforms
- today: ?

The Libertarian Party

- Founded in 1971, but never a serious political force
- 2016: a missed opportunity?

Presidential candidate	Party	Home state	Popular vote		Electoral vote
			Count	Pct	
Donald Trump	Republican	New York	62,625,786 ^[2]	46.17%	306
Hillary Clinton	Democratic	New York	65,130,574 ^[2]	48.02%	232
Gary Johnson	Libertarian	New Mexico	4,453,700 ^[2]	3.28%	0

What is Libertarianism? (Tomasi/Zwolinski)

1. Property Rights
Wide scope, great importance, and foundational moral role
2. Skepticism of Authority
Empirical and moral scepticism; minimal or no state
3. Free Markets
Moral and economic benefits of capitalism
4. Spontaneous Orders
Polycentric phenomena without a visible hand
5. Individualism
Individuals over Collectives
6. Natural Harmony of Interests
Pacifism; people can form peaceful communities together

Types of Libertarianism

1. Classical Liberalism (Hayek, Mises)
2. (Philosophical) Libertarianism (Nozick)
3. Left-Libertarianism (Vallentyne, Otsuka)
4. Objectivism (Rand)
5. Anarcho-Capitalism (Rothbard)

Other Kinds? (What about neoliberalism?)

Remember: Family Resemblance!

SEMINAR OVERVIEW

Overview

Section	Focus	Topics
I. Classical Liberalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Planning and Knowledge 3. Rule of Law 4. Critique of Social Justice 	Free Markets, Spontaneous Order
II. Philosophical Libertarianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Moral Foundations 6. Entitlement Theory 7. Self-Ownership 	Property Rights, Individualism
III. Anarchism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Against the State 9. The Minimal State 10. Alternatives to the State 	Scepticism about Authority
IV. The Influence of Libertarianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Ayn Rand 12. Neoliberalism 13. Future of Libertarianism 	History
V. Left-Libertarianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Left-Libertarianism 15. Basic Income 16. Historic Injustice 	Property Rights
VI. Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Moral Foundations 18. Environment and Pollution 19. Freedom 	

Group Work

- Form groups and discuss. Read text 11, Quiggin, and the last two paragraphs of text 10.
- 1. What is Quiggin's/Samuelson's objection to the Road to Serfdom?
- 2. Are they right? In particular, Is the Road to Serfdom still relevant today? Does it tell us something about our own society?
- 3. What might Hayek reply? Take into account text 9.
- 4. Watch some of the Glenn Beck video (text 12). (or search for similar videos). Does this have anything to do with Hayek?