

1 Runciman talks about the 'doubleness of modern politics'. Is what he is talking about really the 'doubleness of all politics', or is it only modern, and why?

The notion of the doubleness of politics, as Runciman regularly defines in the book, is the symbol of the distinction of political systems into two essential and primitive categories, and that is the core separation of the group that has certain kinds of decision-making rules and the bigger group, which obeys to live under and gives legitimacy to the other side by bearing up with the consequences of the system. Though the words used to describe the sides change, the existence of the sides and the relationship does not alter in the perspective of Runciman's political world. In pre-modern terms, doubleness is a choice, and anyone inside the system is asked to choose sides. Moreover, the choice between two sides was mostly a selection between two groups but many other standpoints against who gets what and how. The distinction between pre-modern politics on the sides of rich and poor is also meant to be on the side of the minority or majority, which essentially was what Hobbes wanted to escape from. Therefore, the Hobbesian conception of the state was built around the degree that there should not be a choice since Hobbes believed a common problem is more vital than anything regarding both sides.

Nevertheless, the two sides are separate in this modern sense of politics. It is known, by definition, that government and people are not the same, and the difference is not just in the distribution of power and its dynamics but also in its core features. The ruling type has always been deeply theorised and practised with attributes relevant only to the minority and illustrated as unique, which seems predominantly the case until the emergence of modern democracies. Later, concepts like representativeness and legitimacy made the distinction more natural and accessible in the Hobbesian state, which was also hard to adopt and complex. Ironically, the journey of the modern state that is planned not to create a dilemma of choice resulted in several more choices and sides, which Runciman explored in the book's various chapters. We have seen that the doubleness tuned into the distinctions between even the ones who enjoyed the benefits of political power and those who turned into socioeconomic power, namely the bourgeoisie and the ones who lived under their reign. Hence, people have to live double lives so that the choice of sides does not happen. As Runciman expresses, "The choice internalised into the body politic, into the daily lives of people who are living this state, both at the top and the bottom, so that everyone, in order not to have to make that choice, is leading a kind of double life." His words are effective and robust regarding the modern conception's polarising effect and irony around doubleness.

Overall, one can point out that doubleness started in ancient times between few and many and has turned into new variations and become concentrated in modern times. Hence, the set of ideas surrounding Runciman's perspective on doubleness has roots in pre-modern times and, therefore, may be valid about the extent of the doubleness of all politics.

2 Pick one thinker and show how he/she responds to the problem of doubleness.

Throughout the book, many thinkers respond to or question the problems of the doubleness. Many of them, including Wollstonecraft, Gandhi and Tocqueville, were aware of the irony of modern politics as a way of escaping from the sides and creating more choices to make but particular thinkers explained how ironic and paradoxical the case has been about doubleness Marx and Engel's. I do believe that they were the ones who were a product of the idea of a more liberal and competitive state, which is deeply rooted in Hobbes because of two reasons. First, Marx and Engel's life chronologically is when the Hobbesian conception shared and protected more nations and cultures than many nations, which means that they were not only a part of the Hobbesian state but a citizen of the world where the world is ruled by sovereign governments in their essence predominantly. This makes their life experiences and insights significant since they shared the double life's injustices and inequalities from the political system and socio-economic life. The second reason is that both of them, especially Marx, knew the system they were living in, and they were experiencing the results of the doubleness of the system at its core, affecting millions of people due to it being not just a government but a world-dominant way of politics.

For the Hobbesian state, the problem of politics was to stop the endless revolving of the wheel, the constant posing and disposing of the question of whose side you're on, depending on who is up and who is down. Moreover, the solution to this problem was the establishment of the Sovereign, but for Marx and Engel, it was a revolution. They were not immediately called to a revolution; they did theorise alternatives, but ultimately, what they saw with Hobbesian conception is a big doubleness of institutions, which are the organs of their systems, all the way through. Indeed, its doubleness is its distinguishing characteristic. The state was both coercive and emancipatory, shadowing the two faces of a medallion as fear and hope. The irony Marx and Engels are aware of is that the state rules both through fear and terror and does violence to rescue people from violence. Therefore, their essential argument was that politics was not a conflict between people and government but between the bourgeoisie and proletariat.

For them, the modern state is basically and unequivocally the coercive instrument of the bourgeoisie. Seemingly, the capitalists -the profit-seeker bourgeoisie- had stopped pursuing ruling to avoid the state of nature and started to seek more profit. This relentless pursuit of profit exploited the labour and corrupted the state. For them, the repetitive cycle of the pursuit of profit ending up within crisis should be stopped by the people this time, not someone who is explicitly better at something but the people living under this reign. The solution was a simple execution of the revolution, deriving from proletariats. Though this one group overtaking another's reign does not seem like a solution to end a doubleness, the revolution was just the start. They were realistic about people needing power to overthrow the current bourgeoisie since they would not give up easily. After periods of an ideal revolution, it would end up with a state that is only there to regulate economic life and not to exploit and coerce the people. They even argue that once people eliminate the bourgeoisie, what need is there for the state? Hence, for them, the solution was the disappearance of the state altogether, along with its double-sided face. Therefore, what Marx and Engel started with their Manifest and developed was indeed a response to the doubleness of politics within the challenge of the modern idea of the state.