

## THE END OF POLITICS

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### Abstract

This paper problematizes the ‘end of politics’ thesis as reconstructed in the works of Daniel Bell and Francis Fukuyama. The author reaffirms the political theory of Hannah Arendt and elaborates on the empirical indicators of the technical state, challenges to sovereignty, militarism, and the narrowing of alternatives. The paper critically examines the ‘end of politics’ as the de-legitimation of the content of a particular political model. The end of politics, history, or humanity is not possible in an absolute sense. Instead, we can speak of the end of certain models of politics, episodes in history, or phases in human development. The dynamics of society, change, and development are continuous processes. Every ‘end’ opens the door to new forms, ideas, and practices that shape the future. The theses about the ‘end’ should not serve as predictions, but rather as reflections on current crises and potential directions for development, aimed at avoiding stagnation and regression.

**Key words:** end of politics, technical state, challenges to sovereignty, manipulation, militarism, alternative.

## КРАЈ ПОЛИТИКЕ

### Апстракт

У овом раду се проблематизује „теза о крају политике“ која се реконструише у радовима Даниела Бела и Франсиса Фукујаме. Аутор реafirмише политичку теорију Хане Арендт и образлаже емпиријске показатеље техничке државе, изазове суверености, белицизма и сужавање алтернатива. У раду се критички прегледава „крај политике“ као делегитимација садржаја једног модела политике. Крај политике, историје или човека није могућ у апсолутном смислу. Уместо тога, можемо говорити о крају одређених модела политике, епизода у историји или фаза у људском развоју. Динамика друштва, промена и развој су стални процеси. Сваки „крај“ отвара врата новим формама, идејама и праксама које обликују будућност. Тезе о „крају“ не треба да буду предвиђања, већ рефлексije о

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тренутним кризама и могућим правцима развоја како би избегли стагнацију и регресију.

**Кључне речи:** крај политике, техничка држава, изазови суверенитета, манипулација, белицизам, алтернатива.

### INTRODUCTION

The topic of the ‘end of politics’ has become increasingly relevant in contemporary political science, especially in the context of the social, economic, and cultural changes shaping our world. The concept of the ‘end of politics’ is often associated with ideas expressed by thinkers such as Francis Fukuyama, who argued in his book *The End of History and the Last Man* that liberal democracy has reached its peak as a form of governance. From this perspective, political ideologies such as communism and fascism have failed, while liberal democracy has emerged as the ultimate solution.

In modern societies, particularly in developed democracies, there is a noticeable trend of apoliticisation, where citizens are becoming increasingly disinterested in political processes and institutions. This apathy can lead to the perception that politics is becoming irrelevant or outdated.

Technological advancement, particularly the rise of the internet and social media, has created new forms of political engagement, but it has also led to the fragmentation of public discourse. Information spreads rapidly, often without deep understanding, which can diminish the significance of traditional political debates. While some forms of political action have shifted to the digital realm, questions remain about how effective these new forms of engagement truly are, and to what extent they contribute to the development of politics as a discipline.

Globalisation is reducing the sovereignty of states, as many issues—such as climate change, migration, and terrorism—are transnational and require inter-state cooperation. This situation can foster the perception that traditional politics is no longer capable of addressing key challenges. The rise of non-political actors, such as non-governmental organisations, corporations, and international institutions, is playing an increasingly significant role in shaping policies. This shift can create a sense that politics has become a domain for professionals rather than ordinary citizens.

‘The end of politics’ is premature. Political conflicts, inequalities, and protests are still present, and public interest in issues of justice, human rights, and democracy remains strong. In many countries, new political movements and protests indicate that politics is not over – it is transforming. The emergence of movements like the Yellow Vests in France or Black Lives Matter in the U.S. shows that citizens continue to actively participate in the political process.

*THE THESIS ON THE 'END OF IDEOLOGY'  
OR THE 'END OF HISTORY'*

In his work *The End of Ideology*, Daniel Bell argues that, in contemporary societies, there has been a weakening of traditional ideologies such as liberalism, socialism, and conservatism. Instead, political discourse increasingly focuses on issues of administration, technocracy, and management, leading to the marginalisation of ideological conflicts (Bell, D, 1960). Bell emphasises that the transition from industrial to post-industrial society changes the nature of political conflicts. Rather than conflicts over ideas and values, political debates now centre on efficiency, productivity, and the pragmatic aspects of managing society. He points to the growing importance of experts and technical knowledge in shaping policy, which can lead to a decline in citizen participation and their interest in traditional political ideologies.

Francis Fukuyama argues that the fall of communism and the spread of liberal democracy marked the 'end of history' in the sense that liberal democracy became the highest form of political organisation. He believes that all alternative ideologies, such as authoritarianism and totalitarianism, lost their appeal. Fukuyama emphasises that the great ideologies were defeated, and political conflicts increasingly shifted towards practical aspects of governance rather than fundamental ideological issues. In this perspective, the 'last man' refers to an individual who no longer fights for lofty ideals or goals, but focuses on material well-being and personal satisfaction. Fukuyama suggests that such an orientation could lead to apathy and a loss of political engagement among citizens (Fukuyama, F, 1992).

Diagnoses of the 'end of politics' represent challenges that must be overcome, rather than signals for withdrawal or disengagement from political involvement. These challenges point to changes that require a new approach to and understanding of political phenomena. There is a need for the renewal and reinvention of political ideas, practices, and institutions to address contemporary challenges such as globalisation, digitalisation, ecological crises, and rising inequality. New political participation involves strengthening civic engagement and participation in decision-making. The innovation of ideas includes the development of new concepts and approaches that respond to modern problems.

Politics should rely more on the actual needs and desires of citizens, rather than focusing solely on technocratic or administrative aspects. Politics is dynamic and ever-changing, meaning there is always potential for its development. Through dialogue, critical reflection, and engagement, politics can adapt and find new ways to address the needs of society. The regeneration of politics requires creativity and innovation in thinking about how politics can function in the context of changing cir-

cumstances. This includes exploring new models of governance, such as participatory democracies or forms of digital decision-making.

Although the ‘end of politics’ may seem like a pessimistic perspective, it actually opens the door to new opportunities and challenges. Politics is alive and constantly changing, and its regeneration can lead to the strengthening of democracy and social institutions. Instead of retreating into apathy, we should engage in creating more sustainable and just political solutions.

Daniel Bell and Francis Fukuyama’s theses on the ‘end of ideology’ and the ‘end of politics,’ as described by Dave Haywood as the ‘ideology of the end of ideology,’ are often considered to have more ideological than scientific character. I partially agree with this view, but I would add something more. I interpret Bell’s and Fukuyama’s theses as the end of a specific ideological and political pattern, a thesis calling for a transformative leap in our understanding of politics and ideology in the context of contemporary challenges. Analysing the theses of Daniel Bell and Francis Fukuyama as the ‘end of a particular ideological and political pattern’ opens a significant discussion on the transformation of politics and ideology in the modern world.

**The End of Traditional Ideologies.** In the era of globalisation, many traditional ideologies (such as liberalism, socialism, conservatism) are facing challenges in terms of relevance. Many people feel that the existing ideological frameworks can no longer adequately explain contemporary realities, leading to apathy toward policies that rely on these ideologies. With the development of new social, economic, and technological challenges—such as climate change, digitalisation, and global migration—new ideological patterns are needed to address these issues.

**Transformative Leap.** The concept of a ‘transformative leap’ suggests the necessity of rethinking and redefining politics. It calls for the development of new, creative, and innovative solutions that are based on participatory and inclusive approaches, alongside innovative governance models. This leap involves crafting strategies that integrate diverse disciplines and perspectives to address the complex challenges of contemporary society. Such a transformation could include strengthening the role of citizens in decision-making processes, ensuring that a wide range of voices and interests are heard and considered in the political process.

**Ideological and Scientific Dimension.** As Heywood points out, the theses of Bell and Fukuyama can be understood as ideological, as they rely on optimism regarding liberal democracy as the final form of governance. This optimism may act as an obstacle to critically examining the potential shortcomings and challenges of contemporary democracies. In contrast, a scientific approach could involve analysing empirical data on the functioning of democracy, potential regressions, and alternative mod-

els of governance, as well as reconsidering the fundamental principles underlying liberal democracy.

**Contemporary Challenges.** In light of contemporary challenges such as ecological crises, rising inequality, and populism, there is a need for the creation of new policies that are capable of addressing these issues. This opens up space for new ideologies or hybrid approaches that can build upon or redefine existing ideological frameworks.

**The Thesis on the End of History or Ideology.** The thesis on the end of history or ideology is seen by many as overly simplistic, neglecting the rich and complex history of ideological conflicts. These theses are considered by some to be a result of current historical circumstances, which fail to take into account potential future changes and conflicts. In recent decades, new ideological and political currents have emerged, including populism, nationalism, and ecological movements, which suggest that ideology has not disappeared but rather transformed. Critics point out that old ideological patterns may be reactivated, or new ones may emerge. The critique often focuses on the fact that liberal democracy, as imagined by Fukuyama, has failed to resolve the issue of economic inequality. Rather than the end of ideology, many argue that we are witnessing the emergence of new, alternative ideologies that address these issues, such as anti-capitalist movements and feminist ideologies. Globalisation has not led to the homogenisation of ideological views, but has created new tensions and conflicts, particularly regarding identity, migration, and cultural issues. Instead of the end of ideology, many see the rise of local, national, and ethnic identities.

Many critics, including theorists like Jacques Rancière (Rancière, J, 1995) and Slavoj Žižek (Žižek, S, 1989), question the sustainability of liberal democracy as the final point of political development. They argue that liberalism may suppress other important ideological and political debates related to justice, egalitarianism, and emancipation. Philosophers like Michel Foucault (Foucault, M. 1975) and Jacques Derrida (Derrida, J. 1992) emphasise that ideology is not just a theoretical framework, but also a way in which reality is shaped and understood. From this perspective, the 'end of ideology' can be seen as the rejection of the complexity and ambiguity of political and social phenomena.

Today, the topic of ideology is somewhat marginalised, despite the fact that ideologies persist, albeit in a unique form: it is as if the concept of ideology has somehow transformed in relation to Marx's concept of ideology. In contemporary social and political discourse, the concept of ideology has indeed evolved, often being perceived through different frameworks than it was in Marx's time.

**Broader definition of ideology.** While Marx's concept of ideology was often linked to false consciousnesses that sustain capitalist relations of production, contemporary approaches encompass a wider range

of ideological formations, including those that address not only economic issues but also cultural, identity-related, and ecological aspects.

**Ideology in everyday life.** Today, ideologies are often seen not only as theoretical frameworks but also as orientations that influence everyday decisions and attitudes. This can include issues such as consumption, lifestyle, moral values, and social identity.

**Postmodernism.** Postmodern theorists, such as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, have questioned the idea of a singular, totalising ideology. Instead, they emphasise fragmentation and ambiguity, pointing out that there are numerous competing ideologies that intertwine and conflict within the same social space.

**Identity Politics.** Contemporary ideologies are often shaped around issues of identity—national, ethnic, gender, and sexual. These identity politics have become central in shaping political movements and social discourses, often challenging traditional ideological divides.

**Critique of Traditional Ideologies.** There is a tendency to criticise traditional ideologies, such as liberalism, socialism, and conservatism, as outdated or insufficient to address the challenges of contemporary society. Instead, many call for new forms of political and social organisation that better reflect the complexity of modern issues. The emergence of new movements, such as ecological movements and postcolonial theories, has also contributed to the transformation of ideological discourse. These ideologies often critique dominant economic and political structures, advocating for a transformation in how societies function. Modern technology, including social media and digital platforms, is changing the way ideologies spread and impact society. Information spreads quickly, and political and ideological debates are often conducted in virtual spaces, which can lead to polarisation and fragmentation.

### *THE POLITICAL THEORY OF THE CRISIS OF POLITICS*

Hannah Arendt explores the nature of politics, human activity, and the role of public space in political life, laying out fundamental theses about what politics is, how it manifests in human life, and its essential characteristics (Arendt H, 1993). Arendt emphasises the importance of action and speech in political life. According to her, politics takes place in the public space, where people come together to discuss, exchange ideas, and act (Arendt, H, 1958). This interaction is crucial for the formation of a political community and public opinion. She distinguishes between public and private life, where public life involves acting within the community and taking responsibility for collective decisions, while private life encompasses personal relationships and intimacy. Arendt believes that healthy politics is only possible when public life is actively nurtured.

Arendt warns about the 'neglect' of or 'forgetting' politics, where people withdraw from active political engagement, leading to apathy and the loss of the vitality of political life. This phenomenon may be a consequence of technological progress, mass media, or social changes that reduce interest in politics.

Arendt also addresses the dangers arising from totalitarian regimes, which suppress the public space and close off the possibility for dialogue and action. She points out how such systems repress human freedom and the ability to act. Arendt defines politics as a unique human activity that cannot be reduced solely to economics or administration (Hannah, A, 1993). Her analysis encompasses the complexity of human relations and interactions, emphasising that politics is inherently human and social.

Arendt explores key aspects of human nature and its place in political life. Her analysis of the significance of public space, action, and speech provides deep insight into how politics is shaped and how it can be renewed in contemporary society. She calls for active citizen participation in the political process, emphasising that the neglect of politics is not only an individual responsibility but also a collective challenge for society.

Hannah Arendt often addresses themes of war, violence, and the nature of power, particularly in the context of the Cold War and global politics. Her view that public life is increasingly shaped by pressures and threats, such as those arising from the danger of atomic destruction, can be broken down into several significant issues (Arendt, 1951).

**Politics as a response to threats.** Arendt points out that, in the contemporary world, politics becomes reactive rather than proactive. Instead of political actions being based on freedom and dialogue, they become conditioned by the fear of possible catastrophes, such as nuclear conflicts. In this context, politics transforms into a struggle for survival, rather than a space for the realisation of human rights and freedoms. Arendt argues that these threats shape political decisions and the behaviour of states. Instead of politics being based on principles of justice or ethics, it often relies on pragmatism and survival strategies, which can lead to authoritarian tendencies. Politics is increasingly perceived as a means of protection from threats, rather than as an arena for free discussion and action.

**Loss of Freedom.** In this context, Arendt emphasises that the essential freedom to act is lost. As individuals and nations face threats, their ability to act freely and autonomously diminishes. This situation can lead to apathy and passivity among citizens, as action is perceived as futile in the face of ubiquitous threats.

Media freedom of speech is abused, among other things, by the widespread occurrence of hate speech. "Freedom of speech is protected by the constitutions of most countries worldwide, as well as by major international human rights treaties. However, in today's digitalized and increasingly polarized world, the pressing question is how to legally regu-

late hate speech while simultaneously protecting freedom of expression" (Vučković, Lukić, 2023, p. 206.)

**Responsibility.** Arendt also emphasises the importance of personal responsibility in political action. In a world where the threats of global powers are omnipresent, individuals face moral questions about how to respond (Arendt, J, 1961). She calls for the restoration of the public sphere and active citizen participation to build a politics that strives for freedom and justice, rather than retreating in the face of fear.

**Return to Human Nature.** Arendt believes that politics should return to its roots – human interaction, dialogue, and action. Instead of submitting to the fear of destruction, she emphasises the importance of affirming life and human dignity as the foundation for the restoration of the political community.

Ernst Forsthoff, as a political theorist and lawyer, presented challenging and often provocative analyses about the future of the political state, especially in the context of technological changes and the evolution of social structures (Forsthoff, E. 1971). His predictions about the end of the political state and the rise of the technical state reveal deep and complex relationships between politics, law, and technology.

**The End of the Political State.** Forsthoff believed that traditional models of the political state, which rely on sovereign power and political autonomy, would become unsustainable due to the increasing complexity of social and technological factors. He warned about the dangers of the centralisation of power and the loss of sovereignty in favour of technical and administrative solutions.

**The Emergence of the Technical State.** According to Forsthoff, the technical state is characterised by the dominance of rationalised, efficient, and often insensitive procedures that are subject to management and control through technology and administration. This form of governance reduces the role of political subjects and their ability to act as agents of change.

**The Disappearance of Manoeuvring Space for Political Alternatives.** Forsthoff emphasised that, as the state transforms into a technical structure, the space for political alternatives shrinks. Decision-making becomes increasingly driven by technical criteria, rather than political debates and values. This transformation can lead to the creation of political systems that are indifferent to the needs and desires of citizens.

**Rationalisation of Power.** To Forsthoff's understanding, political power is increasingly rationalised through administrative and technical mechanisms. This can result in the loss of the human dimension of politics, where complex social problems are reduced to measures that are technically correct, but may not be ethically or socially acceptable.

**The role of Law.** Forsthoff also examined how law transforms in this new context, becoming more an instrument of control than a means



for achieving justice. In the technical state, legal norms may become measures that support efficiency, rather than justice or freedom.

Forsthoff's analysis provides a significant critique of modern political structures, highlighting the risks associated with over-reliance on technology and administration in political processes. His predictions remain relevant today, especially in light of the growing technological power, such as artificial intelligence and digital surveillance, which can shape the way politics and power are realised in contemporary society.

Neil Postman, as a media theorist, is known for his critiques of the media's impact on public discourse and democracy, particularly in the context of television and other forms of entertainment communication. His ideas about the 'end of politics' and the transformation of public communication can be summarised in several key concepts (Postman, N. 1985).

**Staging of public communication.** Postman argues that public communication in contemporary societies increasingly revolves around spectacle, favouring entertainment over serious debate. The media, instead of serving as platforms to inform citizens about important issues, are often focused on entertainment and spectacle.

**Entertainment as the dominant factor.** In this context, Postman emphasises that the entertainment component has become dominant in political discourse. Politics is no longer seen as a serious activity requiring reflection and debate, but rather as a series of entertaining events and performances that appeal to the audience.

**The loss of the foundations of democracy.** When public politics becomes exclusively focused on entertainment, Postman warns that democratic politics loses its foundation. The core values of democracy, such as being informed, critical thinking, and active citizen participation, become less important or even invisible in this new media landscape.

**The influence of television and new media.** Postman particularly focuses on the impact of television on political communication. He believes that television, as a medium that favours visual and emotional messages, changes the way politics is presented and perceived. Information becomes fragmented and superficial, while deep analysis and argumentation lose their significance.

**Political apathy and passivity.** Postman's analysis implies that this shift in media communication can lead to political apathy and passivity among citizens. When politics is reduced to entertainment, people are less motivated to engage, ask questions, or seek change.

This phenomenon can have far-reaching consequences for society, including: the erosion of public discourse, political apathy, and consumerism. Due to the dominance of entertainment, important political and economic issues may be marginalised or misrepresented. Viewers may become indifferent to policies that they do not recognise as 'entertaining' or

relevant. Through this process, individuals may develop consumer identities instead of engaged civic identities, which can affect their ability to act as active participants in societal issues.

### *THE CHALLENGES OF SOVEREIGNTY*

One of the indicators of the end of politics is the increasing prominence of the decline of the external sovereignty of states, which has become a significant issue in contemporary political analysis, especially in the context of globalisation, international institutions, and state interdependence (Guéhenno, J, M 1994). Globalisation has led to greater interconnectedness between states, often resulting in the loss of control over their own political and economic decisions. States are forced to adapt to global markets and norms, which can reduce their sovereignty. International organisations, such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), and the World Trade Organization (WTO), often impose certain rules and standards that states must accept. This can lead to a decrease in states' autonomy in making their own policies.

Transnational issues, such as climate change, migration, and terrorism, require international cooperation, leading to the weakening of sovereignty. States often face situations where they must make decisions that align with global standards rather than following their own interests. Economies are often interconnected through complex networks of trade relations, financial markets, and investments. This interdependence can undermine the ability of states to independently make economic decisions, particularly during times of crisis.

Internal factors, such as political pressures, civil protests, or economic challenges, often require governments to respond in ways that may conflict with their national interests. External pressures, such as sanctions or military threats, can also impact a state's ability to act autonomously. The increased mobility of people and ideas can challenge traditional concepts of national identity and sovereignty. Multiculturalism and international cooperation often raise questions about what it means to be a sovereign state in a globalised world.

The end of external sovereignty can trigger various reactions, particularly the rise of nationalism, a return to local and regional identities, and the search for new forms of governance. In response to the loss of sovereignty, some political movements may emphasise national interests and sovereignty, often with negative consequences for international cooperation. In some cases, there may be a strengthening of local and regional identities as a response to globalisation, which can lead to new forms of political organisation. At local levels, there may be experiments with new forms of governance focusing on decentralisation and citizen participation. The impotence of the state in the face of political problems arising

beyond its borders but affecting its internal territory is profound enough that it may be argued that this signifies the end of democracy and even the end of politics.

In today's world, many challenges, such as climate change, international terrorism, economic crises, and migration, transcend borders and require collective responses. However, individual states often lack the capacity to address these issues or implement effective measures, leading to a sense of powerlessness among citizens. Corporations, non-governmental organisations, and international institutions often have more influence on the lives of citizens than the states themselves. When citizens perceive that decisions are made by foreign powers or external interests, it can lead to frustration and a loss of trust in state institutions.

When the state fails to protect the interests of its citizens, and their rights and freedoms depend on external factors, it leads to the erosion of sovereignty. This can result in a loss of trust in institutions and the rule of law, further weakening democracy. As citizens become aware of the state's inability to solve their problems, political participation may decline, election abstention may increase, and general apathy toward politics may spread. This trend can further jeopardise democratic processes.

The medialisation of politics is particularly evident in situations where politics increasingly focuses on spectacle and media presentation rather than on real political discourse, leading to a loss of substance. Political debates often turn into performances, where the appearance of issues matters more than what is actually being discussed. In situations where the state is powerless, authoritarian tendencies may rise. Authorities may use crises to justify limitations on freedoms, which leads to the further weakening of democracy.

The loss of the internal sovereignty of a state can be seen as a significant indicator of a political crisis. When a state is unable to effectively manage its internal affairs, such as security, the judicial system, or public services, it can lead to the erosion of citizens' trust in state institutions. Increased internal conflicts or external pressures can weaken the state's ability to maintain order and law, resulting in a crisis of legitimacy. When a state is powerless to protect its interests or sovereignty, foreign actors, such as international corporations, non-governmental organisations, or foreign governments, may take control or influence internal decisions. In a globalised world, economic dependence can lead to a loss of internal sovereignty. For example, decisions on fiscal policies may be made under the pressure of international institutions or markets.

The loss of sovereignty often leads to increased insecurity, both economic and physical. When a state is unable to provide basic services or security, citizens feel threatened. In situations where crises have occurred, authorities may respond with authoritarian measures to maintain control, which further undermines democratic values. When citizens feel

that their state is unable to protect their interests, political participation may decrease, leading to a loss of interest in politics, voter abstention, and general apathy towards political life. In this context, the foundations of democracy may be eroded, with citizens discouraged from participating in the decision-making process.

Ulrich Beck addresses the concept of 'risk' and emphasises how modern technical and scientific social contexts contribute to the loss of internal sovereignty in several key ways (Beck, Ulrich, 1993). Decision-making within 'sub-political' frameworks has two consequences. The first relates to risks as a political reality. In contemporary society, many decisions that have significant impacts on public life are made outside traditional political institutions. For example, economic decisions, regulations regarding technologies, or health policies are often made by experts, corporations, or international organisations. The second consequence is the dependence on technical experts and scientists, who make decisions related to risks (e.g., ecological, health, economic). This diminishes the legitimacy of classical political power, as decisions are not necessarily the result of public debate or political processes.

In modern technical societies, risks are becoming increasingly complex and difficult to control. Beck emphasises that the rise of risks (e.g. climate change, biotechnology, nuclear energy) is often beyond the control of political authorities, which are not always equipped or prepared to address these challenges. The phenomenon of lost sovereignty leads to a sense of powerlessness, where citizens face uncertainty and insecurity, and their ability to influence decisions that directly affect them becomes limited. Politics becomes subject to external forces, scientific discoveries, or economic interests, rather than the will of the people. This shift undermines traditional forms of political agency, where decisions are no longer driven primarily by public democratic processes, but by global and technical dynamics that lie outside the reach of ordinary citizens.

Niklas Luhmann, as one of the most prominent sociologists and systems theorists, provides a unique insight into the understanding of politics as a subsystem within the broader social context. His understanding of politics includes several key concepts related to the loss of internal sovereignty and the ability of politics to function as a whole (Luhmann, N. 1997).

**The complexity of social systems.** Luhmann argues that society is composed of various subsystems (such as the economy, politics, the judiciary, education, etc.), each with its specific functions and logic. In this framework, politics is no longer the dominant system that determines or directs other systems, but rather becomes one of many interacting systems. Given the complexity of modern society, politics loses its characteristic of wholeness as it faces challenges and influences from other subsystems. This autonomy leads to a situation in which politics is unable to regulate or control phenomena occurring in other areas.

**The loss of wholeness and fragmentation of politics.** In Luhmann's analysis, politics becomes fragmented and unable to encompass all aspects of social life. The decisions made by the political system are often a reaction to situations and challenges arising from other systems, rather than the result of comprehensive political thought. As different systems connect and interact, political decisions become less predictable. This makes it more difficult for political institutions to maintain control and legitimacy, as their authority is frequently questioned due to external factors influencing political processes.

When politics becomes just one of many communication systems, its ability to function as a coherent whole diminishes. This process can lead to disorientation among citizens, who are faced with an overload of information and difficulties in understanding political decisions. As a result, they may lose trust in political institutions that are unable to adequately address their needs and concerns.

### *BELLICISM AND POLITICS*

Militarisation and the rise of bellicism as dimensions of the 'end of politics' point to a deep transformation in the role of politics in contemporary societies. Instead of dialogue, negotiation, and addressing social problems through political mechanisms, militarisation and bellicism establish a different dynamic that may undermine the very essence of politics. Militarisation is a process in which the military, military logic, or militaristic principles take on a central role in the organisation of society, its institutions, and political life. This phenomenon often implies strengthening the authority of the military, and increasing the military budget and the presence of military rhetoric in public discourse. Bellicism is an ideological and social stance that glorifies war, violence, and conflict as legitimate means of achieving political or social goals. Bellicism often goes hand in hand with nationalism, chauvinism, and militarisation.

When militaristic principles dominate, negotiations, compromise, and dialogue weaken. Militarisation brings with it the logic of 'friend-enemy,' which leaves no room for pluralism and political differences. Politics becomes subordinated to security interests, and decision-making becomes increasingly centralised under the guise of urgency and protection. In a militarised society, force becomes the central method for resolving issues. This leads not only to external conflicts but also to internal repression. Bellicism further legitimises this practice by glorifying military power and fostering a militaristic culture within society.

Militarisation often leads to the erosion of democratic procedures as it requires the concentration of power for 'efficiency.' Bellicist discourse can neutralise opposition and criticism by portraying them as threats to national security or unity. Militarisation is frequently employed

to create a sense of constant threat, which justifies increased control over society. Bellicism, with its rhetoric of heroism and sacrifice, further motivates the masses to support such processes, even at the expense of their own freedoms.

The increase in military budgets often comes at the expense of investments in education, healthcare, and social policy. This can contribute to social inequalities and the marginalisation of parts of society. A militarised economy becomes dependent on conflict, reducing politics to crisis management and the perpetuation of war. The growth of military budgets in many countries, including the U.S., China, and Russia, points to global militarisation. This phenomenon is further exacerbated by regional conflicts and the arms race. Wars and military conflicts are often presented as heroic endeavours, while opponents of militarism are marginalised or labelled as traitors.

The consequences for politics are dehumanising. Politics becomes technocratic and procedural, with key decisions being left to military and security structures. The dominance of militarisation and bellicism can stifle ideological debates, as security issues take absolute priority. Society becomes increasingly focused on conflict and confrontation, neglecting humanistic and cooperative values.

#### *ALTERNATIVES AND POLITICS*

The loss of free, public, rational, and competitive communication among actors is indeed a fundamental problem of contemporary politics and ideology, and can be seen as a distinct aspect of the 'end of politics.' This phenomenon has profound consequences for democratic processes, political pluralism, and the very nature of political action.

Public opinion and discussions, which should be open spaces for the exchange of ideas, become controlled and restricted. The media are often monopolised by political and economic elites, suppressing alternative voices and critical perspectives. Citizens lose the opportunity to be informed and active participants in the political process. Political communication increasingly relies on emotions, populism, and demagoguery, while rational arguments are marginalised. Instead of competitive competition of ideas, slogans, manipulation, and polarisation dominate. The political space becomes an arena for spectacle rather than a serious exchange of opinions. Governments and powerful interest groups often shape narratives that serve their own interests, suppressing the autonomy and freedom of other actors. This reduces pluralism and undermines the competitive dynamics in politics. The political arena becomes a controlled field where it is predetermined who and what can be the subject of debate.

Contemporary technological development, rather than facilitating free communication, often leads to the creation of digital monopolies and the algorithmic suppression of critical content. Filters and 'echo chambers' further polarise society, preventing the free exchange of ideas. The digital public sphere loses its potential to be a space for democratic discourse. Instead of competing in ideas and solutions, political actors often resort to eliminating opponents through behind-the-scenes manoeuvres, disinformation, and repressive measures. Democratic principles of competition and free choice weaken, and the political space becomes homogenised.

Instead of the free competition of arguments, powerful groups impose their interests through control of the media and institutions, leading to a diminishment of power over ideas. The culture of spectacle manifests in such a way that politics turns into a show, where the audience's attention is captured by sensationalism rather than rational debate. The phenomenon of technological control is expressed through algorithms on social media and mass surveillance, which enable the targeted suppression of dissenting voices. Citizens are becoming increasingly less able to distinguish facts from manipulations, which limits their role in free public communication.

The consequences for politics and society are far-reaching, reflected in: the de-legitimisation of democracy, as without free public and rational communication, political processes lose credibility and legitimacy, and people stop trusting institutions and political leaders; and the rise of populism and extremism, which diminishes the space for rational discussion, with extreme views and populist narratives becoming dominant. Confronted with manipulation and a lack of authentic debate, citizens become apathetic and withdraw from political life.

The elimination of alternatives in politics represents a key aspect of the crisis in modern political systems. This phenomenon directly affects pluralism, democratic dynamics, and society's ability to adapt to challenges through innovative solutions. When alternatives are eliminated, the political space becomes homogenised, and dominant groups or ideologies become unchallenged.

The monopolisation of power refers to the activities of political elites and dominant parties that use institutional mechanisms to prevent the emergence or development of competing ideas and actors. This is evident in processes such as manipulation of electoral legislation, media control, and restricting access to resources. On the other hand, the dominance of populist narratives reduces the space for more nuanced and complex political alternatives. Populism often creates the illusion of choice while, in reality, marginalising everything outside the framework of the dominant narrative. Governments frequently collaborate with economic elites to secure a monopoly over resources and reduce the potential for alterna-

tive economic approaches. This leads to inequality and the exclusion of actors advocating redistributive or progressive policies. Digital platforms are utilised to promote dominant narratives, while alternative voices are suppressed through algorithmic filtering and disinformation.

We can distinguish several forms of suppressing alternatives: *political repression* (disqualification of opposition views, closure of media outlets, banning certain organisations or activities); *simulation of pluralism* (a formally large number of parties and actors exist, but they are often essentially part of the same political establishment, with no real differences in programs or goals – multi-party systems where all options align with the interests of dominant groups); *neutralisation of intellectual opposition* (marginalisation of intellectuals, activists, and independent thinkers through control of education, science, and media); and *shaping apathy* (systematic demotivation of citizens through manipulation and the erosion of trust in the political process). The elimination of alternatives often goes hand in hand with the de-politicisation of society.

Without alternatives, political power becomes centralised and unrestricted, even in nominally democratic systems. The elimination of alternatives is not only a consequence of authoritarian tendencies but also a symptom of deep structural problems in contemporary political systems. This phenomenon undermines the very essence of politics as a space for debate, change, and progress. Only by opening space for alternatives can politics regain its potential to address social problems and ensure the common good.

Can there be an end to politics? Politics is inherent to human society because it concerns the organisation of communal life, conflict resolution, decision-making, and resource management. One could argue that certain political models (e.g., liberal democracy, authoritarian regimes, theocracies) may exhaust their capacities and be replaced by new forms. However, changes in political models do not signify the end of politics. Politics will persist as long as there are conflicts, diverse interests, and the need for collective action. Technologies, such as artificial intelligence and automation, can alter decision-making processes, but they cannot eliminate the political nature of human society.

The variability of human societies attests to the fact that human history shows the cyclical processes of the rise and fall of ideologies, systems, and values. Technology, ecology, and geopolitical factors suggest that history is not over. The emergence of new forms of authoritarianism, populism, and hybrid regimes indicates that liberal democracy has not been universally accepted as the ultimate model. Change and development are fundamental characteristics of society. Human society is dynamic, meaning that every end is a new beginning. When one model of politics, history, or human existence reaches its end, another model replaces it. Conflicts between different interests, values, and ideas cannot be eliminated, as they are the foundation of societal development.



### *CONCLUSION: THERE IS NO END TO POLITICS*

The 'end of politics' implies a crisis of traditional forms of political action, decision-making, and the formation of political identities in the process of their extinction or transformation. In other words, the end of politics in contemporary discussions refers to the reformation of political processes towards less ideological and more technical and administrative issues, along with a potential de-politisation and reduction in citizen political engagement. This paper particularly addresses several indicators of the political crisis.

The end of politics may signify *the end of ideological and political conflicts* that characterised previous eras. In this sense, political engagement and debates lose their fundamental function, as they have become subordinated to technical, economic, or administrative logics. Politics is increasingly reduced to managing technical problems and crises, rather than shaping the foundations of social values and the struggle for ideas. In contemporary theories, the end of politics can be seen in the context of the development of the 'technical state,' where political decisions are no longer the result of political negotiations and conflicts of interest, but have become predominantly administrative and technical in nature. The state becomes a manager, rather than a political subject with its own ideological orientations.

The thesis of the end of politics can also indicate the *depolitization of society*, in which political issues are increasingly reduced to questions of management and optimization, while the broader social and ideological dimension of political action is lost. In this sense, the 'end of politics' signifies a reduction in citizen political engagement, where citizens become passive observers. Critics of this concept warn that the 'end of politics' may be a sign of a crisis in democratic engagement, where political elites increasingly take control, and citizens become depoliticized, no longer recognizing their ability to influence social change.

*Sovereignty*, as a key element of political autonomy and state power, becomes problematic in contemporary discourses on the 'end of politics.' The crisis of sovereignty refers to the diminishing ability of states to make and implement decisions independently, due to globalisation, economic pressures, and the growing power of international organisations or transnational corporations. In this context, sovereignty is a matter not only of political identity but also the state's ability to maintain its political control in an increasingly interdependent world. This 'crisis of sovereignty' signals that traditional borders and political processes are changing, which may lead to the diminished political engagement of citizens and the reduced power of political institutions.

*Bellicism*, as constant militarism and a focus on military power, is an expression of the crisis of political consensus. Instead of politics being conducted through dialogue and democratic processes, it increasingly

turns towards military solutions and military dominance, which may be linked to the lack of political alternatives and the inability to effectively address social problems through political deliberation. Bellicism points to the danger of excessive reliance on military force and its role in shaping both domestic and foreign policy, while neglecting political conflict resolution. Through this lens, the 'end of politics' can be understood as the moment in which the political space shrinks, and war becomes the dominant means of resolving conflicts.

*The absence of political alternatives* is one of the key aspects in understanding the 'end of politics.' In the contemporary political environment, especially in the context of post-Cold War and neoliberal societies, it is often argued that political options have become limited, and societies are increasingly in political stagnation. The absence of clear and effective alternatives leads to a reduction in political pluralism and democracy, as many key political challenges are treated as technical issues that do not allow for different political approaches or ideological debates. From this perspective, the 'end of politics' becomes a manifestation of the unification of the political space, in which the possibilities for real change and critical political alternatives are severely limited.

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## КРАЈ ПОЛИТИКЕ

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### Резиме

„Крај политике“ подразумева кризу традиционалних облика политичког деловања, доношења одлука и обликовања политичких идентитета у процесу изумирања или трансформације. Другачије речено, „крај политике“ у савременим расправама односи се на преобликовање политичких процеса у правцу мање идеолошких, а више техничких и административних питања, уз потенцијалну деполитизацију и смањење политичког ангажмана грађана. У овом раду посебно се тематизује неколико индикатора кризе политике.

„Крај политике“ може означавати крај идеолошких и политичких сукоба који су карактерисали претходне епохе. У том смислу, политички ангажман и дебате губе своју основну функцију јер су постале подређене техничким, економским или административним логикама. Политика се све више своди на управљање техничким проблемима и кризама, а не на обликовање темеља друштвених вредности и борбу за идеје. У савременим теоријама, „крај политике“ се може видети у контексту развоја „техничке државе“, у којој политичке одлуке нису више резултат политичких преговора и сукоба интереса, већ су постале претежно административне и техничке природе. Држава постаје менаџер, а не политички субјект са сопственим идеолошким оријентацијама.

Теза о крају политике такође може указивати на деполитизацију друштва, у којем се политичке теме све више свode на питања управљања и оптимизације, док се губи шира друштвена и идеолошка димензија политичког деловања. У овом смислу, „крај политике“ означава смањење политичког ангажмана грађана, који постају пасивни посматрачи. Критичари овог концепта упозоравају да „крај политике“ може бити знак кризе демократског ангажмана, где политичке елите све више преузимају контролу, а грађани постају деполитизовани, не препознајући своју способност да утичу на друштвене промене.

Сувереност, као кључни елемент политичке аутономије и моћи државе, постаје проблематична у савременим дискурсима о „крају политике“. Криза суверености се односи на смањење способности држава да доносе и имплементирају одлуке независно услед глобализације, економских притисака, и растуће моћи међународних организација или транснационалних корпорација. У овом контексту, сувереност није само питање политичког идентитета, већ и способности да

држава задржи своју политичку контролу у свету који постаје све међузависнији. Ова „криза суверености“ сигнализира да се традиционалне границе и политички процеси мењају, што може довести до слабијег политичког ангажмана грађана и умањене моћи политичких институција.

Белицизам, као непрестан милитаризам и оријентација на војну моћ, је израз кризе политичког консензуса. Уместо да се политика води кроз дијалог и демократске процесе, она се све више усмерава ка војним решењима и војној доминацији, што може бити повезано с недостатком политичких алтернатива и способности да се друштвени проблеми ефикасно реше кроз политичку делиберацију. Белицизам указује на опасност од прекомерног ослањања на војну силу и његову улогу у обликовању унутрашње и спољне политике, при чему се занемарује политичко решавање конфликта. Кроз ову призму, „крај политике“ може бити схваћен као момент када се политички простор смањује, а рат постаје доминантан начин решавања конфликта.

Одсуство политичких алтернатива је један од кључних аспеката у разумевању „краја политике“. У савременом политичком окружењу, посебно у контексту пост-хладноратовских и неолибералних друштава, често се тврди да политичке опције постају ограничене, а друштва су све више у политичкој стагнацији. Одсуство јасних и делотворних алтернатива води до смањења политичког плурализма и демократије, јер су многи кључни политички изазови третирани као техничка питања која не допуштају различите политичке приступе или идеолошке дебате. Кроз ову перспективу, „крај политике“ постаје манифестација унификације политичког простора, у којем су могућности за стварне промене и критичке политичке алтернативе озбиљно ограничене.

Заједно, техничка држава, криза суверености, белицизам и одсуство алтернатива указују на дубље политичке трансформације које обележавају крај политичких модела заснованих на сувереним државама, војном обезбеђивању мира и политичкој разноврсности. У овој ситуацији, политика престаје да буде динамичан простор за друштвене промене и постаје подложна прекомерним административним и техничким решењима, док се грађани све више дистанцирају од активног политичког ангажмана.