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**The Political Unreality of Political Realism**

Time and again, discourses and arguments purporting to reveal the true nature of politics emerge, in an attempt—plausible and justifiable in itself—to challenge the abstract, rosy-eyed and idealized political theories that have dominated many types of normative political philosophy. Time and again, they show themselves as unadventurous, lacking or uninformed and fail to deliver what they have committed themselves to deliver. That is not at all because of the resilience of ideal political theory; it is because the various forms of political realism fall far short of addressing the actual and ascertainable features of the political. They become trapped in misconceptions about what thinking politically is or they reproduce some of the aspects of the theoretical approaches they wish to substitute, or at least modify substantially. While being realistic about the study of politics is, to say the least, a worthwhile enterprise and central to what is fast becoming the ‘political turn’, much of what currently goes under its umbrella is open to methodological questioning.

Early contemporary forms of political realism surfaced in international relations theory, a forceful proponent being Hans Morgenthau at the height of his career. In his frequently reprinted book, *Politics among Nations*, Morgenthau outlined six principles of political realism. That doctrine held that politics was ‘governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature’; it assumed that statesmen ‘think and act in terms of interest defined as power’ though the content of such interest will change over time and across place. And whereas the transformative appeal of current ideal theory is held to draw from the domain of universal norms of justice, the idealism that Morgenthau challenged was located in visions of future society that, he argued, needed to give way to the ‘manipulation of the perennial forces that have shaped the past’. Morgenthau was concerned about abstract imaginary futures as against concrete historical practices; current political realists, as we shall presently see, are concerned rather about the flawed applicability of general ethical guidelines to the complexity of social practices. The term ‘idealism’ they hold in common covers two very different positions. Adding to the above, Morgenthau permitted considerations of national survival as constituting the ultimate ethical requirement. Prudence, rather than a sense of moral superiority of any nation, was ‘the supreme virtue in politics,’ he announced. It is no surprise that the post-1945 Morgenthau was associated with American conservatism; but then it is a standard conservative ideological device to ascribe reality to what conservatives claim is the world as they find it. On one theme, however, Morgenthau expressed what has become a long-standing and plausible core tenet of political realism: ‘the political realist maintains the autonomy of the political sphere, as the economist, the lawyer, the moralist maintains theirs’.[[1]](#endnote-1)

Nonetheless, that was far from stating what a realist view of politics should encompass. In terms of the level of sophistication employed, the political sphere was reduced to that of power alone: a very poor and one-dimensional account of the richness and diversity of human practices that can be called political. For if we ask what are the unique features of actual political conduct and thought that are political, we find a number of separate but interlocked practices. They include the arrogation of ultimate decision-making in a society, the ranking of collective priorities, mobilizing or withholding support for and by collectivities, the stabilizing and destabilizing of social arrangements, and the conjuring up of social futures in the form of visions or plans, as well as the obvious wielding of power through persuasion, rhetoric, emotion, menace and force. And all these appear in different relative weightings.[[2]](#endnote-2) Politics is never one thing, whether conflict, power, consensus, rupture, agonism or whatever—that kind of reductionism is always a simplifying distortion. And is it real to reduce human motivation to the psychologism of the pursuit of self-interest? Even if in international relations that appears to be a strong motivation, moves to assuage climate change or to assist less-developed countries have a more complex motivation. And was it accurate to perceive political realism as a broadly conservative exercise in respecting and replicating the past, or to suggest that perennial and static laws of human nature were evident to the political scientist? What we have here, rather, is a particular ideological take on the values that should guide the world, not necessarily on those that do in effect guide it. A propos ideology, Morgenthau’s view was equally unrealistic. In arguing that’ the true nature of [state] policy is concealed by ideological justification and rationalizations’[[3]](#endnote-3) Morgenthau was culpable of a double error. First, he could not detach himself from the hoary view that ideologies were false and dissimulative, a view that has its origins in a Marxist analysis that Morgenthau himself would have abhorred. Second, he failed to acknowledge that, even on his understanding of ideology, such rationalizations were themselves part of the discursive reality of the political—serious features of actual political thinking.[[4]](#endnote-4) If you removed what they concealed, you would find more of the same rather than an objective truth.

Fast forward half a century, with the philosophical thought-experiments of the Rawlsian School coming under increased scrutiny. Doubts and growing criticism of that kind of philosophical argumentation arose from diverse quarters. Why was justice the first virtue of a society, rather than well-being, let alone Morgenthau’s prudence? Was Rawlsianism merely a thinly-disguised liberal political theory, and one far more comprehensively liberal than its supporters claimed? How could the social sciences—and the emphasis is on social—accept veils of ignorance that isolated individual from individual and decontextualized our experiences of the world? And what about neutrality? Was there a view from nowhere? Was neutrality not confused with impartiality—itself a very difficult practice to pursue? How could one offer a neutral position with regard to some zero-sum practices as, for instance, between pro-lifers and pro-choicers on the termination of pregnancy? And was not the very aspiration to neutrality an essentially liberal principle masquerading as a universal one? Behind all that lay a deep suspicion that political theory was being colonized by a different discipline, philosophy, one with ethical purposes and a partiality for logical clarification. Matters didn’t get better when the late Ronald Dworkin, in response to a question I put to him about the particular historical and geographical sources of his ostensibly universal liberal philosophy, offered the following: ‘You say ideas don’t float in an abstract world. When my son was very young, he would tolerate me to ask him questions such as “where do numbers live?” and he got very tired of this, and he said one day, “I know where numbers live – they live in beer cans in the Himalayan mountains.” And that’s where ideas live, too,’ said Dworkin to me.[[5]](#endnote-5) Well, now we know. Time and place are of no consequence to some moral philosophers, and their ideal theory ignores or belittles the empirical, historical and contextual roots of political discourse and language.

The first concessions came from the political philosophers with a peace offering in the shape of what they called ‘non-ideal theory’. Significantly, ‘non-ideal’ still focused on justice, specifically on the domain of the unjust rather than the ‘concrete’, the ‘particular’ or the ‘typical’.[[6]](#endnote-6) In order for political philosophy to be relevant to the ‘real world’, they held, it must offer tools for evaluating practical ways of reducing injustice in the world. In the words of Charles W. Mills in his book *Contract and* *Domination*, written jointly with Carol Pateman, ‘non-ideal theory seeks to adjudicate what corrective rectificatory justice would require in societies that are unjust.’[[7]](#endnote-7) Crucially, the real political world is yet again characterized only by one attribute, power, as is the case with Morgenthau, except that the overriding attribute of power in Morgenthau’s case is conjoined with the overriding attribute of distributive, gender and racial injustice in the ‘non-idealist’ instances. The descriptions of the real world are hence selective and specific. Looking at those two approaches together, two pretty bleak ‘real’ worlds emerge, with few redeeming features. To be real, it appears, is to be unremittingly harsh about the basics of the world of politics. But while for the Morgenthauian the world of imaginary futures is one of delusionary hopes, hopes that obfuscate that necessary and often desirable rawness of the world as experienced over time, for the non-ideal philosopher the world of ethical truths is one from which we may obtain regulatory guidelines that mitigate the inadequacy, inequality and unattractiveness of that rawness and demand instead moral reform. All that is presented as relating to the search for, and identification of, the empirical characteristics of political societies, as if that were itself a clear-cut issue. True, power and self-interest may be accredited with the descriptor ‘unjust’, but that assessment may frequently be subject to ideological contestation. That aside, in the main there is no agreement on which empirical characteristics are noteworthy or demand the most recognition—what is the hard core of that political reality?

The aim of ‘non-ideal’ theory thus becomes one of improving the quality of ideal theory, not one of replacing it with a recognizable account of the world to which different forms of theorizing can relate. It engages with the real world only because, disappointingly, that world fails to live up to the normative expectations of philosophers—but will it ever not do so? ‘Non-ideal’ theory wishes not to accommodate itself to the real world but to achieve what Mills calls, for example, ‘genuine racial and gender equality.’[[8]](#endnote-8) The word ‘genuine’ in that context—with its connotations of true, authentic or pure—does not however come with any empirical markers for what that would look like, but returns to the general and the abstract, to the imprecision of regulatory ideals. ‘Non ideal’ ends up being no different from ‘ideal’ except that it is a reaction to observable ills rather than an armchair exercise. But then even armchair exercises are reactions to the experience and the socially conditioned imagination of the theorist. The insistence on *prescribing* as the chief rationale of political theory crowds out the alternative objectives of theorizing about the political that are chiefly those of *understanding* and *interpretation*. Indeed, if the aim of non-ideal theory is to produce a conceptual array that is ‘well-designed to map and clarify the actual non-ideal realities’,[[9]](#endnote-9) its design is disappointingly vague, schematic, and drawn through negatively critical spectacles. It offers only one part of the realist story that can be told, a story that might be better advised to steer away from either condemnatory or commendatory perspectives in the first instance. Otherwise we will have a truncated sense of the real world of politics. The questions, ‘what does politics look like, and what does politics do?’ should precede the question, ‘what does politics do wrongly (or rightly?’ Both those initial questions are theory-rich as well as being of course contestable. Importantly, they replace the Marxist project of unmasking fundamental defects with the attempt to decode political thought and practice.

So does the current self-styled school of political realism come to the rescue? Does it give an account of what the political is actually about? Does it indeed pay ‘proper respect to the “real” social facts’[[10]](#endnote-10)? There certainly is a change of emphasis, for while the non-ideal philosophers at most descend slightly from their ethical heaven with their safety harnesses firmly in place to avoid a bumpy landing, the self-styled political realists ascend from an earthy engagement with the political, though they shake off much of the vulgar dust in search of ethical solutions.[[11]](#endnote-11) One well-known exponent of political realism is Raymond Geuss in his much-quoted book *Philosophy and Real Politics*. For Geuss, political philosophy (he does not distinguish between political philosophy and political theory) must be ‘concerned…with the way the social, economic, political, etc., institutions actually operate in some society at some given time, and what really does move human beings to act in given circumstances.’[[12]](#endnote-12) So we have in the school of political realism a typical mix of observing political patterns and offering a quasi-psychological account of human motivation. Note, however, how Geuss, commencing not as an international relations expert but as a trained philosopher, seems to replicate Morgenthau’s argument that’ to think politically is to think about agency, power, and interests.’[[13]](#endnote-13) To be sure, the exercise of power is a central feature of the political, but it does not necessarily nest in a confined space of agency and interest—that is, intentional self-serving acts based on a particular psychological motivation. The political can also be unintentional, it can be altruistic or solidaric, and power can be beneficial—empowering, for example, as feminist thinkers discovered over a generation ago.

Realists run the risk of relying on terms that have a reputational problem in common language that attract negative connotations—politics, power, ideology—without teasing out the subtleties and multiple meanings that each of those concepts holds. They thus frequently endorse those dodgy reputations instead of correcting them by alerting us to the full panoply of positions the concepts cover. The result is a continuous oversimplification and reductionism that shrinks the complexity of the political; that does not give us a more discerning picture of what happens in its domain. Psychologists or economists would never stand for such broad brush strokes in their disciplines. And Geuss’s old-fashioned reference to ideology as ‘a set of beliefs, attitudes, preferences that are distorted as a result of the operation of specific relations of power’[[14]](#endnote-14) regrettably persists in denigrating both ideology and power in an old Marxist mode. What then would the ’non-distorted’ understandings of the world look like, once the ‘illusion’ of ideology is removed? Is it real to imply that undistorted or true views exist in the first place? Applying a negative appraisal before the nature of a phenomenon is carefully examined is to fall into the trap of employing prejudgment and discursive mythology—a very far distance away from realism.

Geuss represents a trend in recent political theory, with which I concur, that seeks to extricate politics from the world of ethics. Not that political theory should become, or be seen, as unethical, but rather that the practices of action and thought that typify the political belong to a different sphere. For over a generation, we might argue, political theory has been taken over by particular kinds of political philosophy, mainly American, that seek to spell out rules for political conduct. Many of these rules and regulative principles are in themselves admirable, but they suffer from two inevitable drawbacks. They are universal in their intended application, bypassing the cultural diversity of political principles as well as political practices across the planet; and they cannot take into account the immense variability of concrete instances for which general guidelines are simply insufficiently explicit.[[15]](#endnote-15)

Now that grip is beginning to relax, but its tenacity is far from over. Realists are still caught in its looser clutches. One recurring theme among them is the search for legitimation, as those ‘realists’ follow in the footsteps of Max Weber, who they often consider to be a forerunner of realism. But the concept of legitimacy has led an unhappy life in political theory. For many, it is still a normative sine qua non without which political systems and governments have no moral standing; but for others—a view represented in this paper—legitimacy is also part of a broader arsenal of practices relating to the fundamental need for human communities to mobilize internal and external support for their existence, self-identity and activities. Hence legitimacy can be understood as referring to certain standards of right, valid and ethically sound conduct—say the strict respect for the constitutional order of that society; or it can be understood as referring to the acceptance of, or acquiescence in, the political practices of a society irrespective of their objective moral merit—say the practices of hereditary monarchy still prevalent in some European societies, or of the elders of the tribe in some rural societies. Legitimacy exists in the eyes of the beholder, and there is no compelling reason why the beholder should be an ethical philosopher rather than a member of a political community. We are talking here about political satisfaction and approval for a term whose concrete manifestations vacillate between strict legality, moving through justifiability, and then towards vaguer social and cultural recognition. Among political philosophers legitimacy is tightly linked to ethical justification and is epitomized in theories of political obligation. But political obligation only scratches the surface of the practices of support that actually exist in a society, practices that need to be captured by other terms such as allegiance, loyalty and commitment.[[16]](#endnote-16) There is no overriding reason why the search for legitimacy should be central to a realist view of politics or keep in check the potentially much broader scope of a realist approach. But nor is a focus on legitimacy to be reduced to power interests, as Geuss contends.

For a problematic theory of realist legitimation we may look for example at the writings of Bernard Williams, posthumously rediscovered as a leading member of the political realist camp. In his *In the Beginning was the Deed*, Williams gave with one hand what he then immediately took back with the other. He resoundingly endorsed the distinction between the political and the moral, rejecting the priority of the moral over the political. He held that a necessary condition of legitimacy revolved around the political imperative of securing order and safety. But the temptations in the other direction were too strong for someone trained as a philosopher. Williams enunciated a basic legitimation demand according to which any state had to offer a justification of its power to each of its subjects—an unmistakably ideal requirement—thus denying any state legitimacy if radically disadvantaging practices occurred within its boundaries.[[17]](#endnote-17) So morality was brought back in under a peculiar cover: there are moral principles inherent to the political sphere and, unsurprisingly, such moral principles emerge from a liberal stable.

We confront two difficulties here. First, although it goes almost without saying that the political may contain moral principles, it does not follow that those principles have to be liberal. Second, the very search for moral principles should be problematic from a realist perspective. It disables realists from asserting what they should be asserting, and asserting without an air of reproach: namely, that the political also contains practices quite independently of their morality (and, for that matter, practices that many would consider also amoral or immoral) and that we have to take that on board within the methodology of the discipline just as, say, historians would. After all, that is what the autonomy of politics must mean. That autonomy of the political does not entail the immorality of politics just as it does not entail its morality. If, say, the mobilization or withholding of support for collectivities are standard political practices, we can and should analyze and discuss them quite separately from their ethical significance. Conversely, the attempt to inject liberal principles into politics may be a worthy aim, but it catapults Williams back into the family of liberal political philosophers who possess an emphatic liberal agenda and whose ideals transcend real politics. Thus Williams rules out terror as a political situation,[[18]](#endnote-18) which is either to offer a highly restricted view of political practices or to impose an ethical code on what we are entitled to take into account as political theorists. One is reminded of the extraordinary claim by another Bernard, Bernard Crick, who flatly stated: ‘Politics is the way in which free societies are governed. Politics is politics and other forms of rule are something else.’[[19]](#endnote-19) And more recently Jacques Rancière has arbitrarily reduced the political from exactly the contrary perspective when declaring that ‘There are always forms of power, but that does not mean that there is always politics. Politics occurs only when political subjects initiate a quarrel over the perceptible givens of common life.’[[20]](#endnote-20) For Rancière, only disruption gains the accolade of a true, radical politics, permanently undermining the very nature of the liberalism based on trust, justification and co-operation to which Williams aspires, and damning any form of conciliation as apolitical. How on earth can we find our way if the same signposts at each crossroads send us simultaneously in opposite directions?

In sum, both Morgenthau and Williams are wedded to a clear ideological reading of the mission of political realism as well as the moralizing one that Williams, at least, sought to escape. For while Williams admits that historically legitimation claims have not usually been liberal, he also asserts that ‘now and around here the Basic Legitimation Demand together with the historical conditions permit only a liberal solution; other forms of answer are unacceptable’. Williams then adds the clincher: ‘In part, this is for the Enlightenment reason that other supposed legitimations are now seen to be false and in particular ideological.’[[21]](#endnote-21) What an odd statement! Why, then, is Williams’ adoption of liberal principles not ideological? Only because from Williams’ elevated and unreal vantage point it is a general feature of Anglo-American philosophy to regard a liberal epistemology and an unassailable ethical rectitude as one and the same thing. ‘Now and around here’ is not as particular as it seems, for the real political world returns to the universality that liberal philosophy ostensibly bestows. The implication is that’ now and around here’ is the optimal political standard and any change will be one for the worse. If other legitimations are false, this one must by extension be true and we are back to a realism that is steadily inching its way to the best of all possible worlds. Finally, Williams proposes that ‘liberal political theory [for there is no other that deserves the name] should shape its account of itself more realistically to what is platitudinously political.’ But what is platitudinously political? Apparently reducing differences and taking into account others’ disagreement, showing respect for them. All those are remarkably similar to contemporary forms of the agonism adopted by some poststructuralists, but they are hardly generally voiced platitudes. Recognizing difference and respecting others are already liberal forms of thought and conduct, so for liberal political theory to shape its realistic account of those ostensible ‘platitudes’ is for a particular version of liberalism to chase its own tail in a conspicuously circular manner. Would historians or sociologists be driven in the first instance by the requirement to justify, validate, and prescribe? But our nominal realists seem unable to shake off the dictates of liberal ethics. Indeed, this characterizes in particular most American political theorists, who are under great pressure to address the problems of democracy in their work and defend its principles. It is admirable that political philosophers form self-appointed ethical task forces recommending public policy, because that is one role intellectuals are expected to perform. But a very different role for intellectuals in the field of political theory is under-developed. It is the one involving a Weberian Verstehen that offers interpretative frameworks, one taking the pulse of a society engaged in thinking politically at all levels of social life, and one that will enable political theory to reach maturity as a social science, not just as philosophy or as the history of ideas.

James Tully is one instance of ethical pressure on political theorists, no doubt unrecognized as such by many of them. On close inspection his voice is similar to that of Mills, devoted to righting the wrongs of the historically marginalized. Tully sees that task as one of creating a critical and transformative theory or, as he puts it, ‘an interlocutory intervention on the side of the oppressed’,[[22]](#endnote-22) the ultimate aim of which is to convert human interaction to ‘non-violent, democratic and peaceful relationships.’[[23]](#endnote-23) All that is laudable, but it too is hardly deserving of the term ‘realist’. Claiming to be a realist simply because one’s prescriptions are based on empirically ascertainable historical and sociological facts still doesn’t ensure a ‘realist’ future.

Another instance of that pressure, or perhaps inclination, is a recent piece by Bonnie Honig and Marc Stears, who call for a ‘realist account of politics’ that ‘may find in the exercise of political action inspiration to fight’ for ideals such as co-operation, solidarity and hope.[[24]](#endnote-24) For them that is a ‘truly new realism we call “agonistic” realism.’[[25]](#endnote-25) Honig and Stears are admirably cautious and critical about some of the recent realist literature. But agonistic realism is yet again just one slice of what realism may contain, and it is directly open to the justifiable criticism they level against Tully who, in their view, ‘ends up normativising the real’.[[26]](#endnote-26) But that critique bounces back, for agonistic realism is voiced in the same ‘normativising’ register through its goal of taming violent contestations and removing them from the political arena. Nice, but not real. It is a manifesto for activists, aiming to ‘encounter and mobilize… rebuilding our future together’.[[27]](#endnote-27) That is only one possible route for political theory, and certainly not a sufficient basis from which to theorize about the real world of the political.

Two further features are notably lacking in many explorations of realism. The one is emotion; the other, reference to the vernacular. There is insufficient space to go into those in detail here, but this can be said. The political cannot be adequately decoded without an appreciation that persuasion, rhetoric, and threats, as well as communal pride, solidarity and anger, are all part of political discourse. And the political cannot be adequately decoded unless we extend the remit of political thinking to investigate its manifestations at various points of articulation, of which the state is only one, and in which democracy is only one kind of political regime. Take for example the traditional history of political thought, which focuses on some 50 individuals, plus outriders. Would social historians get away with that, often basing their findings on only one case per generation or even century? I think not. That is not the history of political thought, but a listed temporal sequence of people who are regarded as important political philosophers by other political philosophers. Getting real also means to have a far more extensive purview of the range and sources of political thinking, rather than restrict it to a narrow and elitist segment of political philosophers and academics, or to a small subsection of what is loosely and unsatisfactorily termed the ‘Western’ world. It needs to take heed of pamphlets, newspapers, parliamentary debates, manifestos, popular books, literary works, minutes of meetings, and not least vernacular expressions—written, oral and visual—as well as the great minds of the age. All these are instances of thinking politically and all need to enter the orbit of what scholars do when they theorize about the political and thinking politically.

The question usually asked in the realm of political realism is how can we improve normative political theory, and the answer given in this case is: by relating it more closely to the real world of politics. But the question I want to ask is, how can we improve political theory simpliciter, and the answer is: by granting that ethics and normativity are but one feature of theorizing about politics and that theory—as with other disciplines—must also involve identifying and understanding the patterns we encounter without passing judgment on them. That kind of realism must precede prescriptive realism, for otherwise appraisal and critique become irrelevant. Prescriptive political theorists weed out in advance those aspects of the political with which they are not in sympathy, and they frequently do so by definitional fiat. That is not realism. To be sure, we will never command an accurate knowledge of the real political world, because the meaning of so many of its attributes is essentially contestable, and because we cannot describe political reality, only interpret it. But our interpretation needs to be plausible, to make as much sense of the political phenomena we investigate as we can, all the while conceding that we await contrary interpretations. Williams was right when he claimed that the world was messy, but his retort was to counteract that messiness by imposing liberal political philosophy on it, thus violating the autonomous status of politics that so many so-called political realists preach. Others are right to identify the disagreement that is so common to political life, but their response is to promote a sanitised kind of dissent—agonism—while ignoring both its more uncompromising variants and the opposite tendency to form blocs of consent, however thinly. Following the highly successful but severely limiting colonization of political theory by political philosophy over the past forty years, it would be a grievous loss were political realism to be colonized by prescriptive political theory. My response to Williams’ claim is that political theory should acknowledge the messiness of social life and reflect it. And it should recognize that the political cannot be summed up in a few pithy phrases—it is a very complex set of phenomena. In particular, it should regard the practice of thinking politically as itself a real activity demanding decoding, however pleasant or unpleasant the contents of that practice are. That is what good political theory should do. That is what realism in political theory is all about.

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2. For a detailed discussion of the political and of the nature of political thinking, see M. Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking: The Anatomy of a Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., p. 86. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. See M. Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon, Press, 1996). [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. T. Garton Ash et al. (eds.), *Liberalisms in East and West* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2009), p. 152. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. A. Swift, ‘The Value of Philosophy in Non-Ideal Circumstances’, *Social Theory and Practice*, vol. 34 (2008), 363. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. C. Pateman and C. Mills, *Contract and Domination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 94. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Symposium, ‘Contract and Domination’, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol. 13 (2008), 240. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Pateman and Mills, *Contract and Domination*, *op. cit*., p. 114. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. W.E. Scheuerman, ‘A Theoretical Missed Opportunity? Hans. J. Morgenthau as Critical Realist’ in D. Bell (ed.), *Political Thought and International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 43. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. For an elaboration see M. Freeden, ‘Editorial: Interpretative realism and prescriptive realism’, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol. 17 (2012), pp. 1-11. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. R. Geuss, *Philosophy and Real Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid., p. 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid., p. 52. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. On the problem of regulative principles see Freeden, *The Political Theory of Political Thinking*, *op. cit*., pp. 7-8, 268-71. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Ibid., pp. 180-199. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. B. Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 3-5. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid., p.5. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. B. Crick, *In Defence of Politics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 55. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. J. Rancière, ‘Introducing Disagreement’, interview in *Angelaki*, vol. 9, no. 3 (2004). [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, *op. cit*., p. 8. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. J. Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key. Vol. 1: Democracy and Civic Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 17. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. J. Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key. Vol. I1: Imperialism and Civic Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 309. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. B. Honig and M. Stears, ‘The New Realism’, in J. Floyd and M. Stears (eds.), *Political Philosophy versus History? Contextualism and Real Politics in Contemporary Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.178. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid., p. 179 [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Ibid., p. 199. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid., p. 205. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)