

# THE POLITICAL UNITY SPECTRUM: A THEORY OF LEFT-RIGHT POLITICS, FROM LIBERALISM TO EMANCIPATORY PROGRESSIVISM

## SİYASİ BİRLİK SPEKTRUMU: LİBERALİZM'DEN ÖZGÜRCÜ İLERLEMECİLİĞE, SOL-SAĞ POLİTİKA TEORİSİ

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**Abstract:** While political ideologies are often portrayed along a liberal–conservative continuum in the United States and a left–right continuum in Europe, their universal applicability is questionable. The switch between left and right, and the nature of what is being conserved in the US for the former, conflating left and leftism for the latter, and the differing aspects of the words ‘liberal’ and ‘liberalism’ make it confusing to authors to devise similar continuums for other countries. The Political Unity Spectrum offers a visual abstraction of universalistic left-right politics under four types of political unity as well as suggesting that moving between these confines is possible. Using this abstraction, the positions of Turkey and Iran are defined, while also answering the following political questions: (1) how failing to maintain political cohesion could lead to civil wars; (2) how left and right switched places in the US; (3) how both left and right in the US and in Europe are left-wing in Turkey and in Iran; (4) the difference between liberalism and progressivism.

**Keywords:** Left-right politics; partisanship; liberalism; public opinion; the Overton Window of Political Possibilities

**Öz:** Siyasi ideolojiler, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ndeki liberal-muhafazakâr/tutucu bir süreklilik ve Avrupa'da sol-sağ bir süreklilik boyunca sıklıkla tasvir edilirken, evrensel uygulanabilirlikleri sıklıkla sorgulanmaktadır. Sol ve sağ arasındaki geçiş ve ABD'de eskisi için neyin korunduğunun niteliği, sol ve solculuğu birleştiren ve “liberal” ve “liberalizm” kelimelerinin farklı yönleri yazarların diğer ülkeler için de benzer süreklilik göstermesini kafa karıştırıcı kılar. Siyasi Birlik Spektrumu, dört tür siyasi birlik altında evrensel sol sağ politikanın görsel bir özetini sunar ve bu sınırlar arasında hareket etmenin mümkün olduğunu ileri sürer. Bu soyutlamayı/ozeti kullanarak, aşağıdaki siyasi soruları cevaplarırken, Türkiye ve İran'ın konumu tanımlanmıştır: (1) Siyasi uyumu korumadaki başarısızlık nasıl iç savaşlara neden olabilir; (2) ABD'de sol ve sağın nasıl yer değiştirdiği; (3) ABD'de ve Avrupa'da hem sol hem de sağın Türkiye ve İran'da nasıl sol gorusu olduğu; (4) liberalizm/hur fikirlilik ve ilerencilik arasındaki fark.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sol-sağ politika, partizanlık, liberalizm, kamuoyu, Overton Penceresinden Siyasi Olanaklar

## INTRODUCTION

Although free participation of the public, government responsiveness, and competition amongst political elites shape democracies (Dahl, 1971), informed individuals with consistent views of abstract political terms and values are rare (Zaller, 1992). Accordingly, people generally look up to partisan elites for cues to acquire and form opinions on various issues. Even the most aware citizens, who have widened their range of understanding, fall consistently within one party's definitions or another's. Thus, shaping or framing (Chong & Druckman, Framing Theory, 2007) public opinion for the well aware and the inconsistent alike becomes possible in democracies. Another study showed that the public ends up not with policies they wanted but with those framed to appear so (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Besides framing, use of social and economic shocks is another possible tactic to change the narrative and the minds of citizens. The Overton Window (Lehman, 2010) was developed in the mid-1990s by Joseph P. Overton to demonstrate a window of acceptable ideas at the centre of a spectrum of ideas that goes both to the left and to the right. The spectrum did not deal with left-right politics but with a degree of freedom, with one side freer and freer, and the other, stricter and stricter. Shifts in opinion are, then, materialised, less likely when a "radical" or "ridiculous" idea presented, since the public are sitting in their comfort zones, but rather when an "unthinkable" idea is presented. The shock shatters inertia, and makes the public perceive that a lesser provocative idea is acceptable.

With significant increases in the availability of information on the internet, the relation between citizens and their representatives in the political arena is being transformed. The Facebook–Cambridge Analytica data scandal (Davies, 2015) showed that public opinion continues to be shaped and framed, at even higher efficiency levels, using microtargeting (Gage, 2003). Since the abundance of evidence, collected by professionals and grassroots movements, make despotism an arduous act, politics has transformed accordingly. If every "truth" has its rebuttals, then framing emotions is a more viable alternative than framing truths. The phenomenon, with the fitting name of post-truth politics, marks the supremacy of ideologies that blind people from all the evidence present (McIntyre, 2018). In retrospect, what then is keeping societies from collapsing, if truths are plenty? The Political Unity Spectrum suggests that keeping the political discourse within one of the four political unity confines, increases political and social cohesion. The narrative, if unchecked, increases the possibility of civil wars.

Notwithstanding the inadequacies that left-right analyses carry, they have had meaningful changes in our understanding of issues such as political representation, coalition formation, government spending priorities, and party competition (Huber & Inglehart, 1995). As moving to left, on these spectrums, correlates with decentralisation of power, a tipping point has historically shown a reversal in this trend. At this point, moving further to the left requires collective action, which is a reversal in government size. Political parties that have realised the limits of freedom at this point, have remained to protect it. The rival parties, formerly right-wing, inevitably – as they cannot promote a closer society – move farther left and surpass the incumbent position of freedom. Traditional spectrums show moving left means more freedom, but never differentiate between "freedom with responsibility" and

“freedom from responsibility.” Historically, moving far to the left can cause political parties switch places. For example, left-wing views in France shortly after the French Revolution became right-wing views. The revolution had taken freedom into heightened levels beyond control. An absence of governance showed not to increase freedom, but to cause havoc. Similarly, dispute over the New Deal in the United States caused the left-wing Republicans become the new right, and the right-wing Democrats, the new left. Previous attempts at visualising continuums where the farthest right is authoritarian and the farthest left is liberal democracies lose their adequacy as the New Left proposes “more inclusive” forms of governance for the United States (US) and the European Union (EU).

With the rise of populism, it is believed that the new forms of leadership are either “populist nationalist” or “populist socialist” (Bannon, 2018). Socialism, in this sense, is the defence of emancipatory ideals that define ‘the people’ vis-à-vis ‘the elites.’ On the other hand, nationalism, according to this view, omits to separate ‘regional value systems’ from the horrendous acts committed in the name of ‘ethnic nationalism.’ Not differentiating between these political structures or their ideological views, to think that Conservatives in the US are defending ethnic nationalism, shows the lack of a proper mental representation for the people to understand the developments in political philosophy. The relative peace times we live in, after half a century of Cold War between two ideologies, is history for us to learn from. The Political Unity Spectrum offers four types of Political Unity, three of which have proved to be working political confines, regardless of their degree of freedom.

The point where Western countries stand, differs from a handful of other countries; even those that are imitating the liberal democracy model. Since a left-right continuum in Turkey, for example, bears no similarities to its European counterparts, Yılmaz et al. moved on to Moral Foundations Theory (Haidt, Graham, & Joseph, 2009) to explain a political ideologies continuum for Turkey (Yılmaz, Sarıbay, Bahçekapılı, & Harma, 2016). It never occurred to them to define a spectrum based on a nationalist Kemalist Republic to which there is a liberal left, a socialist far left, and a dogmatic right that could embody principles of political Islam. On a similar note, Öniş notes that social democracy is not on the left-of-centre of Turkish politics, and that the Republican People’s Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP) alongside the Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP) are nationalist, with mercantilist views on economics. He uses the label ‘defensive nationalism’ to denote to these political parties, where the adjective is the reiteration of the protective nature of nationalism. However, as he mentions the Islamist heritage of Turkey being addressed by Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), the political ideology he synthesises after this party is ‘conservative globalist’ (Öniş, 2009). By defining ‘globalism’ with the economic aspect of globalisation,<sup>1</sup> and mentioning the absence of other “political” parties such as ‘liberal globalists’ and ‘social democrats’ it becomes clear that these syntheses do

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<sup>1</sup> It seems that globalism, in Turkish literature, always refers to the economic aspect of globalisation, which is seen as a political movement to homogenise the rest of the world with one uniform Western approach. The same concept, in Western literature, where its economic aspect is lesser of a dispute, puts more weight on the cultural aspect of globalisation. It is, therefore, advised to note the differences of how this concept is perceived in different parts of the world.

not follow a correct word order. The word on the right defines the ideology or ‘-ism’ while the adjective on the left describes its type. When political views of one party are compared with economic views of another party, it comes as no surprise that a left-right continuum becomes hard to delineate. Besides, trying to shift from political to economic views, is raised by the discontent the author felt from political orientations defined as left and right with US and European definitions in the first place. The Political Unity Spectrum, strictly referring to political systems, regardless of their economic views, suggests that Turkey and its constituent parties stand farther to the right of the US and the EU. Such an approach is, therefore, an objection to analyses that assume the political continuum in Turkey could relate to those of countries with full democracies. Whether a democracy has reached consolidation, according to this theory, makes a big difference.

In the case of Iran, there is little confusion on the political stance of the country in the confines of political Islam. Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader of Iran, is very vocal about the ‘red lines’ that define structure and limit the citizens from certain freedoms. Although elements of democracy are imitated, individual leaders are screened and cannot proceed to candidacy without approval of religious bodies or the direct approval of the supreme leader. As an outcome, individuals join the political arena as activists of human rights, democracy, women’s rights, and minority groups, in hopes of fighting underrepresentation. These activities, if deemed dangerous, can be flagged as “colluding against national security”, and the author will face jail time. Regardless of whether this approach does or does not violate human rights, or freedom of speech, the results have been effective in discouraging any real opposition group from forming within the country. As our approach in this research shows, partial democracies ‘with an adjective’ (Collier & Levitsky, 1997) exist in other Unity Types as well. Using the Political Unity Spectrum, it become clearer as to why, in spite of elections, the political atmosphere in Iran has been stagnant in the past four decades.

## 1. LEFT-RIGHT: THE SCHISM

The terms left and right were first used in France shortly after the revolution. Two groups, attending the newly formed assembly, sat on their seats on different sides. Those who wished to preserve the political system of the past, the Girondins, chose seats on the right, and the radical Jacobins who had taken power in the last years of the French Revolution sat on the left. The vision of the latter was to form an egalitarian socio-political system where social justice was above all. For the next century, abolishment of private property, and replacing it with social property came to be known as leftism, and its supporters, leftists (Carlisle, 2005: vii).

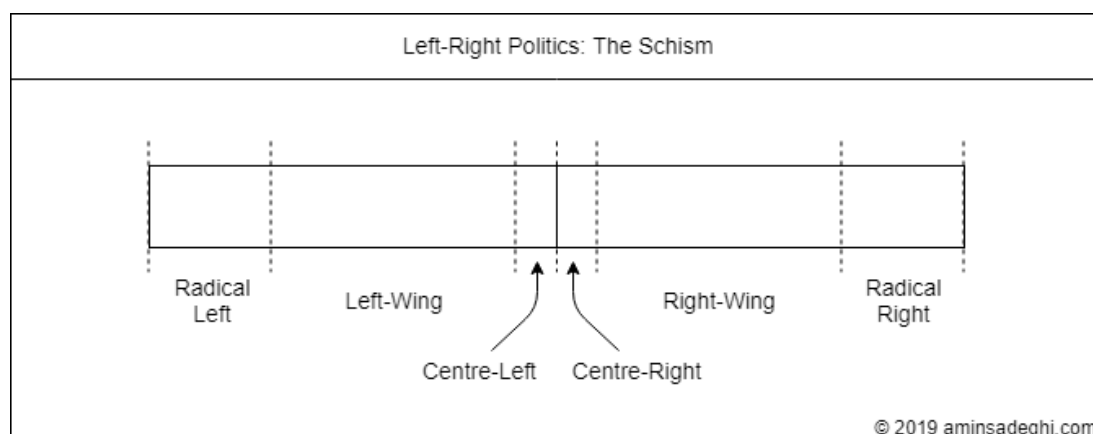
The bicameral rectangle<sup>2</sup> in Figure 1 represents political decision-making powers within a country, where power is shared between two or more groups. The duality in politics is more obvious in countries where two main political powers exist. One usually has a tilted balance of power in their favour, mostly conserving the system present. The other, wishing to tilt the balance other way around, consistently

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<sup>2</sup> The use of the word bicameral is figurative, to represent bipartisanship – not to be confused with bicameralism, which is unanimously used in political literature to refer to two houses in congress.

identifies ongoing problems and asks people for votes in the next elections. This dichotomy is less obvious in parliamentary systems with three or more political groups; however, even in such cases, groups form transitory alliances either to conserve the ongoing system, or to elevate change.

Figure 1 further delineates each of the two political sides. On the right, right-wing represents the usual policies that the side holds. Radical right shows a group of people who wish not incremental change, but abrupt changes in the system. Centre-right consists of people who refuse to take an ideological side, and have mixed ideas of both sides, but nevertheless have a leaning towards right-wing ideas in general. In the case of right representing conservatism, and the left representing progressivism, radical right has a reactionary yearning for values of the past, or nationalism even. The left is almost a mirror of the other, whereas its far-end seeks radical changes within the current system, yearning for a futuristic, and newer alternatives.



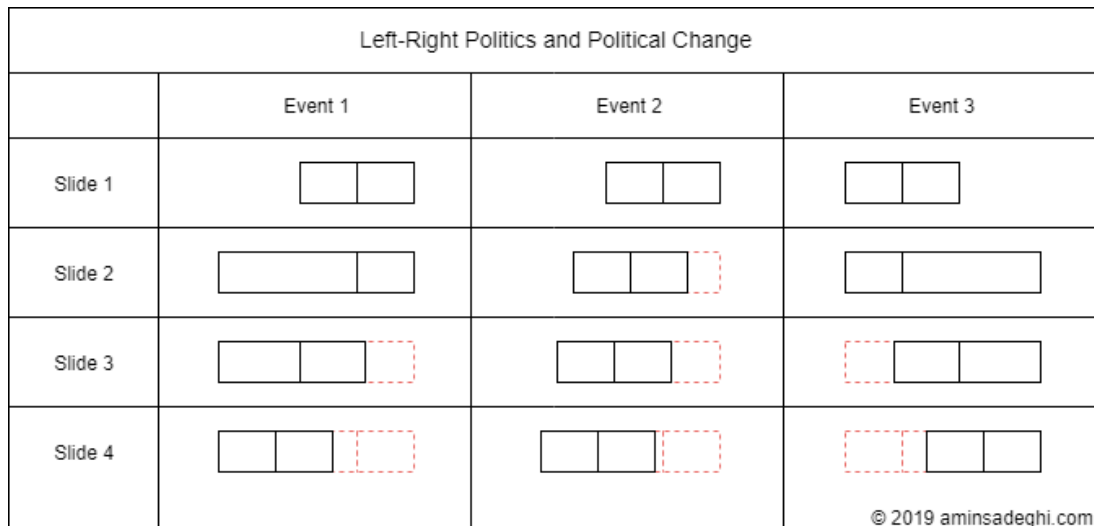
**Figure 1: Left-Right Politics: The Schism**

At first, it may seem that the right is always conservative while the left is always progressive. However, the reason those two terms are not used in this universalistic generalisation is that such categories reflect a small portion of time compared to a few centuries this figure tries to address. For example, progress, when a political party stands against dogma, is a liberal move that is associated with liberalism. Both progressivism and liberalism are, hence, movements of the left. For that very reason, left is more of a general term that is preferred here instead of progressivism.

One anomaly that confuses Americans with their political history, and may seem to threaten the left-right schism used here, is when right and left switched places in the Fifth Party System in 1932. Abraham Lincoln's Republican Party, successor to (American) Whigs, the National Republican, and the Anti-Masonic Party, was in principle, a liberal movement – or left-wing. In contrast, the Jacksonian Democratic Party, successor to Thomas Jefferson's ideals – was right-wing. The switch in 1932, marks the liberal left turning conservative right, and the democratic right turning progressive left. This change of the left from liberalism to progressivism is one of the hallmark moments that mystifies left-right spectrums.

## 2. LEFT-RIGHT MOVES

Each bicameral rectangle in Figure 2 represents a political system with more than one political group influencing its politics. The section on its left contains left-wing, and its right, right-wing politicians, supporters, and followers. Changing the political atmosphere is possible in at least three different ways. Event 1 shows left-wing ideas becoming prevalent, persuading the right to slowly abandon current ideas and embrace new ones. In the fourth slide, both sides have reached equilibrium, agreeing on important matters, and discussing minor issues. Event 2 is similar in direction to the previous example, but varies in degree of dispute between the two groups. Both groups are flexible with regard to progress notwithstanding their differences in minor issues. Not least in importance is the reverse in progress found in Event 3. While a stationary position implies conservatism, moving to the right is reactionary. A yearning for the “greatness” of the past has a temptation for the radical right that is based on the belief that a former state of political affairs was superior to the current-day system.



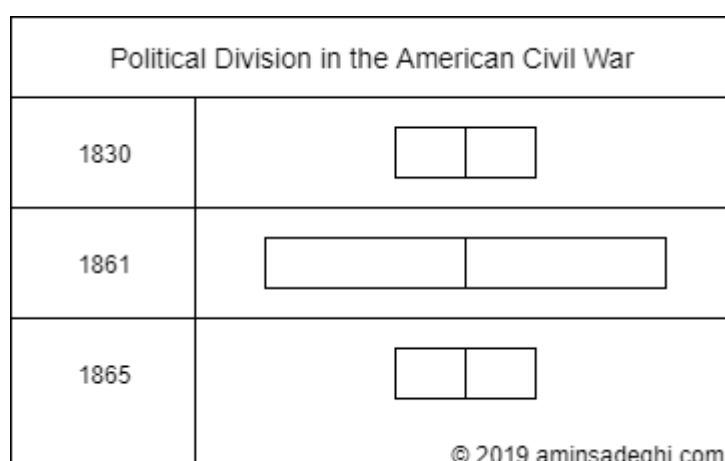
**Figure 2: Left-Right Politics and Political Change**

The 1979 Revolution in Iran is an example of a reactionary movement against the political and economic system that Reza Pahlavi and his son brought for Iran. Although economics was performing well, neither was wealth distributed equally, nor was the society philosophically able to cope with inequality. On the other hand, the political system was mechanically set up, incompatible with the expectations of the Iranian people. Religious sentiments grew amongst people who had for centuries lived with Islamic beliefs – they missed the justice of Ali. Similar to Event 3 (See Figure 2), the revolt in 1979 was, thus, a reactionary revolution to return to pre-Pahlavi justices of the past, moving towards the right: more of structure, control, laws, and regulations.

### 3. POLITICAL DIVISION, AND POLITICAL COHESION

In both Event 1 and Event 3 (see Figure 2), one of the two sides gives in to the demands of either their opposition or its people. Under such an assumption, with or without resistance, transitioning and moving towards either of the sides is done without serious or fatal tension. In other words, one side chooses to compromise for the sake of political and social unity. Warning signs may include a deadly encounter, which could cause politicians to come to their good senses, to have their ideologies weakened for the right of life of citizens. However, this is not always the case. When “the ends justify the means,” tensions will grow and, because of it, increase division between two main ideologies within that society.

The American Civil War that broke in 1861 is an example of such division that took decades for a dichotomy of ideologies to finally erupt. These two ideologies were Protestant and Roman Catholic at their cores. The former were the British who arrived before, and the latter predominantly German and Irish after, 1830 (McPherson, 2003: 7). The conflict between North and South was to determine whether human rights should be practiced in Europe amongst themselves, or abroad amongst the natives as well. Antislavery sentiments were taught for decades before it tuned into the massacre that took the lives of 750,000 military and 50,000 civilian deaths (Hummel, 1999: xv). Fighting against slavery has been an important issue for more than a century so that it is tempting to reduce the Civil War into an emancipatory act, or the abolishment of slavery. The underlying problem between North and South is often forgotten. The important political lesson often forgotten, in Jeffrey R. Hummel’s analysis (Hummel, 1999: x), is the opposing stances on power distribution. The federalist approach of the Northern states<sup>3</sup> required centralisation, whereas the Southern states called for a decentralised, distributed accession to power. Such differences are neither religious, nor ideological, but rather cultural that later enter politics. Figure 3 portrays the American Civil War as an example of political division.



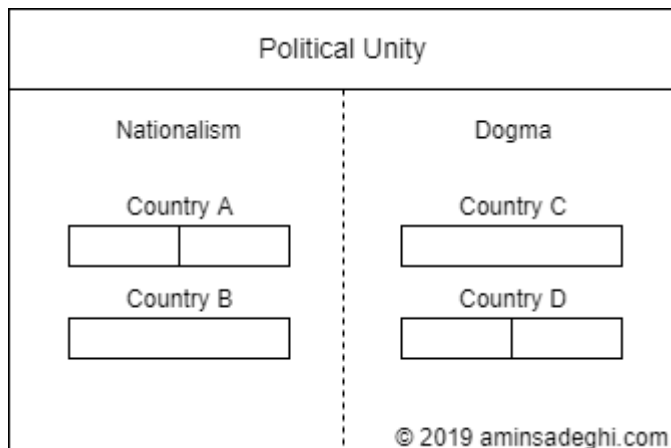
**Figure 3: Political Division in the American Civil War**

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Hamilton’s Federalist ideas continued under Henry Clay’s party: The Whigs.

Unlike a situation where one side makes a concession (see Figure 2, Event 1, and Event 3), both sides distance themselves from the other. The former describes “political cohesion,” whereas the latter, “political division.” Without compromise (see Figure 3), differences reached its peak in 1861, sparking a full-scale civil war. After the war was over in 1865, order came back to the States with Republicans and Democrats as the two major political parties. The two parties restored social order, and increased political cohesion by reducing their political differences.

#### 4. POLITICAL UNITY

It is no surprise that most one-voiced political systems are also dogmatic. But perhaps it would surprise many to find out that a bipartisan political system could also be classified the same, i.e. dogmatic. Older political systems, which usually happen to be idealistic, and have defined their red lines, tend to have little room for social experiments. As a result, ideas and actions that are beyond the red lines are silenced. Those figurative red lines, one at the right and the other at the left, impose – at times, enforce – unity. They also function as inhibitors of civil wars. As shown in Figure 4, both one-voiced “Country C” and bipartisan “Country D” have political unity under “Dogma” as their unity category. “Country C” could only move from “Dogma” to “Nationalism” in case its leader decides, whereas in “Country D,” its left-wing could drag it in that direction. The same is also true about nationalist countries A and B, as they can, regardless of their political system, remain or move to the right.



**Figure 4: Political Unity**

The perfect example for “Country D” (see Figure 4) is Iran after and ever since the 1979 revolution. Mohammad Khatami was the pinnacle of a left-wing movement that rose in Iran with 69 percent of people voting for him in 1997 ballots. As the highest number of youth born in 1987 and 1986 was coming to age, Khatami’s plans for easing up control over societal and economic entities were cherished. In the international arena, he famously proposed the “Dialogue Among Civilizations,” for which he won the “Global Dialogue Prize.” However, as Suzanne Maloney notes (Maloney, 2015: 258), this was all “reform within the red lines.” His evolutionary



liberalisation never found its way outside the well-defined red lines of religious dogma, but rather rejuvenated the Islamic Republic from within, and portrayed to the outside world a government representing its citizens, as well as a guarantor of “equality, and freedom” (Maloney, 2015: 261). In this example, we see a democracy move left and right, but never leave its boundaries – defined and controlled proactively by dogma.

## 5. THE POLITICAL UNITY SPECTRUM

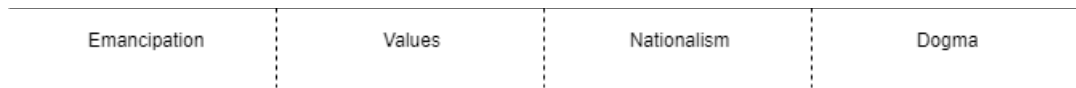
Dogma, as a form of political unity, is not necessarily predicated on the implementation of religion. A common misunderstanding is to think that religion is a bringer of dogma. On the contrary, religion is only one of the ways with which a dogmatic political system is implemented. What separates a dogmatic approach to politics is to have one voice in all political decision making. Kings and queens of the past ruled without being held accountable by an opposition group. Under the kingdom, strictness of rules swayed in the hands of the ruler. Similarly, dogmatic political systems that define religion above any other political unity, if not run by leaders, are interpretations of the words of God, with defined boundaries. Opposition to these rules is a direct opposition to the word of God, and thus not allowed. Oligarchies are extensions of the same system, where power is decentralised amongst a small group of people. With the fluidity of societies these days, however, this type also fails to represent the will of people, as structures and wants of people change rapidly. Without political interest groups that could rise from the people through elections, oligarchies are also considered dogmatic in this model.

Nationalism, although it may share some features with a dogmatic system, is very well identifiable as a distinct form of political unity in history. Sovereignty of the state made it possible for European countries to settle their differences by taking nationality above religion – even as a temporary solution, it worked. In its infancy, not only did sovereignty separate the state from the Catholic Church, but it also helped new forms of decentralised politics take form. Even though nationalism changed the focus to national production – which produced wealth – it nevertheless had an “us vs. them” mentality that caused the greatest atrocities of worldwide wars and ethnic cleansing in human history. This also caused thinkers to devise new values that would decrease tension amongst humans.

Value systems have had uneven developments in different parts of the world, from the fixed one in the United States, to the slowly developing French Revolution values, to construct version of values in the European Union. The idea is to write a constitution, above all, that protects the rights of as many people as it could embrace. Under utilitarian developments, ethical doctrines have transformed to metaethical positions. After borrowing the greatest political intellectual achievements of Britain, as well as studying the greatest political systems of the past, the founding fathers of America discovered how to utilise what works for many. The French had different values; therefore took a different direction towards social values.

All three of the abovementioned forms of systems are broad categories that encompass various types of political systems, e.g. both a democracy and a republic could fit under “Nationalism” as a form of “Political Unity.” Moreover, to define a

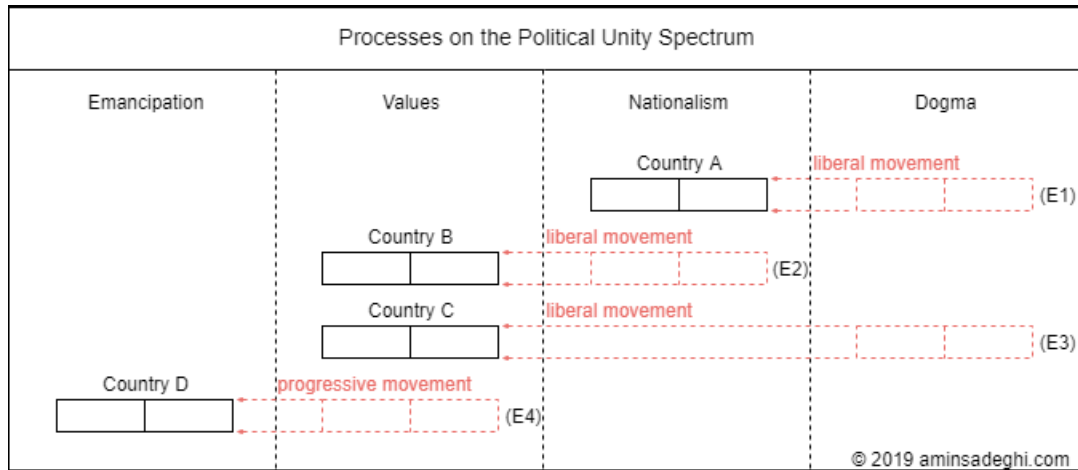
spectrum, positioning each category must relate to historical development, as well as future cases of a system moving right or left. Therefore, the Western experience is primarily used to see whether it can be sustainable with other examples as well. All three forms of unity, plus an emerging fourth, are shown in Figure 5.



**Figure 5: The Political Unity Spectrum**

As demographics are rapidly changing, Samuel P. Huntington’s prediction of clashes along the “fault lines” of culture (Huntington, 1993) becomes more evident day by day. Ease of travel, the possibility to gain citizenship in another country, the flat structure of social media, and agile networks have let more people to join political debates. This change, however, is occurring at such a fast rate that formation of an organic transition is unimaginable. In most countries where religion and the state are inseparable would have their left-wing politics pull their system from “Dogma” farther left under “Nationalism,” or directly under “Values.” At any rate, the move is liberal in nature (shown in Figure 6). But what is farther to the left? Is it beneficial to move farther to the left? What will we gain from it? Will we lose anything when we get there? Similar to how academia and businesspersons viewed globalisation at the turn of the century, three possibilities exist: (1) Transformational changes; (2) An end to the Western civilisation; (3) A transition with relatively little difference to a value system.

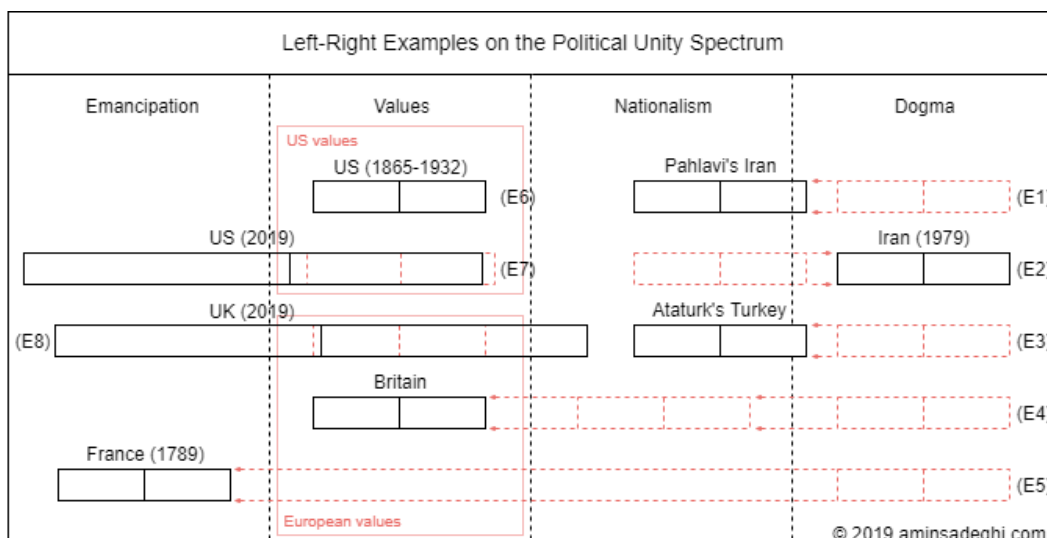
The emerging fourth form of Political Unity is not very different from the French Revolution and its intended values. Equality was never materialised and instead let despotism take over. A void in governance let Napoleon take advantage of nationalist sentiments and take France back to nationalism as its form Political Unity. The same happened with the Bolshevik Revolution as its form of governance, communism, meant the absence of governance, leading to a void that was filled with a new class that led to state capitalism. A wave of New Left thinkers have since been developing a new system to erect equality, with equity as its economic pillar, emancipation as its political philosophy, and continental philosophy as its progressive philosophy.



**Figure 6: Processes on the Political Unity Spectrum**

To conclude, politicians as well as their supporters are categorised into two meta-categories of the Right (adj.: right-wing) and the Left (adj.: left-wing). Universal differences, regardless of time, include the Right’s immutability and fixation and the Left’s wish for reforms. The interplay between the two move societies, on steps and plateaus, with a change first and consolidation afterwards. What glues the two together, and stops their distance from becoming disproportional is a set of common values, e.g. religious, national, and regional values.

Examples of political change are shown in Figure 7. E1 demonstrates the promotion of nationalist sentiments during the Pahlavi dynasty for Iranians, which was reversed in a reactionary revolution in 1979 shown in E2. E3 demonstrates nationalist changes that Ataturk brought for Turkey. E4 and E5 portray two movements, different in pace. The former was brought in Britain by incremental changes to the political structure, while the latter was sudden revolution by the French. E6 is the portrayal of post-Civil War United States that was similar in value system but had different values at its core, and thus produced a political system different from its European counterparts. Political cohesion remained until the Democratic Party decided to move farther left with and after the New Deal. In 2019, political division is a reality of US politics, which might lead to civil war if and only if the division goes upstream to culture to cause social division (shown in E7 in Figure 7).



**Figure 7: Left-Right Examples on the Political Unity Spectrum**

To this day, it seems, emancipation is a territory of vague confines, rejections, inversions, rebellions, and therapeutic ideologies that have been tried but never completely succeeded. In economic terms, any antithesis to capitalism that is deemed progressive falls within this category. Equity, egalitarianism, absence of governance, inclusive politics, free healthcare, free education, and sustainable development are all marks of the New Left that some US citizens as well their EU counterparts are enamoured with. Both seem to have contenders on the right and the far-right (See E7 & E8 in Figure 7).

## CONCLUSION

With the help of four different types of Political Unity, we have shown that two poles of political ideology, held by contending parties, requires constant compromise on issues. Politicised interest groups help lift the will of the people to the political arena. Policies are, then, devised by agreements and compromises between two major political ideologies. However, when parties produce numerous differences, on which they refuse to compromise, their distance is increased and each resorts to tribalism. A mesh of politics downstreaming from culture, and culture upstreaming from politics, transmits ideological polarity to the society. Taking the narrative from the political to the social, divides the nation into two, which in turn heightens tensions. Should the political bodies not reach a compromise, the possibility of a civil war outbreak becomes imminent. The model suggested in this paper offers an understanding for the importance of having and keeping a nationwide political cohesion, most preferably, of the “Values” Political Unity type, which is most compatible with full democracies.

Although national sentiments, sparked by Patrick Henry, abruptly helped the colonisers revolt against England, the US constitution was devised on three broad values that foresaw the arrival of people from all around the world. All parties remained in “Values” as the Political Unity of the US. The defining factor in the left-

right distinction was state power. The Democratic Party's wish to increase state power was right-wing and the Republican Party's wish to have decentralised power was left-wing in nature. After the New Deal, the Democratic Party shifted towards 'leftist' ideals of justice. The Republican Party, on the other hand, seeing the value system as the end of the road for liberalism, remained stationary to 'conserve' those values. The contending ideology, wishing not to remain stagnant, called the move, "liberal" or progressive. The Political Unity Spectrum helps with visualising the switch as well as with understanding that 'progressive' and 'conservative' are fitting labels for the stance of US parties after the New Deal.

On a wider spectrum that encompasses all political systems, Iran sits in the farthest right corner. Whether the country is authoritarian under its leader's rule, or an oligarchy with a limited number of families in positions of decision-making, its political system is dogmatic. Turkey, which had moved left under Ataturk's nationalist slogan of "Turks are hardworkers", has missed the opportunity of consolidating its democratic system. Without a control on power and representation, the system has the tendency towards moving back to dogma. Nevertheless, both dogma and nationalism sit to the right of value systems. Therefore, even the conservatives in the US and the geographical nationalists of Europe, are defending political systems that are freer and more inclusionary than that of Turkey and of Iran. Any move towards the left, in the latter two countries is (politically) liberal – providing more agency to the individual. The Political Unity Spectrum helps visualise why right-wing ideas in one part of the world corresponds with left-wing ideas in another. However, leftist ideas, which seem to be universal, are far-left everywhere. The Political Unity Spectrum offers a visual understanding as to how distinctive the 'left' and 'leftism' are, and why they should never be used interchangeably.

The previous point also clarifies the distinction between liberalism and progressivism. The former has two shapes: (1) full democracies with liberty as their highest political end, i.e. liberal democracy; and (2) full democracies with the highest possible size of a welfare state, i.e. social democracy. The latter is unknown territory that promises emancipation to the individual. No country has ever been able to reach or maintain such a political system. Liberals and progressives have different views on economics. While the former holds the idea that the wealth of nations is a creational process that increases the standard of living for all, the latter thinks of economics as a zero-sum game, where the accumulation of wealth at the hands of a few comes at the expense of deprivation of others. Liberals and progressives hold different views on equality as well. Whereas the former believes in the justice of equality of opportunity, the zero-sum mentality of the latter believes that competition is unjust in nature, and therefore justice is only served when equality of outcome is guaranteed. Liberalism, compared to older political systems, is a left-wing movement that reaches a certain point, then must be conserved. Progressivism, or leftism, has no boundaries in moving left on a wider political spectrum. The Political Unity Spectrum gives a visual aid to portray that liberalism and leftism to opposing ideologies, only in a smaller spectrum. On a wider spectrum, they both have, surprisingly, similar goals.

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