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The Clash of Irreconcilable Worlds:
A Critique of V.J. Vanberg's Thesis on the Complementarity of Liberalism and Democracy

Abstract

This paper represents a critique of Viktor J. Vanberg's thesis that liberalism and democracy are in some kind of natural symbiosis, owing to the same normative premise (individual sovereignty) and the same mode of relation (voluntary agreement) present among members of hypothetical social contract. This thesis is shown to be incorrect on two principal levels of investigation: level of abstract/normative analysis and level of history of relationship between liberalism and democracy. Vanberg's treatment of the issue has several theoretical deficiencies: generally problematic positioning of liberalism and democracy, inappropriate mixing of normative level with methodological one, and narrow use of the notion "voluntary agreement". Furthermore, historical experience of relationship of liberalism and democracy presented within this paper, documents that this relation should be explained in terms of struggle over dominance, rather than in terms of peaceful coexistence and natural symbiosis. The intentions of the critique of Vanberg's attempt to "reconcile irreconcilable" is not just to present misguided arguments of this author, but also to show that, generally speaking, liberalism and democracy are two irreconcilable worlds and two more than different political philosophies.

Key words: Laissez-faire liberalism, democracy, individual sovereignty, voluntary agreement.

The opinion that "liberal democracy" is the most preferred political and social system of organizing ever can be heard very often today.

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Schools, the media and universities teach that specific and long historical development is responsible for creating the "best mix" of social and political components, the so-called "liberal democracy". Most of the developed countries in the Western Hemisphere are liberal democracies, and the vast majority of former real socialist countries struggle to reach the standards of the consolidated democracies of the West.[2] According to this understanding, liberal democracy seems to be the product of a historically necessary development – led by efforts of an "adult" mankind evolved from "prolonged childhood", a process to which the symbolic point was finally put on by the theoretical declaration of Francis Fukuyama on the "end of history". Therefore, considering this basically positive evaluation of liberal democracy and an optimistic vision of its future, understandably, the concepts of "liberalism" and "democracy" are considered very similar ideas, they are seen as complementary and together they form, in a deep sense, a "natural" symbiosis.

The fact of domination of liberal democratic model itself does not, however, lead to the conclusion on the internal compatibility and complementarity of liberalism and democracy. According to the understanding expressed in this paper, there are two relevant approaches based on which light can be shed on their relationship. The first one, concerned with the historical context, with how the relationship of liberalism and democracy occurs and is operationalized in the practical sphere – in fact, the nature of the real form of this relationship, and the second one, concerned with what liberalism and democracy as ideals mean, i.e. what we awarely, or (more often) unawarely mean by them, and how these concepts are understood in philosophical discussions and political theorists' works.

Many difficulties in understanding this relationship are just the result of inconsistent application of either approach. It is often the case that when it comes to the normative component of democracy, people actually have in mind only some of its historical forms. Or, conversely, one can speak of the normative dimension of the problem without taking into consideration historical experience of modern democracies.

Clash of two worlds

The historical course of development of modern democracies documents a special dynamics of the liberalism-democracy relationship,

2 This, according to many, is the primary goal of social upheavals and revolutions named "African spring".

and to the detriment of the first. Namely, once the democratic principles take root (by expanding the voting rights from members of certain social groups to all adult members of society – universal suffrage), then its logic leads to the reduction, restriction or even abolition of the validity of liberal political institutions.[3] For the logic of the majority rule based on universal suffrage leads to the expansion of the democratic decision-making principle to those segments of the public and private life that have traditionally been protected by liberal political institutions, and generally questions, and relativizes the civilizational distinction private/public (Pešić, Novaković 2008: 87). As a rule, this leads not only to a change in current policies, but also to legislative changes, even a change in constitutional arrangements.[4] The main characteristic of the domination of the democratic principle is reflected in the increase of the state bureaucracy, actually increase of the state as such.

The disappearance of the traditional monarchical system of government in most countries of Europe after World War I and the establishment of the republican model of parliamentary elections and universal suffrage had as its primary result the expansion of government/bureaucracy[5] and the increasing influence of the state in sectors that traditionally had not been covered by the sphere of public policy. Compared to earlier monarchical systems, a modern democratic state generates massive expenditures – unprecedented for monarchical systems, even

3 "It seems to be the regular course of the development of democracy that after a glorious first period in which it is understood as and actually operates as a safeguard of personal freedom because it accepts the limitations of a higher nomos, sooner or later it comes to claim the right to settle any particular question in whatever manner a majority agrees upon.". (Hayek 1998: III, 2) Also: "... if the prospects of individual liberty are better in a democracy than under other forms of government, this does not mean that they are certain. The prospects of liberty depend on whether or not the majority makes it its deliberate object. It would have little chance of surviving if we relied on the mere existence of democracy to preserve it." (Hayek 1960: 109). These two quotes, especially the second one, refute Paul Gottlieb's thesis that "Hayekian democracy is a super-added merit that enhances without changing substantively what it touches" (Gottlieb 1991: 4), although they do not refute the reasons for which, according to him, Hayek accepted democracy.

4 One of recent attempts at abolishing the remains of the liberal order within the ruling paradigm of liberal democracy (or welfare state) is the project of "multiculturalism". A prominent theorist of multiculturalism Will Kymlicka advocates the extension of the classic "core" of liberal rights to new creation of a special "corpus" of rights, conditioned by democratic development. (Kymlicka 1996). Such an expansion according to the author of this paper is nothing more than their abolition for the ultimate holder of rights cannot be a group, but only an individual (Novaković 2010).

5 About this Norberto Bobio says the following: "All states which have become more democratic have simultaneously become more bureaucratic, because the process of bureaucratization is to a great extent the consequence of the process of democratization." (Bobbio 1987: 38).

in wartime.[6] The expansion of the share of government employment (model of government as the primary employer),[7] and the introduction of new types of taxes and tax strategies, are brought about by new democratic republics, due to which the philosopher Peter Sloterdijk refers to the modern state as the "state of taxes", Steuerstaat, (Sloterdijk 2009). Circle of government supremacy over economic and social trends was closed with the last major interventionist step – the abolition of the gold standard and the introduction of state money. This kind of economic innovation opened the door widely not only for greater control over monetary policy but also for implementation of very popular mechanisms for staying in power today: funding of consumption out of non-existent sources and state borrowing (Hoppe 2001: 62).

Shrouded in an attractive robe of the "welfare state" democratic republicanism conquered Europe, the United States and other countries in the period after World War II. It was presented as a middle ground between "unbridled" laissez-faire liberalism and extremism of the socialist central planning. Using the democratic procedure and by applying Keynesian principles, the welfare state expands its role in the society, especially in the sphere of economic life. The state becomes the "mother of all mothers" taking care of everything, from education of the youngest members of society, their upbringing by its model, to employment and ensuring their future. In economics, this surrogate mother practices the strategy of "public work", "general employment", "minimum wage", i.e., everything that the classical liberal order leaves to a spontaneous game and voluntary arrangements of stakeholders in the market. Guided by the idea of "social justice" and "equality", the welfare state increases its range to a degree it can no longer sustain. At the end of the seventies of the previous century, it experienced a serious crisis, a collapse in fact, from which it could only be saved by returning to old wisdoms, by the application of measures of restriction and reduction of the state apparatus and restoration of the concept of minimal government that occurred in the late eight-

6 Total government expenditures up to World War I had exceeded 15% of GDP only during the war. During the interwar period it increased to about 20-30% of GDP, only to increase to as much as 60% of GDP in the postwar period (Hoppe 2001: 55).

7 Based on data obtained by Peter Flore and to which Hoppe also relies in his analysis of democratic republicanism, an increase in the share of government employment of labor ranged from 3% until 1900, 8% in the interwar period, up to 15% in the postwar era. From these statistics the following are excluded: military personnel, health professionals, social institutions and social security agencies, as well as nationalized industries (Hoppe 2001: 56). It is clear that with these excluded categories the percentage increases well above 15%. This is confirmed by the OECD report according to which state employment in some European countries includes the whole 30% of the total workforce (OECD 2008).

ies of the twentieth century owing to reforms of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States.[8]

This historical development shows that liberalism and democracy are not only incompatible, but are mostly de facto opposed. The increasing development of democracy and expansion of the impact of democratic institutions has led to the elimination and bridging of liberal restrictions regarding public decision-making.[9] The fact that observable reality of everyday life refers to the idea of conjunction of two apparently idyllic natural allies says nothing about the essential connection between two different ideologies and political ideals itself, but is actually the result of the victory of the democratic idea, that by the power of its appeal and an aura of moderation compared to radical demands of the Left, and "inappropriate" conservative elements of liberalism,[10] presents a rolemodel equally strived to, each for their own reason, by political elites and citizens.

Ideals of liberalism and democracy

The definition of "democratic ideals" (or a range of content of the term "democracy") at the normative level represents a particular problem. On the other hand, it appears that there are no cardinal and fundamental disagreements about determining the meaning of the "ideal" of liberalism, and that, at least, there is a general, but in theoretical sense functional consensus on this issue.[11]

8 That these reforms were still partial, although effective for countries in question is shown by the latest world economic crisis. Reforms of the eighties only temporarily halted the trend of increase in government expenditures and borrowing practices, a trend that continued when the first results of the same reforms brought economic benefits to the leading Western countries. For the causes of the crisis that are seen in an excessive state intervention and regulation motivated by economic populism of the leading world power, see the article "Capitalism and the Crisis" by Miroslav Prokopijevic (Prokopijević 2008).

9 The democrate Bobbio agrees with this and concludes: "What I am concerned to do here is to highlight the fact that though democracy has, for the last century at least, been considered the natural progression from liberalism, the two ideologies prove to be no longer compatible at all once democracy has been taken to its logical extremes as a mass democracy, or rather as a democracy of mass parties, so as to produce the Welfare State." (Bobbio 1987: 114).

10 Without engaging in the debate here on the relation between liberalism and conservatism, it should just be noted that "the conservative" element of liberalism can only mean that, based on liberal principles, the possibility that the form of government in its character was conservative (monarchical type of government, for example) cannot a priori be excluded, which certainly does not follow from democratic principles.

11 In this paper the word "liberalism" in fact implies the entire intellectual tradition of "classical liberalism", and the word "liberalism", at least here, in no way is to be confused

In contrast to the democratic ideal, the historical operationalisation of which contributed to the complexity and the difficulties in understanding its basic assumptions, the historical context of the development of liberal ideas and their implementation since the "Glorious Revolution" (1688), as well as its theoretical interpretation since the works of John Locke, until today, has pointed to a certain semantic set that has been largely accepted by the very colorful interpretations within liberalism itself. This primarily refers to several main units of meaning that occur when using the word "liberalism," such as the idea of individual rights, the rule of legitimate law, free market and minimal government. What makes liberals differ from one another is only a question of the scope of the state (as a minimal state), or, expressed in James Buchanan's terms, understanding of the function of the "protective state" (Buchanan 2000: 88) as well as challenging the idea of the state in general (anarcho-liberalism). As opposed to this idea, the idea of the "productive state" (Buchanan 2000: 88) is generally rejected by almost all relevant theorists of liberalism.[12]

On the other hand, most liberal theorists understand democracy as a method or a procedure for exercising power (a form of government). Hayek argued that democracy is merely a means but not an end (Hayek 1960: 104), Mises sympathetically accepted democratic method as "a method for the peaceful adjustment of government to the will of the majority" (Mises 1966: 150) but also with a certain degree of caution.[13] Even the radical liberal Murray Rothbard, in Hoppe's opinion, "had a soft spot for democracy" (Hoppe 2001: XXIII). When democracy is understood only in the procedural sense, from the perspective of these theorists, it can have positive effects and may be acceptable, at least in

with the meaning of domesticated today, that includes semantic set built after the model of the political theory of John Rawls, which is contrary to what "liberalism" traditionally means.

12 It is therefore clear that in this category it is difficult to classify authors like John Stuart Mill, who openly supported the idea of "a productive state", both in his famous essay On Liberty (Mill 2007) and elsewhere.

13 The following Mises's words confirm it: "Always and everywhere Liberalism demands democracy at once, for it believes that the function which it has to fulfil in society permits of no postponement. Without democracy the peaceful development of the state is impossible. The demand for democracy is not the result of a policy of compromise or of a pandering to relativism in questions of world-philosophy, for Liberalism asserts the absolute validity of its doctrine. Rather, it is the consequence of the Liberal belief that power depends upon a mastery over mind alone and that to gain such a mastery only spiritual weapons are effective. Even where for an indefinite time to come it may expect to reap only disadvantages from democracy, Liberalism still advocates democracy. Liberalism believes that it cannot maintain itself against the will of the majority;" (Mises 1951: 83).

its limited, partial form. Namely – through the idea of minimal government and clearly demarcated decision-making public sector.[14]

Thus, it is necessary to see how the ideals of liberalism and democracy are embodied. This is not an easy task and the matter is seemingly facilitated by the existence of a general consensus among theorists, based on which it follows that these two are completely different things. Even many modern advocates of democracy – largely approaching the basic standpoint of socialism, agree that for its functioning at least one set of political legacies of liberalism in the form of the core of basic civil rights is necessary. Some researchers of the concept and practice of democracy, such as Frank Cunningham for example, believe that democracy should be understood as "liberal democracy" which, depending on the circumstances and preferences can accept either socialism or capitalism as "alternative economic systems" (Cunningham 2005: 46).[15] All this indicates that supporters of democracy (and democratic socialism) imply that generally, these two terms are different and cannot be identified. As we have seen, this view is also shared by liberal theorists.

Reconciling the irreconcilable

However, Viktor Vanberg, a follower of ordoliberalism, tried to challenge this almost idyllic picture of the scientific consensus, presenting the thesis that liberalism and democracy are not only compatible but also "complementary" terms (Vanberg 2008: 139). Here I will expose in more detail the arguments he uses to prove this statement, and thus also answer the general question of relations and possible "complementarity" of the two notions.

Namely, as an ordoliberal, Vanberg points to a segment of the liberal tradition, and those liberal authors who belong to it, in order to confirm his thesis on the "complementarity" further, especially the works

14 Favorable attitude of prominent liberal theorists regarding democracy can be explained with appealing connotations (of equal participation in the public sphere of politics, gender equality, "civilization" achievements of "equality", progress, even the pathos of progress of the Enlightenment, etc.), the popularity that democracy has widely gained, especially in the twentieth century, and also with "a strategic response to an accomplished fact," as Paul Gottfried noted (Gottfried 1991: 4). Namely, as a result of actual dominance and victory of democracy in XX century.

15 It seems, generally, that all those who like to declare themselves as "liberal democrats" (such as Ronald Dworkin and Robert Dahl) adopt only a set of political rights and freedoms, as one component of liberalism, while rejecting the idea of a "free market" with which the original liberalism is inextricably linked. For further details see Bodrožić (2005) and Boljević (2005).

of Friedrich von Hayek and prominent representatives of the Virginia school, Gordon Tullock and James Buchanan (especially their views expressed in the classical representative of public choice philosophy, The Calculus of Consent). Pointing to their favorable attitude towards democracy, by which it appears that democracy is a necessary (but certainly not sufficient) condition that guarantees preservation of individual freedoms, Vanberg tries to substantiate his thesis by pointing out not only the character of the relationship that is a consequence of actual cohabitation of the two "irreconcilable things" (on which, it seems, Hayek based his understanding of democracy (Hayek 1998: III, 2), but, by going further, refer to the insight by which their basis is one and the same. He says, "that both ideals are founded ultimately on the same normative premise, the principle of individual sovereignty" (Vanberg 2008: 140).

In order to establish the idea of the identity of the root of the two phenomena with different manifestations of the event, Vanberg indicates the necessity of not treating the issue of the relationship of liberalism and democracy as it is usually done in the classical liberal discussions, namely, by pointing out the importance of private autonomy based on the institution of the rule of law, but that it is important to make the transition from, how it might be said the "objective level" – the level of institutions and their functioning, to the "meta level" of the discussion – the level of considering basic rules of the game, the constitutional plan. With this move Vanberg approached contemporary contractarian theorists such as authors of the Virginia school, and the ideologist of "modern" liberalism,[16] John Rawls.

The methodological maneuver of the change of the consideration level allows Vanberg to, together with these theorists, start from the "individual sovereignty" as a basic methodological unit, so that he could, with the help of a few assumptions, especially the assumption of "voluntary agreement" contextualise the relationship of liberalism and democracy at the most abstract level. In doing so, the implementation and possible factual operationalisation on the basis of the assumed criteria are less important to him than the original hypothetical situation itself (status quo) and the assumptions that define it. Exactly these assumptions – individual sovereignty plus voluntary co-operation – refer not only to the classical interpretation of methodological primacy of the individual in social contract theories (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, etc.), but also inclusion of an additional element. This additional element represents the "democratic" upgrade of the classical liberal contracta-

16 A form of socialism, actually.

riansim. Namely, through the idea of "voluntary agreement", Vanberg points to the same normative roots of liberalism and democracy. For if both liberalism and democracy are based on individual sovereignity, it is clear that the legitimacy of any agreement at the constitutive level (meta level) will rely on the principle of voluntary agreement of equal participants in the constituent game. This means that, firstly, the democratic ideal assumes individual sovereignty, secondly, that any legitimacy is founded on voluntary co-operation. The same can be said of liberalism; it also proceeds from the absolutism of the individual and the inviolability of the principle of voluntary co-operation as the foundation of any legitimacy. The point of difference between the two is not, according to Vanberg, their normative level, but the segment of different focus, as well as the segment of institutional development and implementation of ideals. Liberalism focuses on the preservation of private autonomy through the institutional arrangement of the legal order and the "specific systems of private law" (Vanberg, 2008: 152), while democracy focuses on the inviolable sovereignty of the citizen that only a posteriori enables engineering of political institutions of democracy.[17] Vanberg names this interpretation of liberalism constitutional liberalism, distinguishing it from the "free market" or "private law liberalism" (Vanberg 2008: 143) and by referring to Buchanan, notes that such liberalism is "naturally 'democratic' (Vanberg 2008: 143).

Undoubtedly this latest attempt at "the reconciliation of the irreconcilable" is very attractive and ambitious. However, several important objections at the general level question the whole Vanberg's strategy of "reconciliation", but also point out important assumptions in thinking about the relationship between liberalism and democracy, which is crucial for this work.

At first it appears that Vanberg excludes some important authors and trends of the social contract theory without any explanation. Since his treatment of the relationship problem between liberalism and democracy is moving primarily at the constitutional level, it is logical to expect that he, at least in some sense presents his view of the theories (or trends within such constitutional deliberation) with whom he disagrees or that are irrelevant to the thesis represented. Instead, we get

17 "Majoriy rule and other institutions of democracy" (Vanberg 2008: 152). Thus, i.e., for Vanberg the question of majority rule (decision-making of the majority) and the issue of unanimity rule (absolute democratic consensus), are issues of indirect interest only, if keeping in mind the constitutive level of consideration. It follows that for him the procedural definition of democracy where it was a form of government (as is often the case when determining the meaning of democracy) is not relevant prima facie, but an abstract, constitutive plane is essential where the real meaning of the word "democracy" can be determined.

from him only the referral that the "liberals who focus on the issue of 'how much government' tend to pay little attention to the issue of how government should be organized" (Vanberg 2008: 141) as well as the in-principle rejection of anarcho-liberalism by reference to authorities Mises and Friedman. Based on this theoretical ostracism it can be concluded that most liberal theorists are not interested neither in the institutional issues (which can be partially accepted), nor the constitutional level of consideration (which can not be accepted at all). Vanberg does not even take into consideration the approach to the theory of social contract a la Locke, even in principle, and mentioning Robert Nozick and his capital contribution to contemporary contractarianism is out of the question. It is also indicative that his work is primarily engaged in "reading of F. A. Hayek and J. M. Buchanan," while the paper shows that Vanberg actually mostly read Rawls, and even Habermas! (Vanberg 2008: 147, 153). In doing so, when considering Hayek's attitude towards democracy he almost does not take into consideration the basic starting point and the guiding principle of Hayek's political philosophy at all, namely his evolutionism and the idea of spontaneous order (catallaxy) that could initially respond to the question of the relationship between liberalism and democracy in his philosophy, but instead calls to those of Hayek statements pervaded with Hayek's incomplete, confusing and generally speaking theoretically unfledged attitude toward democracy, and this position is used in support of his implicit thesis that Hayek was a "democrat".

In order to prove his basic thesis of the normative identity of democracy and liberalism, Vanberg takes only what he needs from each theory, not trying to grasp a broader perspective standing in the background of each of them. For this reason neither his interpretation of Buchanan's point of view seems appropriate to motives and intentions of the author of The Calculus of Consent. For without taking into account these elements the sense in which the authors of the mentioned book used the approach they called "democratic" cannot be adequately understood. Here is what Buchanan says about this: "In that book [The Calculus of Consent, ed. A. N.], Gordon Tullock and I indulged our fancies and deployed our professional talents in deriving a logically consistent basis for a constitutional and democratic political structure, one which seemed to possess many of the features of the polity envisaged by the Founding Fathers. We ofered an understanding of the institutions that have historically emerged in America, an understanding that differs in fundamental respects from that reflected in the conventions of modern political science" (Buchanan 2000: 10). To understand this quote one should bear in mind the context in which it is written, and that was in the time of expansive growth of government

regulation in America, that slowly but surely changed the traditional order designed by the Founding Fathers.[18] In fact, Buchanan's and Tullock's intention was to rethink the assumptions of the social order of the United States, to bring out these assumptions in order to stop the negative social trend. For these authors constitutional reform, therefore, is "as a means of limiting government" (Lee 1987: 334). However, when Buchanan uses the words "democracy", "democratic," he has in mind the existing order and the paradigm of the system as conceived by the Founding Fathers. The fact that at the same time he implies the identity of liberalism and democracy[19] based on the performance of an actual (historical) model does not mean that these are the same things en general (that they share "the same normative premise"). In this case Vanberg also replaces two basic approaches (historical and conceptual, normative) to explain the relationships that we are interested in, from which it may follow that factual or historical cohabitation of liberalism and democracy implies their normative identity!

This "purified" interpretation of Hayek and Buchanan allows Vanberg to also introduce into consideration the theoretical work of John Rawls, whose contractarianism and methodological approach he not only approves of and a priori accepts, but also legitimizes by trying to present Rawls's problematic difference principle (Rawls 1999: 65) as something that necessarily follows from the principle of "justice as fairness", all in order to show that "they are all same at the top", namely Hayek, Buchanan, Rawls, even Habermas.[20] Viewed in this way, different theories of the new contractarianism are free of context and intention of the authors and are presented as "identical." What enables this identity is nothing more than the two above mentioned premises – the premise of individual sovereignty and the premise of voluntary agreement. Vanberg, therefore, refers to his vision of a hypothetical social contract in which the original citizens cooperative (Rawls's term) is, at a meta level, the meeting point and a symbiosis of liberalism and democracy.

Without the need to deny one thing everyone agrees on, and that is that the principle of voluntary agreement is unquestionable for liberal theorists, it should be noted that the case here is the one of substitu-

18 The book *The Calculus of Consent* was published in 1962, so at a time when J. F. Kennedy, perhaps one of the biggest proponents of the idea of the welfare state among American presidents (besides, of course, Jimmy Carter and Barack Obama), was sitting in the Oval Office.

19 "Yet I remain, in basic values, an individualist, a constitutionalist, a contractarian, a democrat – terms that mean essentially the same thing to me." (Buchanan 2000: 11).

20 To what he could be responded in Hegelian fashion that it is not "the top" but "the night in which all cows are black".

tion of theses and conceptual reduction applied by Vanberg in order to strengthen his basic thesis. Namely, the idea of "voluntary agreement" originally precedes political ideologies of any kind, including liberalism and democracy. It primarily refers to a mode of behavior typical of human relationships in general. Therefore, voluntary agreement is something that precedes every ideology and every politics. To identify the principle with the democratic principle in advance is to accept a very reduced and generally problematic anthropology, the roots of which can be found in Aristotle's thesis of man as a political animal (zoon politikon). This is not to say that the principle of "voluntary co-operation" cannot be called democratic, only that it is necessary to take into account the context in which the term is used and in which it gets its special feature. Bearing in mind this context dependence, that places one and the same kind of human relations in different mental registers (the register of politics, the register of psychology, the register of anthropology, etc.), it becomes clear in what sense Vanberg's use of the term (solely as a synonym for democratic relationship) is based on a too narrow use of the term and illegitimate reduction of the whole meaning of a concept to only one of its components. This means that there are actually different types of co-operation that can be characterized as "voluntary co-operation". Liberalism of the Lockean orientation also accepts the idea of voluntary co-operation, but as something that does not necessarily foresee a specific form of social organization. Only when a social community is established it, according to this view, may take the form of a particular political system (be it "democratic," "monarchical," "aristocratic", etc.). So when liberal theorists speak of "voluntary co-operation" it does not automatically imply democratic co-operation.

Further, even if it were accepted that liberalism and democracy are based on nominally the same methodological grounds (in this case individual sovereignity), that does not automatically mean that both start from the same "normative premise." No one, of course, will deny that methodological individualism is the basic methodological mechanism of classical liberal theory, or that absolutism of the individual is something which came to modern political theory precisely thanks to this school of thought (Novaković 2008: 131). What we cannot agree with is an identification of a method with a normative dimension (value system) of a theory. This can be explained by the following example from classical political theory. Although both Hobbes and Locke proceed from the same normative premise, absolutism of the individual, their political theories lead to completely different conclusions. Hobbes's state becomes in the end the horrible "Leviathan," a sovereign "keep-

er" and "maintainer" of citizens' security, while Locke sees the state as something largely limited by individual rights (the right to "life, liberty and property") that does not foresee a specific political system (monarchy, oligarchy, democracy). Hobbes ends up in the authoritarianism of the raison d'état, and Locke in defense of individual freedom. This shows that the primacy of the methodological in relation to the values plane is not an adequate strategy for finding similarities (or differences) at the normative level. Although it is true that any liberalism implies methodological individualism, any theory that uses methodological individualism does not imply liberalism and does not necessarily end there.

All these wrong upturns (replacement of the methodological with the normative plane) and placement of very different theories (purified social contract theories) at the same level have their origin in Vanberg's erroneous theoretical positioning of liberalism and democracy. To explain this argument I would like to refer to Vanberg's distinction between "three levels" at which liberalism and democracy can be compared. Here is Vanberg's table:

	Underlying Normative Premise	Principal Focus I	nstitutional Embodiment
Democracy	Individual Sovereignty	Citizen Sovereignty	Majority Rule and Other Institutions of Democracy
Liberalism	Individual Sovereignty	Private Autonomy [Consumer Sovereignty]	Specific Systems of Private Law [of Market Institutions]

(Vanberg 2008: 152)

As already stated, and as can be seen from this table , Vanberg identifies liberalism and democracy in terms of their normative premises, but also distinguishes them in terms of principal focus, i.e. direction from which they start. This table would be acceptable if one of its deficiencies, a product of the crucial misunderstanding of general positions of liberalism and democracy were corrected. Although liberalism as a doctrine is concerned with politics, the political dimension, however, is neither its origin nor its ultimate goal. Moreover, liberalism as an idea arises from the necessity of restricting the segment of politics as such, while democracy as an idea occurs primarily in the segment of politics and for the political segment, namely, as an ideal of general political participation. If certain changes were made to Vanberg's table by replacing the normative premise of "individual sovereignity" with

"citizen sovereignity" in the field of democracy, things would be much clearer and more consistent, according to the author of this paper. Here is how Vanberg's modified table may look:

	Methodological Starting Point	Underlying Normative Premise	Principal Focus	Institutional Embodiment
Democracy	Individual	Citizen Sovereignty	General Participation	Majority Rule and Other Institutions of Democracy
Liberalism	Individual	Individual Sovereignty	Private Autonomy [Consumer Sovereignty]	Specific Systems of Private Law [of Market Institutions]

From this table it is clear that democracy is concerned primarily with political participation – the exercise and control of power, either through direct or indirect participation. Therefore, its primary focus is general participation. The ideal of democracy would be for every citizen, every individual in society to be involved in the control and exercise of power. Perceived this way, the idea of democracy is close to the idea of "total citizen" (Dahrendorf), a being completely involved in politics – zoon politikon. On the other hand, the idea of total citizen is completely alien to liberalism. Liberalism, as a theory, is based on the individual as an individual, a being not predetermined as a political being. According to liberal theorists this individual is in fact a very specific, concrete, individual – it is a creature of human everyday existence that exactly because of it concreteness cannot be entirely subsumed under group categories of social theory, nor respond to the utopian hopes of political theories that claim exclusive rights to the knowledge of the fundamental property of this concreteness. Such an individual is the starting point of liberal theory while the reflection on the functional framework of its protection – from coercion of power or its kin – is a basic theoretical motivation of liberalism. Vanberg correctly observes that liberalism focuses on preserving the integrity of private autonomy of individuals, or, as Locke would say, the right to "life, liberty and estate" (Locke 2008: 323). Hence, according to this modified table it follows that the integration of normative premises of liberalism and democracy would constitute a logical error. Such a procedure would produce a reduction of normative scope of liberalism, because a certain type of anthropology (liberal anthropology) would be replaced by other anthropology – political (democratic) anthropology. From the liberal individual, whatever it be, only a political individual – a "citizen" would remain, and it would be a price of Vanberg's attempt at reconciliation.

Also, it is evident that in this is second table there is another, added column. Specifically, the column that says "methodological starting point." Such intervention was necessary in order to reflect that liberal and democratic theory may use the same methodology (or the same methodical units), but that their normative starting points are different. In that sense, this table clearly shows that Vanberg made a double error by, firstly, identifying normative starting points of the two theories, and secondly, by mixing the normative and the methodological plane.[21]

Of course, Vanberg's table, as well as its modified version, is neither the first nor the last thing said on the relationship between liberalism and democracy. The primary aspect of this work was the critique of Vanberg's position using the same conceptual and theoretical instruments and tools he uses. For example, we could conclude, together with Bobbio (and with a good ground) that the ideal of democracy is nothing more than the fact "that all are in a position to make decisions about everything" (Bobbio 1987: 37), and to derive other conclusions from there. In this case it would become clear how the democratic ideal itself is problematic, logically impossible, in fact. That is, its operationalization is difficult, unless additional restrictions (indirect rather than direct democracy) and additional requirements (separation of powers, private autonomy, etc.) are imposed. Logically, as a position, it is meaningless, because, if "all are in a position to make decisions about everything ", it would mean "that no one makes decisions about anything." Vanberg's elegant treatment of ideals of democracy and its normative premise avoids these consequences: examining things at a completely abstract level (meta level) something from the specific level is picked up ("citizen sovereignty" as a historical legacy of liberal democratic societies), and neglects the true ideal of democracy embodied in the claim "that all are in a position to make decisions about everything."

However, this Vanberg's attempt at "reconciling the irreconcilable" has value precisely in the reference to thinking about the basic intentions that underlie ideas of liberalism and democracy and determine their meaning. A critical review of Vanberg's solution suggests that theories that use identical methodological tools need not produce the same conclusions, much less be the same theory. Contextual occurrence of a certain idea, or a theoretical concept and its basic intention are indispensable assumptions of its understanding. Hence, even ex-

21 Here Vanberg also pays the price for his omission of consideration of Lockean theories of social contract. For any of these theories, like, for example, the theory of Robert Nozick, says that consenting associations of autonomous individuals do not necessarily create the institutional arrangements of the democratic type.

tremely abstract considerations at the constitutional plane proposed by Vanberg cannot have full value unless the full semantic scope of words we use is included. Otherwise such a high theoretical abstraction would result in infertile identifications that can only contribute to conceptual confusion. Ultimately, even if we accept the ideal type leveling at the constitutional level, the results of such an enterprise would be irrelevant to the specific consideration on ideas of liberalism and democracy. Notably, their use value, both in the segment of theory and in the segment of political reality, would be negligible.

From the analysis so far given follows that the relationship of liberalism and democracy, both in its historical realization, and in ideological sphere, can be understood primarily as a cohabitation relationship of two quite different things. Of course, many will insist that it is more to it and that the compatibility mode is true form of this relationship, especially bearing in mind the actual situation of dominance of liberal democracy model. However, this thesis is supported by only one value assessment made through superficial observation of the political system of the contemporary world. The historical dimension of this relationship, as presented in the first part of this paper clearly indicates that its dynamics should rather be understood in terms of relations and the conflicts of struggle for dominance of one over the other. On the other hand, the fact of dominance of a particular liberal democratic model implies neither ideological complementarity (Vanberg's intention) nor ideological compatibility. For the ideals of democracy and liberalism, as ideals, represent ideals of two different worlds, one that is primarily concerned with politics and the other that is trying to save us from politics. Hence, any attempt at their reconciliation is doomed to failure, because the irreconcilable cannot be reconciled.

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