

# A HYPOCRITICAL STAGE? DEMOCRACY: BETWEEN LITTLE COUNTERVAILING LIES AND HALF-TRUTHS\*

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## ABSTRACT

*In this paper I try to discuss a peculiar understanding of democracy's relation to mendacity. According to this reading, democracy is its best when it is located between "little countervailing lies and half-truths" and the main threat to democracy comes from our strong feeling of sincere politics. I will be claiming that this line of argument depicts a certain type of political actor and divides democratic politics into two separate domains. As a result, I argue that conceptualizing democracy depending on a middle ground between "little countervailing lies and half-truths", disregards the problem of trust, which is a crucial social bond and, depicts a political sphere which is unburdened from moral constraints. And, eventually, it ends up being a version of political realism.*

**Keywords:** Mendacity, Sincerity, Democracy, Political Actor, Hypocrisy, Socratic Citizen.

## İKİYÜZLÜ BİR SAHNE: DEMOKRASİ; 'UFAK TELAFİ EDİCİ YALANLAR VE YARI GERÇEKLER' ARASINDA ÖZET

*Bu yazıda, demokrasinin siyasal yalanla olan ilişkisine dair özgün bir anlayışa değinilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu okumaya göre, demokrasi "ufak telafi edici yalanlar ve yarı gerçekler" arasında yer aldığı en iyi durumdadır ve demokrasiye yönelik en büyük tehdit samimiyete olan güçlü hislerimizden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu argümanın, belli bir tür siyasal aktör profili resmettiği ve demokratik siyaseti iki ayrı alana böldüğü iddia edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, demokrasiyi "ufak telafi edici yalanlar ve yarı gerçekler" arasındaki orta alan üzerinden kavramsallaştırmanın, çok önemli sosyal bir bağ olan güveni göz ardı ettiği ve ahlaki kısıtlamalardan muaf bir siyasal alan resmettiği savunulmuştur. Ve nihayetinde bu anlayışın, siyasal gerçekçiliğin bir yönü olmanın ötesine geçemediği öne sürülmüştür.*

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Siyasal yalan, Samimiyet, Demokrasi, Siyasal Aktör, İkiyüzlülük, Sokratik Yurttaş

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### Introduction

Mendacity is a lively topic in political theory in relation to democracy and claiming that it is going to be as such does not require an exceptional insight. The main question in this debate after the outburst of post-truth, I believe, is how democracy should relate to mendacity. If democracy is based on an exchange of opinions in a discursive way, and therefore it has to remain aloof from truth which is considered domineering over opinion, how should democratic politics deal with mendacity? How should mendacity be conceptualized in democracies, if truthfulness has not been considered as one of virtues of political sphere, as Hannah Arendt claims? In this regard Martin Jay's remarks which are put forward in his book *Virtuous of Mendacity* are worth remembering. The book, written in 2013, before the phrase post-truth became ubiquitous, tackles with the peculiar relation between lying and political theory. Jay claims that:

[W]ithin the realm of the political the search for perfect truthfulness is not only vain but also, potentially dangerous. For ironically, the mirror image of the "big lie" may well be the ideal of "big truth," the absolute, univocal truth, which silences those who disagree with it and abruptly terminates discussion. Both are the enemy of the pluralism of opinions, the ongoing vigor of debate, and the bracing clash of values and interests. [...]. [I]t may be healthier to foster lots of little countervailing lies or at least half-truths, as well as the ability to test and see through them, rather than hold out hope for ending mendacity once and for all.\*

Jay does not discuss mendacity in relation to democracy in particular, but his emphasis on discussion and his position against univocal truth, allows us to infer that Martin Jay puts democracy side by side with "little countervailing lies or at least half-truths". It seems that democracy as a form of political association that is based on interaction of opinions in a discursive way has a unique relation to mendacity. Further, to speak of a healthy democracy little lies, and half-truths are even necessary since they may help democracy to keep its balance between the big lie and the big truth. I would like to address this middle ground that is reserved for democracy and the assumption that lays beneath it and its implications.

In order to do this, I will start with Elizabeth Markovitz who grants a similar place to democracy as Martin Jay that enables me to elaborate contours of this middle ground. Then, I will turn to Danna Villa who shall help

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\* Martin Jay, *Virtues of Mendacity*, University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2013, p. 179-180.

me to develop the argument further and to show that situating democracy on a middle ground implies a certain division within the democratic sphere itself. After engaging a discussion with Markovitz and Villa, in the second part I will be claiming that the presumed middle ground that is saved for democracy and the division also presuppose a certain type of political actor who can and will, when the context requires, lie to the public or deceive the public. In order to depict the traits of this political actor, I will recourse to several other scholars who also regard “democracy as a logocentric enterprise” or underline the importance of language in democracy. In this regard instead of focusing on differences of these authors, I will try to capture the picture of the political actor which has been implicitly or explicitly put forward in the first chapter by Markovitz and Villa. Finally, in the last part of the paper, I will raise my concerns and questions about this line of argumentation. And I will be arguing that conceptualizing democracy depending on a middle ground between “little countervailing lies and half-truths”, disregards the problem of trust which is a crucial social bond and, depicts a political sphere which is unburdened from moral constraints and, in turn, it ends up being a version of political realism.

### **Language, Democracy and the “Power” of the Socratic Citizen as a Witness**

Elizabeth Markovitz in her widely cited book *The Politics of Sincerity: Plato, Frank Speech and Democratic Judgment* defines democracy as an enterprise which is based on language: “language is at the centre of democratic political projects. So, it is critical that we pay attention to how we evaluate political words. Otherwise, not only can we not really understand what is going on in political discourse, but we are also more likely to make poor judgments about what sort of speech and speakers make our democracy more robust<sup>†</sup>. According to her, the main threat for democracy comes from our obsession with mendacity. Our constant belief that someone is lying to us, or our suspicion of that we are being deceived, especially in case of democratic politics, directs us to search for sincere politicians and this very belief has devastating consequences for democracy. According to Markovitz this hazardous search for sincerity has two aspects in our political culture; one has links to the practical politics and is connected to the practice of *parrhesia* and the other is related to political theory which she discusses with

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<sup>†</sup> Elizabeth Markovitz, *The Politics of Sincerity: Plato, Frank Speech and Democratic Judgment*, Pennsylvania State University Press, Pennsylvania, 2008, p. 15.

deliberative democratic theory (DDT). According to her, these two aspects are linked and are creating a dangerous political climate for democracy‡.

Markovitz, firstly, discusses deliberative democratic theory and claims that while DDT, rightly, understands democracy as a logocentric enterprise or put differently regards political power as that which is founded on reason and language/communication, however it also gives sincerity a special place and this is the problematic side of DDT. From Markovitz's perspective, according to DDT in order to speak of a claim's validity it has to be tested out through the claims of sincerity, truth and rightness which are the three stands points of intersubjective communication. Achieved on this basis is an agreement which casts out lying, deception or even at some point rhetoric which is considered as containing elements of strategic communication. From this angle sincerity means speaking without holding back any information, a prolocutor presents herself as she is before a public. According to Markovitz once sincerity is put forward as an anchor for political deliberation and agreement then this would undermine our critical capacity as democratic citizens. If a political actor who demands support is considered sincere, Markovitz assumes, there is no need to inquire this actor's arguments, what she says would be regarded as truth and as a reflection of speaker's inner truth since sincerity implies a special relation between the speaker and the truth§. To elaborate the dangers that have been associated to DDT, Markovitz turns her gaze to *parrhesia*\*\* as a practical aspect of sincerity since she stresses that our perception of democracy as a political association which is founded on sincere communication haunts politics with a rhetorical force which undermines deliberation itself.

According to Markovitz *parrhesia* which originated in Athens's Ancient Democracy "described the speech of a person who spoke without reservation,

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‡ According to her Donald Trump's election for presidency in USA is in some sense exemplifies the dangerous aspect of sincere politics. See: Elizabeth Markovitz, "Trump 'tells it like it is.' That's not Necessarily a Good Thing for Democracy", *Washington Post*, March 4, 2016.

§ Elizabeth Markovitz, *The Politics of Sincerity...*, p. 13-47.

\*\* Here, Markovitz engages a discussion with M. Foucault's conceptualizing of *parrhesia*. She claims that Foucault is also responsible for the triumph of sincerity in our political discourse. However, as it is well known, for Foucault *parrhesia* remarks a bond between the public speaker and her life which suspends the democratic politics. In "The Courage of Truth" (2012) Foucault claims that a revolutionary is the one who bears witness to her way of life. Therefore, according to Foucault *parrhesia* is the link between the revolutionary and her way of life. In this sense Foucault is not speaking from a democratic political perspective, his point is to conceptualize a militant life and a politics beyond the given political forms, as Michael Hardt (2010) remarks. But for the sake of this paper I will not engage Markovitz's reading of Foucault.

ornament, or regard for personal".<sup>††</sup> Especially after the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC when it was difficult to differentiate truthful speech from untruthful one due to the rise of Sophistry. When Sophists distorted the connection between speech and speaker, Ancient politics tried to find a solution through *parrhesia* which initially ties the speaker to her speech. Here there is no place for ambiguity, the speaker is even taking the risk of not being appreciated or of being reprimanded she tells publicly what she thinks about political matters. Besides, this speaker also never has recourse to rhetoric, she speaks straightforwardly and clearly without using any language games. Having discussed *parrhesia* with the following features; taking a risk, speaking without withholding any information and the inner connection between the speaker and the speech Markovitz claims that in our era sincerity plays *parrhasia*'s role which now means that the only reference for the truth claims that the speaker puts forward is the speaker's own being, her personality. If speaker says something, it is regarded as true since she is sincere or *parrhesiastes*.<sup>‡‡</sup> Here personal traits of a speaker become a public matter which for Markovitz should not be a part of any political debate in the first place. According to her, when political deliberation hovers around idiosyncrasies politics falls the victim of deception and lying against which sincerity is deployed. As in the Ancient Democracy when orators were hiding behind *parrhesia* and pursuing their own interest therefore precluding a healthy deliberative public space to take place so do sincere politicians today. Markovitz underlines that the sincere politician or *parrhasiates* tells the audiences that they should not need to worry, that all she is saying is true. Yet, according to her a public atmosphere that privileges sincerity undermines citizen's ability to judge the content of the speech, since if everything is under the guarantee of sincere intentions and goals then there is no need to pursue any kind of enquiry about these intentions or goals. When judgement is considered redundant, at this moment, Markovitz believes, the public can easily fall victim to mendacity since every claim whether it is true or not can be justified with regard to speaker's sincerity without a thorough public deliberation. Sincerity, with its rhetorical power can become in the strict sense a mask for mendacity.<sup>§§</sup>

Against sincerity's might be deceptive power, Markovitz suggests that political theory, conscientiously, should take into consideration the citizenship practise that was performed by Socrates which can provide a way that helps democracy to be in its healthy in-between place; between the big lie and the big truth. She claims that Socratic citizenship practise was severely

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<sup>††</sup> Elizabeth Markovitz, *The Politics of Sincerity...*, p. 65.

<sup>‡‡</sup> Elizabeth Markovitz, *age*. p. 68-70.

<sup>§§</sup> Elizabeth Markovitz, *age*. p. 74.

ingrained in the Socratic method, irony which was deployed against *parrhesia* which warns us about the dangerous aspect of this so-called truth-telling practice. Socrates with his method draws our attention to the ambiguity of communication. Markovitz is convinced that Socrates by inviting his addressee to the enquiry of certain concepts - such as justice, truth, so on - spurs his addressee to look at the given norms and concepts from various angles and to consider that there are various standing points, in doing so Socrates incites them to judge. By this invitation Socrates suspends the inner relation between the speaker and her speech that is founded by *parrhesia* and remarks the importance of judging the content of the speech without looking into the speaker's self. If democracy is a logocentric enterprise, says Markovitz, what matters is not the sincerity of speaker but what she says since only by diligently judging the content of the speech and the given values, we can speak of democratic accountability.\*\*\*

Socrates on the one hand doubts any truth claim that is based on sincerity, on the other hand he reminds us that before any answer there is always a question and a democracy should be deemed as an endless questioning enterprise. We can never be sure whether politicians who promise this or that version of justice or freedom are deceiving us, however what should concern us is whether this promise of justice or freedom can really make any sense in our democratic system, in our interaction, mainly in our lives. If the politician is insincere but what she says has a significant point within our deliberation, we should bear in mind what she is saying not her personality.†††

In this line of argument Markovitz is not alone, for instance, Danna Villa also highlights the importance of Socratic practice. Villa similarly believes that Socrates with his strong commitment to make visible any injustice that has been veiled by our unquestioned values or principles and simultaneously his avoidance of commitment to any notion of justice slows down political practice and opens a room for judgement. Socrates dissolves taken-for-granted beliefs and encourages his peers not to consent to any principle without questioning and therefore not to give up their capacity of judgement. Here, what Socrates aims is not to give, for instance, another definition for justice or truth but he tries to problematize the horizon in which truth and justice has been and is defined. Keeping in mind this Socratic political demeanour Danna Villa claims that in democratic politics interest, desires and values constantly circulate and transform and this unceasingly calls for politicians to act but politicians whose main goal is to persuade their

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\*\*\* Elizabeth Markovitz, *age*. p. 110-118.

††† Elizabeth Markovitz, *age*. p. 212.

fellow citizens leave the values and desires as they are given. Politicians don't question taken-for-granted beliefs, for Villa this is the duty of citizen who now is equipped with Socratic practice of citizenship.##

From Villa's perspective the political actor in Weberian sense has a vocation to act and is loosely bounded by moral-ethical codes and it is the Socratic citizen who reminds the boundaries, ethical-moral consequences of the acts. It is suggested implicitly by Markovitz and explicitly by Villa that here we have a split between political actors and their peers as Socratic citizens. Put differently here on the one side, there are political actors who direct the taken-for-granted beliefs of the political sphere to a particular action, on the other side rests the Socratic citizen whose vocation is to slow down this action and open up these beliefs, values and desires to questioning. This split I believe has dramatic consequences for politics but before focusing on the implications of this split, I would like to now take a look at the split from the side of political actor and how she is depicted with regard to mendacity. In order to do this, I will recourse to several other scholars who share the idea of "democracy as a logocentric enterprise" or underline the importance of language in democracy. In this regard, instead of focusing on their different perspectives, I will try to capture the picture of the political actor that has been implicitly or explicitly put forward by Markovitz and Villa.

### **Hypocritical Political Actor**

Politics in democracies is considered as an exchange of opinions which takes place in a discursive way and based on this ground the political actor tries to persuade her peers in order to enact her policy. Therefore, as a logocentric enterprise in democracy there is no guarantee that the truthful argument will prevail, rather in it politics is a matter of persuasion and political legitimacy lays in persuasion. From this angle it is claimed that democracy's unique form allows mendacity to be part of its political sphere. Since in democracy persuasion is essential or there is a public who must be persuaded in a discursive way the political actor has to mask her inner intentions, desires or values and this even – maybe not necessarily but depending on the context occasionally – asks her to lie. For instance, David Runciman asserts that mendacity or hypocrisy<sup>§§§</sup>, helps the political actors to

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## Dana Villa, *Socratic Citizenship*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2001, p. 20-28.

§§§ As Sissela Bok (1999) convincingly reminds hypocrisy, in ancient Greek meant to answer, to reply but the concept later became to describe the performance of an actor in the stage. According to her now hypocrisy is widely deployed to label certain practices: to hide the real character or to put a mask and act in a virtues way without

hide their intentions and by this act of hiding creates a public space for political action since mendacity or hypocrisy cuts off the connection between power and violence and allows language/communication to take place.\*\*\*\* In this regard Ruth W. Grant states that “[s]ome sorts of hypocrisy [...] sustain the public conditions for political integrity”.††† According to Grant political actors due to their different and irreconcilable interests and desires have recourse to lying, and thus trying to eliminate lying in political encounters might give rise to violence. In the same vein Judith Shklar, who’s known with the seminal paper “The Liberalism of Fear”, stresses that accusing democracy about mendacity which helps to harmonize the interests in a discursive way would obliterate its foundation and would be an invitation for violence. She states: “[o]ne might well argue that liberal democracy cannot afford public sincerity. Honesties [that humiliate and a stiff-necked refusal to compromise] would ruin democratic civility in a political society in which people have many serious differences of belief and interest. Our sense of public ends is so wavering and elusive because we often do not even see the same social scene before us. We do not agree on the facts or figures of social life, and we heartily dislike one another’s religious, sexual, intellectual, and political commitments-not to mention one another’s ethnic, racial, and class character”.†††† Here mendacity or hypocrisy is grasped as a virtue which renders democracy to function. For mendacity is understood, on the one hand, as a mask which makes possible for political actors to hide their inner thoughts, intentions and desires, and on the other hand it allows them to connect with general convictions without showing what they think about them. Therefore, it functions for actors to gain power or continue to be in the power. To be exact, mendacity holds together the political sphere and by eliminating violence allows this sphere to come to pass.

Since democracy is founded on language not on violence or force, the political actor has recourse to basic convictions in order to play the political game, even if she has reservations, she has to put a mask; she has to seem to accept these convictions as hers. Also, a political actor needs a mask whenever she engages with other actors, this is especially important says Demetris Tillyris when the actors have different interest and goals which is case all the time in democratic politics. Thus, democracy, according to Tillyris, has an agonistic and open-ended form in which persuasion and deliberation

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believing that virtues. Keeping in mind this last meaning of the concept in this paper I employ hypocrisy a way of lying as Perez Zagorin (1990) rightly remarks.

\*\*\*\* David Runciman, *Political Hypocrisy: The Mask of Power, From Hobbes to Orwell and Beyond*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2008, p. 203.:

††† Ruth Weissbourd Grant, *Hypocrisy and Integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau and the Ethics of Politics*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1999, p. 180.

†††† Judith N. Shklar, *Ordinary Vices*, Harvard University Press, USA, 1984, p. 78.



play a crucial role. Therefore, mask which political actor put on when she engages with public and with other political actors is important in order to persuade the public and carry out the deliberation. Consequently, mendacity and hypocrisy become main features of the mask. "For, politicians, especially those operating within a democratic context, are also dependent on the *demos*. And, because compromises are inter-twined with inconsistency and entail the betrayal of some of one's commitments and values, hypocrisy has an additional role to play: it enables politicians to conceal their vices, dirt and inconsistencies; to marshal on and satisfy some of the goods of politics".<sup>§§§§</sup>

If democracy is founded upon a practice of concealing idiosyncrasies, even this often requires mendacity, a call for a sincere politics will undermine its foundation. To eliminate mendacity and hypocrisy, the argument runs, renders the life blood of democracy, political deliberation, impossible. Here politics is considered as a discursive encounter in which the political actors with various interests, desires and goals try to find an agreement through persuasion without forcefully imposing their position on others. Also, a political actor has to respect the general convictions even if this demands from her to put a mask with which she can hypocritically pretend that these convictions represent her own. Thus, political power in democracy does not rest on violence but on a communicative power of which mendacity is also a part. If the political actor who lies, deceives the public is expelled from the scene, this can result in eliminating the very scene itself. In this regard, as Martin Jay, whom I mention in the beginning, says, if one wants to keep safe the foundation of democracy, one has to find a way to live with mendacity and a democratic manner is to accept that mendacity is an essential part of its politics that which also implies a certain split between political actors and their fellow Socratic citizens.

### **Conclusion: Concise Remarks on Trust and Politics**

The arguments that I have been presenting here at first glance seems similar to that of political realism. The latter mainly claims that politics, put crudely, is largely a game of power and in order to obtain this power the political actor should do whatever is needed since the game has not tied by any moral coda. For some political realists, for instance Weber, an actor, depending on the events that the actor faces, has to violate moral principles but at least when she reflects on her decisions, she has to shoulder this moral

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<sup>§§§§</sup> Demetris Tillyris, "The virtue of vice: a defence of hypocrisy in democratic politics", *Contemporary Politics*, vol. 22(1), 2016, p. 14.

burden\*\*\*\*. But the authors I mentioned with regard to mendacity, they comprehend politics mainly as a practice of opinion exchange that privileges the language that includes interests, desires and so on. From their perspective, politics is a deliberative play, that is, in order to speak of a democratic political sphere, the legitimatization has to lay on exchange of opinions, here politics does not depend on a heroic act. Democratic politics rely on agreement and deliberation which is not strictly rational as in DDT which relegates mendacity but includes it. Therefore, a political actor can lie but what matters is whether she persuades her peers who can judge actor's speech and focus only on the speech not her heroic traits.

In this regard, it seems that authors try to undermine heroic act of political actor in order to give way to an egalitarian political sphere in which actors and audience have equal power which means that they face with each other in a discursive way and what matters is not, in case of mendacity, the moral burden that the actor takes on after lying to the public or whether or not she is sincere. As Villa and Markovitz claim, citizens in a Socratic way judge the actor's speech and decide whether it touches on the issues that they confront; they simply ignore political actor's idiosyncrasies. But according to this approach politics is a procedure that takes place between two parties; there is on the one hand the political actor and on the other hand citizens as an audience. As Dana Villa and the authors that have been mentioned in the second chapter state, the political actor's vocation is to act according to the convictions, she has no time to stop and judge them, and this duty, as Markovits claims alongside Villa, is carried out only by her fellow citizens who have Socratic faculty of irony. Therefore, political sphere bears witness to a split. Even Nadia Urbinati in her seminal work on democracy cannot abstain from but formalizes this split, even though she recourse to slightly different terminology.

Urbinati claims that "[m]odern democracy is diarchy of will and judgment, not monocracy of the will".++++ Here democracy has two connected domains: on the one hand, there is the process of decision [which is clustered in various institutions and] which brings the discussion to its conclusion that took place between citizens. On the other hand, there is sphere of deliberation in which citizens equipped with the capability of judgement or with Socratic irony and they are thus able to deliberate on several issues and express their opinions. According to Urbinati, based on decision and especially deliberation and opinion, democracy puts aside claims of sincerity, truth or truthfulness

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\*\*\*\* Max Weber, "Politics as Vocation", trans. Rodney Livingstone, in *The Vocation Lectures* (eds) David Owen and Tracy B. Strong, Hackett Press, Indianapolis, 2004.

++++ Nadia Urbinati, *Democracy Disfigured: Opinion, Truth and the People*, Harvard University Press, USA, 2014, p. 2.

and includes mendacity, deception and rhetoric. Urbinati by describing democracy as a diarchy perpetuates the split between actor and the citizen and once more underlines that mendacity, not sincerity, is part of democratic politics.

This does not mean that the authors whose argument I have mentioned favour mendacity in democracy whatever the case, but they consider that mendacity plays a crucial part in democracy not sincerity or *parrhesia* (truthfulness) and thus democracy is at its best when it stays between the big lie and the big truth. And this can be achieved if democratic politics is conceived with a split between the actor and citizen or now in Urbinati's words diarchy of will and judgement. Nevertheless, I believe this approach about democratic politics has limits.

First of all, the political actor in this account is not bound by any ethical or moral duty in relation to lying, she enjoys telling lies, from time to time, in order to persuade citizens. Here in Urbinati's word, and as we saw in the second chapter, the domain where the decision takes place and, especially, where the political actor feels herself at home is exempt from any moral burden. What matters is how Socratic citizens handle the lies that they have been told, either they have recourse to their ability of judgement or they simply follow the political actor since they believe that she is sincere, they trust her and if they embrace the last option, then they undermine democracy's foundation. I believe that this line of argument, while trying to diminish the weights of sincerity which might gain a rhetorical power, renders politics an amoral practice and in this regard, it meets up political realism which construes politics as a value-free game. If I revise Rahel Jaeggi's argument about economy, here democratic politics "is understood as something that functions autonomously, a 'norm-free' domain driven by its own logic".#### Therefore, politics becomes a formal, free-standing practice without any content as economy.

Secondly and related to the first one, this perspective disregards the problem of trust on which language is founded and which plays a certain role in social interaction. From their point of view democracy is a logocentric enterprise, that is, it is based on language nevertheless they neglect, for instance, Ludwig Wittgenstein's remark on language, as he states: "What can I rely on? I really want to say that a language-game is only possible if one trusts something",##### Trust is undeniably a complex issue and needs to be discussed comprehensively but what I want to underline here is that if an

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#### Nancy Fraser and Rahel Jaeggi, *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2018, p. 5.

##### Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, Blackwell, Oxford, §508-509, 1969, p. 66.

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opinion means disclosure of the particular aspect of the world to a particular person, then every other person has different sights and sees the world from different angle.\*\*\*\*\* Therefore, in order to have a consistent view of the given issues, one has to trust the other or one has to trust other's account of what the other sees: namely one has to rely on what the other tells about what she experiences. One cannot see the world entirely from her position. Thus, politics which is based on language is about judgement as well as about trust and sincerity.

In this regard, an account of the relation between mendacity and democracy has to pay attention to the concept of trust, since we depend on other's account of the world that she views from her angle which is deeply connected to trust and sincerity. What we need, I believe, is a perspective which will consider sincerity and trust alongside the capacity of judgement, but which does not depend on a split between an actor and audience that eventually give rise to trust issues in the first place.

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\*\*\*\*\* Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, eds. Mary McCarthy, Harcourt Publishing, New York, 1981, p. 21.

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