

Agorism

Agorism is an offshoot of the demarchy movement, where democratic or demarchic voting is used to say what we want, while betting markets determine how to get it.

It was developed by researchers at Lalor University in New Canberra. They were concerned with the long history of political mistakes that occur even in democratic states, let alone nations like Imperial France and Manchuria. They reasoned that finding better ways of aggregating information and determining what policies will actually do good would improve governance. In the mid-23rd century the "cybercracy movement" of administration had been tried. The cybercrats used widespread data collection to try to collect all relevant information for computer-supported decisionmaking. It failed to deliver results. The agorists thought that the main problem was the implicit assumption that everything was easily measurable: the happiness of people, the kind of health they had, foreign policy success - all these are hard to quantify. People, especially administrators, had a vested interest in misreporting. Worse, cybercracy assumes that the values underlying society are objective and not just expressions of what people feel.

Agorism attempts to use people to gather relevant information about the state of society, rewarding them for accurate insights. There are still elections and elected officials, but their purpose is mainly to define what is good and just rather than suggest what is to be done. Welfare is calculated according to the definition set by the parliament (which weights together what is valued) by an independent statistics branch of government. Policies are suggested by various think tanks, online forums for citizens and special committees, refined and vetted for practicality, and then publicly announced. The proposals are then subjected to betting markets where people can bet on whether doing or not doing a certain policy will lead to greater or lesser welfare. If the market predictions clearly estimate that a proposed policy will improve welfare, then that proposal automatically becomes law.

The clever trick is to use the markets to aggregate the information the citizens have, and make it profitable to be accurate in predictions about the consequences of different policies. If somebody thinks that raising taxes will decrease welfare, he can make money (and reputation, if the bet was announced in his name) from being proven right. Supporting stupid ideas will lose you money.

While mainly an academic exercise, agorism has been considered as a possibility for running some outposts and orbital habitats. Agorists have also begun to demonstrate the utility of basing decisions on betting markets across the Core. Some sociologists think agorism might be a good form of government for heavily networked smaller Core societies or perhaps Nibelungen. If colonial independence and demarchism spreads agorism might have its chance.

[This is based on Robin Hanson's idea "Futarchy", described at
<http://hanson.gmu.edu/futarchy.html>
<http://hanson.gmu.edu/futarchy.pdf>
]

Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is a reaction to the excesses of nationalism over the past centuries. They criticise the shortsightedness and quarrelsomeness of current nation-states, promoting greater international cooperation and occasionally the eventual coalescence of nations into global governance. Cosmopolitanism is much stronger as a movement in the Core than in the colonies, although many colonists hold cosmopolitan values on their own.

People discussing cosmopolitanism usually distinguish between the "universalists", the "treaty-builders" and the "globalists".

Universalist cosmopolitans mostly strive to improve international relations, make it easier for people to travel and recognize each other as humans with equal value and strengthen international projects like OQC or the World Meteorological Organization. It is a well-meaning movement that few people have anything to say anything negative about. In the Core the most well-known cosmopolitan is the human rights lawyer Clinton Baumgartner, who consistently has worked for better international law and conflict resolution in India and South America.

The treaty-builders have clear political goals: they want to create more and stronger treaties like the ESA, Scandinavian Union, United Arab Republic, Vogelheim or the Confederation of Palestine to integrate nations more firmly with each other, ideally merging them. They cite the past success of such treaties and promote them locally. Many of their ideas were developed from the writings of Ibrahim Al-Ali, who in the late 21st century analysed the possibility of more confederations.

To some extent the reunification of Germany was a treaty-builder triumph that turned into disaster: president T.H. Schumpeter was influenced by many of their ideas, but although the unification worked it also caused colonies to break off and a worsening of international cooperation.

At present one of the more promising programs is to convince Australia and the US to form a closer pact; public support for the "Vega Association Treaty" is slowly growing. Another area where treaty-builders have high hopes is India, where the Mysore alliance seems to be getting somewhere; cosmopolitans are doing their best to get other nations to accept and support this. In France the treaty-builder politicians are trying to strengthen support for ESA rather than seeing it as a tool for the Empire; this has put them in total collision course with imperialists and nationalists who accuse them for running German and Manchurian errands.

The globalists (their enemies call them hegemonists) think that the age of nation states is completely over and world government is the logical solution. At the very least there should be just one government per solar system, but ideally there should just be one universal human government representing all of humanity. Key decisions should be made at the highest level, while local issues can be decided in the federated former states. This fits a global economy with global communications and fast transports much better than the current patchwork of competing nations.

Globalists have never been a major group, but support for them seems to be growing at a surprising rate. The Russian pundit/ideologist Vasily Proskuryakov has been developing a plan for global peace, prosperity and freedom based around setting up a Federation of Humanity. The Federation would help coordinate the currently separate interstellar

organisations like OQC and SAMN, resolving disputes and generally acting as for pre-Twilight UN. According to Proskuryakov, once the Federation had proven itself international treaties would gradually extend it. In order to make nations want to join membership in the Federation would also include various automatic trade treaties, reductions in tariffs and mutual defence obligations. There has been some serious attention to this idea, especially from the Tirane nations and independent colonies.