

Back to 1984: The Role of American Universities in Dismantling Liberal Democracy

Liah Greenfeld¹

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Abstract This article discusses the psychological pressures of free society and the resulting tendency towards totalitarianism – an ever-present cultural undercurrent in liberal democracies. Recessive in periods of optimism (created by economic growth, military victories, international prestige), this tendency may become dominant when national self-confidence wanes and especially dangerous when it takes hold of the cultural elites. The position occupied by the university system, these elites' *alma mater* and major employer, is particularly important. A bastion against the totalitarian tendency during significant scientific breakthroughs which increase the authority of science (representing and requiring freedom of thought and expression as a necessary condition of intellectual creativity), it becomes its hothouse with the development of bureaucracy, when emphasis on creativity is inevitably replaced by the stress on competence. Today, it is argued here, all the conditions favoring totalitarian tendency combine to undermine liberal democratic society from within, with freedom of expression being the first target of attack.

Keywords Liberal democracy · Modernity · Nationalism · Orwell · Social sciences · Totalitarianism · Universities

As it always happens, the experience of totalitarianism preceded the term. This experience is rather recent. It was unknown before the emergence of nationalism in the 16th century, and before modernity, in general, and democracy, in particular, which appeared together and as a result of

nationalism (all three also for a long time unnamed). The original, English, nationalism, thus the original form of modernity, was individualistic; the original modern democracy, however imperfect, was also individualistic – i.e., it was *liberal* democracy. Totalitarianism, at its root, is a psychological reaction to the individualistic nationalism, modernity, and democracy. It is the radical and, in its psychological nature, “reactionary” form of modern collectivism. Modern collectivism can also be historical: an expression of cultural traditions, rather than a psychological reaction. Collectivist traditions may reinforce totalitarian reaction and likely contribute to its institutionalization. Some collectivistic nationalisms, and “social” or “popular” democracies which they commonly foster, are clearly grounded in both.

However, even institutionalization of totalitarianism is possible in the absence of collectivistic traditions, while structurally uncrystallized totalitarianism is an important social current within every individualistic society and liberal democracy. In its essence, the totalitarian reaction is a reaction, within the conditions of a secular egalitarian society, against the idea of the individual as an autonomous actor. This implies the denial of the *ideal* of liberty (as unnatural and anti-social): the rejection of individual freedom and insistence on the subjugation of the individual to the collective as a matter of principle not only in overt behavior but also and especially in thought and feeling.

The term “totalitarianism” reflects this attitude, which was originally articulated as the desire for the absolute identity of *individuality* and *totality* in the work of German Romantics and idealist philosophers (Fichte and Schelling among others) who belonged to their circle, and of Hegel and his many followers. The inventor of the term, Giovanni Amendola, was a philosopher himself and had profound familiarity with this body of literature. German Romanticism was far more than a school of thought: it was a form of consciousness, an existential orientation, a vision of reality which could hardly be

✉ Liah Greenfeld
lvq@bu.edu

¹ Boston University, 745 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215, USA

described as Marx would have it, namely, a conscious awareness of what is. Provoked by the experiences of its creators, the Romantic vision helped them to cope with these experiences, transforming reality in the process. In the late 18th century Romantic mentality with the totalitarian aspiration at its core was contained within a narrow intellectual circle, but Romanticism happened to be the mold of German nationalism, and when, in the early decades of the 19th century, this emerged, totalitarianism became a political force. It was Italian nationalism as imagined by Giovanni Gentile (and Mussolini) that was responsible for its name-recognition. Amendola, who coined the term, was a critic of Mussolini and wanted to stress the anti-liberal implications of the Fascist agenda, but the neologism was eagerly embraced by Fascist ideologues. They used it to characterize both their spirit and the ideal Fascist state, and proudly admitted that their aspiration was for “total representation of the nation and total guidance of national goals.”

Then, about three decades after the invention of the moniker in 1923, totalitarianism became an object of academic discussion, for social scientists and political theorists showed no interest in the phenomenon until the Cold War. Remarkably, when this at last happened, they took Mussolini at his word, accepting his aspiration for *fait accompli* and treating totalitarianism as a description of an actual political community. (It should be noted that they were not solely responsible for this mistake: they followed the lead of Winston Churchill, who used “totalitarianism” in his 1946 “Iron Curtain” speech to describe the Soviet regime, though in his case this was done with a clearly ideological purpose in mind.) Among social scientists, political theorists, and those whom they advised thereafter totalitarianism was commonly associated with the intrusive, centralized state, controlling every aspect of its citizens’ lives, its paradigmatic examples in history being the Nazi regime in Germany (very often referred to as “fascism”) and the Soviet one in Russia. Naturally, this discussion focused on the means by which the centralized state achieved such total control, emphasizing instruments of state terror that distinguished the “totalitarian” political apparatus most sharply from the liberal democratic one, concentration and death camps in Nazi Germany and labor camps in the Soviet Union. It was assumed that total control (i.e., of action and thought in all spheres of life) of the entire population was the intention behind these camps, and that they were indeed successful in achieving this goal, assuring not simply compliance but whole-hearted, willing participation of the masses of the people in the totalitarian project. By the time expert theories of totalitarianism were developed, Nazi Germany was defeated and the Soviet Union entering the period of Khrushchev’s “thaw,” which put an end to the terror of Stalin’s time, and swiftly moving into Brezhnev’s “stagnation.” The evidence coming from both Germany and the Soviet Union strongly suggested that the vast majority of both

populations, unaffected by the camps, was not terrorized by their existence but believed that they existed for the greater good, cooperated with the regime only when this was in one’s personal interest, found numerous ways of going around its dictates when it was not, and, in general, was politically unengaged – namely, that the paradigmatic totalitarian states, however, centralized and terrorist, were not totalitarian (or at least extremely unsuccessful in their totalitarian aspiration). This led to a widespread confusion, inspiring Daniel Bell to quip that “totalitarianism” is a concept in search of reality.¹ Still, Wikipedia opens its entry on totalitarianism with a definition: “Totalitarianism is a political system in which the state holds total control over the society and seeks to control all aspects of public and private life wherever possible,” and Britannica states: “Totalitarianism is a form of government that theoretically permits no individual freedom and that seeks to subordinate all aspects of the individual’s life to the authority of the government. ...By the beginning of WWII, “totalitarian” had become synonymous with absolute and oppressive single-party government.”

It may appear that the first fictional description of the totalitarian experience – its first model in literature, Zamyatin’s novel *We*, which comes from the Soviet Union – lends credence to this notion of totalitarianism as a centralized, all-controlling state like the Soviet one. Russian literature since 1850s, post-Romanticism, goes under the name of *Critical Realism* (something not without relevance, perhaps, for those who subscribe to Critical Realism in sociological theory, emerging as I write as the latest fashion in that field) and it is assumed that Zamyatin’s novel, obviously critical of its protagonist society, is also realist, i.e., that it describes the Bolshevik state of its time. It does not, because in 1921, when it was written, there was no such state. Russia was in the throes of a civil war, its disordered condition least of all imaginable in terms of the minute regimentation of a population under the total – and uniform – control of the state. Neither do the other generally recognized and widely read literary models of totalitarianism (Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* and *1984*). These were constructed by Englishmen who had no direct knowledge of any “totalitarian regime.” Were Huxley and Orwell (*1984* is indeed often interpreted as a depiction of the Soviet Union, a more “realistic” sequel to *Animal Farm*) to such an extent preoccupied with experiences of far-away lands as to devote to them their supreme creative efforts? And, if so, why then Huxley placed his characters in London and Orwell’s humans, at least, were indoctrinated by Ingsoc and not a worldview more suggestive of a Germanic, Slavic, or Italianate derivation?

The answer is these three great writers wrote about the reality they knew intimately and not about political regimes

¹ Quoted in Peter Baehr, p. 2345 in “Totalitarianism,” *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, pp. 2342–2348.

that they would never know. Totalitarian societies all three depicted were imaginary – there are no such societies anywhere, but what they imagined in them was the fruition of actual totalitarian tendencies which they confronted in their actual societies, England perhaps even more than (pre-1920) Russia. (While Huxley and Orwell had no experience of Russia, Zamiatin lived in England: he supplemented his Petersburg engineering education at British shipyards.) For while there can never be a truly totalitarian state, there are truly totalitarian aspirations: the examples of German Romantics and Mussolini are sufficient evidence for this.

The totalitarian aspiration is the aspiration, as was noted, for the absolute identity of individuality and totality, the dissolution of the individual in the significant group, the substitution of the group identity for individual identity, the actual identification of the personal and political, of all individual ideas and interests with the ideas and interests of the group. Its logical implication is levelling of all individual differences, making individuals uniform, or *absolute* (unconditional) equality. Individuality is, in fact, suppressed, individual freedom – which is, above all, the freedom to differ – is denied. It is this absolute submersion of the individual in the group, the abolition of freedom and elevation of equality above all values that *We*, *Brave New World*, and *1984* stress. At the same time, all three focus exclusively on a particular stratum – the intelligentsia, the cultural elite which is a part, albeit the second-tier, of the ruling class – within their dystopian societies. *We* are separated from the masses of the people by a wall, products of Beta embryos would not be by any means confused with the inferior Gammas and Deltas, not to mention the Savages, and members of the Outer Party regard Proles as wild animals. Products of inferior embryos in *Brave New World* lead the stoned but carefree lives of the permanently intoxicated, and in all three novels, the populations outside the governing establishment – those beyond the wall, the Savages, and the Proles – are left in their natural state of freedom: their personal and inner lives are not controlled, they go about them in ways they choose, their indoctrination is haphazard at best (Proles are kept entertained by trashy literature to keep them out of mischief, but Savages and those beyond the wall can actually get access to Shakespeare and Pushkin); they all can be spontaneous, like what they like and dislike what they dislike, choose their sexual partners, have children, sing – what Zamiatin, Huxley, and Orwell describe has little in common with the concept of totalitarianism constructed by academics.

Of course. Creative imagination does not conjure worlds out of nothing, it makes compete realities which present themselves partially, spelling out what is only hinted at and developing tendencies to their logical conclusions. It is remarkable that the imagination of three important writers with varied experience, in three successive decades, a Bolshevik naval engineer in the early 1920s, immediately after the 1917

Revolution, an Oxford scholar and a scion of a prominent scientific family in the 1930s, and an ideologically skeptical life-long fighter for social justice in Burma and Spain, among other places, in the 1940s, was captured by the tendencies in their immediate milieu – the small world of the educated classes to which they belonged, and that they reached close to identical conclusions as to where these tendencies would lead, if allowed free reign. The ideal type of the totalitarian mode of being (not state) they each separately constructed rings frighteningly true to us, their fellow intellectuals, who have experienced these tendencies, and our name is legion. However confused by the later academic discussions of totalitarianism, we know from experience how totalitarianism feels and recognize it in Zamiatin's, Huxley's, and Orwell's depictions. Isn't it curious that, for all three, totalitarianism reaches its limits with extending equal opportunity into the most private area of sex, that is, with the denial of freedom of sexual discrimination: everyone must make oneself sexually available to everyone else and has no right to personal likes or dislikes, to being turned on by some qualities and turned off by others, and that love – the spontaneous reassertion of this personal freedom and the rejection of this equality run amok – implies revolt against totalitarian system as a whole?

Portrayal, however, is not an explanation. Totalitarian aspiration permeates our cultural atmosphere, and the closer we are to cultural centers, in Shilsian terms, the more concentrated it is, but why? Let me try to approach this question empirically – that is, historically and from the point of view of the experiencing individual.

Specifically a reaction to the unfulfilled promises of German Enlightenment, German Romanticism was the original form of general psychological reaction against the characteristic pressures of modernity. This is the reason for the enormous and lasting appeal of Romantic philosophy throughout the modern world. Modernity was brought about by nationalism, appearing first in 16th century England. Enlightenment already reflected the image of reality projected by nationalism. This image is secular (in the sense of being focused on this empirically accessible world to the exclusion of transcendental forces), and – as regards society – based on the principles of fundamental equality of membership in the community and popular sovereignty. The human world is believed to be divided into nations – it is *international*. A nation is a sovereign community of fundamentally equal members, and therefore, is by definition a democracy. Replacing the image of reality in which this world represents only an insignificant part, ruled over by the empirically inaccessible, unfathomable transcendental divine creative intelligence which gives it meaning, nationalism radically changes our existential experience. This world becomes inherently meaningful and each one of us is placed in control of our own destiny. We become our own makers. As each of us is fundamentally equal to all other members of our national communities, national

identity gives us the right to choose our own personal identity and our actual social position in principle becomes the function of what we want from life. Our individual freedom is dramatically increased and grows constantly with additional choices for self-definition. But the burden of responsibility for one's own life is increased proportionately, also growing with additional choices for self-definition. For many of us the environment into which we are born no longer serves as the master blueprint to model our conduct on throughout our lives. We can no longer learn who we, each individually, are from it, as did individuals born into the hierarchical religious societies which the egalitarian secular societies of nationalism replaced. The only thing many of us know about ourselves, individually, is that, being fundamentally equal to everyone else in our society, we have the right to occupy any position we may aspire to. It is up to us to decide what it would be. Of course, we would only aspire to actual equality with, or the position of, those we see as better off than ourselves. There are, therefore, a limited number of desired identities and the competition for them is harsh. Some succeed, and some fail. Failure to realize one's chosen identity makes one question one's identity, its effects may be psychologically devastating. One is likely to doubt one's very equality to the successful members of one's society and develop an inferiority complex. There is a challenge and risk in freedom; it is exhilarating but also frightening. Risk-averse do not like the experience: they want to be considered equal to the best without putting this equality to the test. Totalitarianism is the conclusion of this simple psycho-logical syllogism. It is an ever-present cultural current in modern democracies, though varying in strength in accordance with circumstances.

There will always be people in a nation, who would eagerly give up their individual freedom for the safety-net of equality of result (i.e., absolute, unconditional equality), but the strength of the totalitarian tendency within a society changes in inverse proportion to the likelihood of finding a personally satisfactory place in it, that is, the likelihood of self-satisfaction. It will naturally be less pronounced in periods of economic growth than in those of recession, but also at the times of national self-confidence, peaking international prestige, military victories, than when the nation's sense of purpose is questioned, its standing is diminished, and military capacity is in doubt. When economic downturn coincides with national self-doubt, defeat, and falling prestige, as it is today in the United States, the totalitarian tendency should be expected to be especially powerful. In addition, whatever the circumstances of the nation as a whole, the experience of modernity is different in different social strata: individual freedom may be most valuable for those who have little to lose and much to gain; this explains why immigrants to the United States, whose resources are in every respect inferior to Americans born and brought up in the country, are more appreciative of the opportunities this nation offers (which are fundamentally

opportunities to compete with the better-endowed) than the native-born. But both the sense of freedom and its price are greatest where one has most choices for self-definition, which means in the most prosperous and liberal societies, and in the most prosperous and liberal sectors of any society. The more one has to lose at the start, the riskier making choices becomes. Education also dramatically increases (awareness of) possibilities of choice. Paradoxically, this means that objectively the most comfortable strata of free societies, the strata who have most freedom and experience it most directly, are subjectively the least comfortable with it.

Among other things, this is reflected in the significantly higher rates of functional mental disease (schizophrenia and depressive disorders) with the troubled sense of self as the central symptom in prosperous and generally safe liberal democracies, such as the United States, and within the educated upper-middle classes of these democracies, than in less prosperous, less safe, or less liberal societies, and among *continuously* disadvantaged strata and those with limited education in liberal societies. Continuous economic hardship and physical insecurity limit one's choices as much as legal restrictions, so does limited education and education which imposes limits (for instance, religious education); these factors, which, from some points of view, constitute objective disadvantages, as a result, serve as protective factors in-so-far as subjective psychological wellbeing is concerned. The greater is the equality of economic conditions (and economic mobility) within liberal democracies, and the more people in it get liberal college education, the higher rates of functional mental disease become in them and the more evenly they are distributed.

Mental illness, however, is a radical response to the psychological pressures of modernity, and, even in countries such as the USA, where the rates of functional disorders are very high, this is not the response of the overwhelming majority of those who experience these pressures. The majority of those who are threatened by freedom are affected on the sub-clinical level and are likely to suffer from a generalized psychological discomfort, rather than actual disease. They are by definition maladjusted to the free society and uncomfortable with their position (with who they are) in it. Thus they are naturally hostile to it and those who feel comfortable in it. While they do not become dysfunctional, they are easily drawn to socially disruptive activities – join oppositional, often violent, movements at home, go to fight for revolutionary causes abroad, become lone wolf terrorists. It is this much larger group than the population of mentally ill, that develops the totalitarian aspiration. In this sense, totalitarianism is the characteristic modern malaise, the predominant form the sub-clinical mental discomfort with oneself and one's social environment takes. Moreover, it is important to understand that it is a grassroots current: it is not imposed on the population by a centralized government, it is not a result of ideological brainwashing

(though many of the affected individuals may latch onto an ideology that makes sense of their discomfort), it derives from this personal discomfort itself. Individuals who are afraid of freedom *want* to be dissolved in the collective, they *want* decisions to be made for them, they conform irrespective of the ideology. That is the reason for the easy, seamless transfer of modern fanatic devotions from one radical position to its very opposite: so long as we bleat in unison, it does not matter whether we bleat: “four legs good, two legs bad” or “four legs good, two legs better.”

The desire for limits on freedom, like mental illness, is, again, concentrated among those who have the fewest such limits and the greatest freedom. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that today in the United States the totalitarian tendency is strongest in the universities, both among the students and among the faculty. Both groups represent a privileged sector in the corresponding age populations: 18 to 30 year-olds who cannot afford postponing gainful employment, not to speak of the tremendous outlay of funds, which getting a college or a graduate degree now requires, do not opt for college and graduate school, while faculty come closest to what a liberal democracy has to offer by way of a titled leisure class. The two age groups express their frustrations – their maladjustment in a liberal democracy – differently: the young become activists, the older become ideologues. Through their ideology the faculty reinforce the discomfort of the students and give direction to their totalitarian aspiration. Universities become hothouses of totalitarianism in the United States of America.

This is so, in particular, within the humanities and social sciences. While the sciences are not exempt from this, the freedom they enjoy is always more limited than that of the other two academic divisions. There are internal standards in science against which a scientist cannot transgress, if he or she wishes to remain a scientist, thus scientific education imposes internal limits on one’s individual freedom. In the humanities, and especially in the social sciences, there are no such standards and no such limits. In addition, in the sciences, students demand to acquire a particular expertise, and the professors, who must demonstrate having this expertise, spend most of their time in the classroom transmitting it. In some fields in the humanities (e.g., foreign and ancient languages, esoteric subjects such as archaeology) this also obtains to a certain extent. But in the social sciences, there is very little to no expertise to transmit, the students are unaware of what it is, if it exists, and are uncertain of what they want from their education, and professors, as a result, may use the classroom as a pulpit for preaching their ideology.

The identification of the university with science makes the situation paradoxical. The internal standards of science protect it against the impositions of extra-scientific authorities. To develop, science must be free to hold on to its standards and to disregard all others, if these others contradict its internal requirements. The ideals of individual freedom, particularly

freedom of thought and expression, rose to their place at the apex of the modern scale of values to a great extent thanks to the emergence of science as a central measure of the intelligence, and thus prestige, of a nation. Science – especially pure, fundamental, not applied science – educates for freedom by example: by sticking to its normative standards of conjecture and refutation we call “scientific method” (i.e., logical formulation of hypotheses, so that they may be contradicted and refuted by empirical evidence), whatever the extra-scientific cultural trends or public demands. This is why the freedom to think and say that two times two is four is so cardinally important, as Winston Smith realizes in *1984*. Mussolini, in his aspiration to leave no sphere of life outside the state, to harness every human activity to its political needs, chose the emphatically a-political chess and art as his examples: “We must finish once and for all with the neutrality of chess. We must condemn once and for all the formula ‘chess for the sake of chess’, like the formula ‘art for art’s sake’. We must organize shockbrigades of chess-players, and begin immediate realization of a Five-Year Plan for chess.” Yet, chess would continue to be chess, even if organized in Five-Year Plans, and even art, though affected in the direction of its development, could continue to be creative. Science, in distinction, would cease to be science: subjected to extra-scientific directions, it will lose its creative ability and will no longer progress towards ever greater “content of truth” in its understanding of empirical reality. It will become stagnant, in other words. It is the functionally imperative for its development *neutrality* of science (neutrality not required for the realization of objectives of chess and art, their functioning as such), the functional necessity of its autonomy that bestows on science its most important, exemplary role in liberal democracy. When it accepts an instrumental position, be it in the economy, in warfare, or in medicine, and agrees to become a tool in the hands of a wider society, it can no longer play this great role. Science which gives up on its freedom to develop independently of social control loses its exceptional significance for liberal democracy and becomes just another way people make their living.

Historically, it was against religious authority that science had to be protected and that freedom of thought, in general, was asserted. Eventually, science replaced religion as the supreme intellectual and even moral authority. A core modern institution, it came to be widely regarded as the embodiment of modern values. American research universities, often constructed on the basis of fundamentally religious educational institutions, were founded specifically to create optimal conditions for the development of science. With their formation, *academic freedom* – the right of science to develop unimpeded – became one of these values. The preserve of academic freedom, American research universities were thus built as bastions of freedom of thought and expression, of the individual freedom par excellence and they are still considered as such

around the world. Extra-mural intrusions into the sacrosanct space of the universities were seen as the surest, most egregious, sign of betrayal of the ideal of freedom itself. Attack on academic freedom meant an attack on liberal democracy and commitments of modernity. In the course of the 20th century, such intrusion was feared mostly from the totalitarian state, as happened in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

Research universities were founded to advance the sciences: they offered scientists steady and comfortable employment, allowing them to dedicate themselves full-time to their work, without worrying about where the funding of it would come from, and assuring the training of the next generation of scientists through their graduate departments. In the United States, where the model of research universities was created (to spread eventually around the world), the money was initially provided by the so-called “robber barons” of the post-Civil-War years. This provided the structured environment, the systemic conditions in which science could advance. The universities could not actually advance science: every advance in the understanding of reality was a result of individual creativity, which cannot be taught or even cultivated, but can only be recognized and encouraged. It was their task to assure such recognition and encouragement. To assure this, they had to foster *competence* – the knowledge of what was already known, the familiarity with the state of any particular scientific field, which would enable one to immediately recognize and judge the significance of a breakthrough if it happened. In Kuhnian terms, homes for *normal*, routine science, the universities have been gatekeepers for *revolutionary* science, which often came from the margins of particular disciplines (e.g., Einstein). It is competence, the mastery of the field, not originality, which became the routine basis for promotion, remuneration, etc. Originality, creativity, always extra-ordinary, naturally remained in many respects outside the university order, established to create optimal conditions for it.

The early presidents of the American research universities, either altogether new establishments, such as Johns Hopkins or the University of Chicago, or of colleges that were transformed into research universities, such as Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, were often clergymen, very rarely scientists themselves, and did not have clear views on the nature of science and its standards. Therefore, they saw no problem in accommodating within the universities intellectuals returning from Germany, where, in the traditional German universities, which trained personnel for government bureaucracies and offered courses in the general liberal arts or philosophy, they were educated in the humanities and, admiring the German arrangement, wished to continue as professors in universities at home. Some of these intellectuals also opted for the moniker of “social scientists.” The first *social science* in an American research university was history; the department was established at Johns Hopkins in 1876. Within the next three decades we had the full existing set of social science departments.

Called “sciences,” social sciences laid claim to the validity, reliability, and therefore authority of science. Together with the rest of the denizens of research universities they also acquired the right to academic freedom. But they were sciences in name only: they did not have the internal standards of science which would impose on them an inner logic of development and shield them from extrascientific influences. They did not consistently increase the “truth content” of their interpretations of reality and did not progress. They were institutionally malleable and permeable, and always under the influences of dominant cultural trends, pulled by them in different directions. Unlike in the sciences, academic freedom, as a result, in the social sciences was interpreted not as the right to develop unimpeded by these dominant trends, but as one to pursue, irrespective of whether it conformed to any standards, any interest, including advocacy in the classroom and in one’s publications of precisely those dominant cultural trends, from which the requirement of academic freedom was supposed to protect science. These dominant trends thus from early on emerged as standards in the social sciences, with scholarship and teaching valued in accordance to how well they reflected such extrascientific influences. Depending on the character of the particular discipline, the extrascientific trends they reflected could be fads and fashions around particular names or ideas, currents in political culture, passions aroused by electoral cycles, economic fluctuations, technological innovations, or any combination of these that would determine the general tenor of public discussion during particular periods. These would crystallize into particular disciplinary dogmas. Competence, on which career advancement would depend, in these disciplines came to mean conformity and dogmatism. Research universities, established to protect freedom of thought and creativity, at least in the social sciences became pressure chambers in which these were consistently suppressed.

The bureaucratization of universities greatly contributed to and perpetuated this state of affairs. Bureaucracies are organizations exclusively concerned with instrumentalities. Social mechanisms for the achievement of certain goals and values, they are autonomous – i.e., ruled by a logic independent of these goals and values – and for this reason, fundamentally the same in politics, in education, in health-care, and so on. Their own goal is to have the mechanism operate smoothly – in other words, to assure their own smooth operation. Thus they tend to fill every gap in the functional stream constituting their feedback loop and naturally grow. As they grow, the amount of vested interests in their continued existence as bureaucracies, completely unrelated to the goals and values around which they were originally developed, grows too, and they become increasingly driven by the interest of self-perpetuation, even to the detriment of these goals and values. Unless constantly redirected to these by personal, independent of the bureaucracy, leadership, they are naturally prone to become dissociated from these goals and values. With the increase in the input of

the bureaucracy into the selection of candidates for such leadership positions the probability that the leadership would be independent decreases. This input, in turn, is directly related to the participation of the bureaucracy in fundraising. In universities it necessarily increased when the money of original patrons which for a time allowed them to be financially independent was spent. Our research universities are vast, now old, bureaucracies, increasingly relying on fundraising to sustain themselves. It is not surprising that they are centrally preoccupied with generating revenue and are no longer knowledge-seeking institutions, dedicated to the purpose of creating congenial environment for free generation of ideas.

Even natural sciences are affected by the bureaucratization of universities. Competing against each other for external funds, universities, on the one hand, establish a single hierarchy of prestige, which precludes diversity of scientific training and discourages scientific innovation, and, on the other, making promotion and professional status of researchers directly dependent on outside grants, open doors to the penetration of extrascientific influences, as they allow (in fact, force) research to be shaped by the requirements of governmental and private funding agencies. Even in natural sciences, academic freedom loses its original meaning of freedom of thought and expression. In social sciences, in which free thought and expression have been discouraged for many decades, bureaucratization not only perpetuates the historical problem with the social sciences (their claims to the status and authority of *science*, which are founded solely on their institutionalization as “sciences” within research universities founded essentially to promote the sciences) that, in the absence of standards and scholarly tradition, necessarily leads

to the equation of competence with conformity to the prevailing ideology, but exacerbates it by actively privileging advocacy of popular ideological causes capable to secure external funds. To use a medical metaphor, our social sciences are prey to several debilitating infectious diseases against which they are powerless to protect themselves due to a severe developmental disorder, of which they are also victims.

And so, as our universities increasingly lose the ability to contribute to the maintenance of free society by shielding science from extrascientific demands, the contribution of the rest of the campus to the dismantling of liberal democracy grows. Far from being the bastion of free thinking and open mind, the university emerges as the seedbed of grassroots totalitarianism, a huge, ramified Minutrine, without the help of the centralized ideological state, without the vigilance of the Big Brother. (Though, come to think of it, WE, in the *Brave New World* of 2016, on this side of Oceania, would surely be guided by a Big Sister.)

Liah Greenfeld is University Professor and Professor of Sociology, Political Science, and Anthropology at Boston University, and Distinguished Adjunct Professor at Lingnan University, Hong Kong. She is the author of *Mind, Modernity, Madness: The Impact of Culture on Human Experience* (Harvard University Press, 2013) and other books about modern society and culture, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Harvard University Press, 1992) and *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Harvard University Press, 2001). This article was originally presented at a conference held at Wellesley College in October, 2015, entitled “The Fate of Freedom of Expression in Liberal Democracies” under the auspices of The Freedom Project (www.wellesleyfreedomproject.org).

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