NORBERTO BOBBIO’S POLITICS OF CULTURE:  
A formula for liberalism and an antidote to Fascism

by

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ABSTRACT

Bobbio’s prose emphasizes the polemical duality of the palazzo and the piazza—the uneasy relationship between those who govern and those who are governed, and their perennial yet necessary rivalry in a mature democracy. Although no overreaching moral theory can resolve all of the ethical tensions that exist today, Bobbio chooses to prioritize the prevention of the abuse of power at the individual and group level in developing his own form of democratic liberalism. Bobbio’s message is that Fascism and anti-Fascism must not merely pass into history.

In this thesis, I set out to prove the validity of Bobbio’s tenet that political and social democracy cannot be satisfied through the exclusive pursuit of economic democracy. Democracy, he claims, can only be realized through the implementation of democratic institutions that guarantee international participation. I aim to define the politics of culture that Bobbio prescribes to preserve the role of culture, and to show that anti-Fascism is necessary to liberalism. Anti-Fascism permits individuals to articulate their needs and ideals in society, unlike Fascism which stifles these through its monoculture.

I also explain the applicability of anti-Fascism as a contemporary political method, and I reinforce the idea that democratic values are strengthened through the addition of an anti-Fascist component. I illustrate how the history of anti-Fascism and the intellectuals who are committed to preserving its memory and political utility need no longer form part of a side-lined “grey zone”. On the contrary, they indicate a path to contemporary democratic theory. I argue that the ideals of the Partito d’Azione, although formulated in the late 1930s and early 1940s, have significant relevance to the questions of the current epoch. The Partito d’Azione gave rise to a popular vocation for liberty that has today become the target of the neo-liberal Right. The political programme of that Right is based on the dismantling of the anti-Fascist corpus of ideas— including the validity of debate and of non-conformist views—as developed by the members of the anti-Fascist intellectual community of Turin. The neo-liberal Right seeks to transform Italy into a market with US-style flexibility and to discredit the entire baggage of Italy’s post-war Left. With Communism out of the picture in terms of political relevance, all that remains of the Left in Italy is Bobbio’s social liberalism. Bobbio’s political agenda was never limited to the prerogatives of labour but sprang to the defence of the under-dog, that is, those whose citizenship puts them at risk, or whose basic rights at the international level are threatened.

My thesis provides a historical context through which Bobbio’s work can be approached, through an examination of his role as a protagonist of the anti-Fascist movement. In Chapter I, I illustrate the importance of Bobbio’s intellectual forebears and their writings, which gave rise to Bobbio’s central concept of a politics of culture. I define the politics of culture within the context of Bobbio’s
liberalism, where he draws on the thinking and life experience of other Italian intellectuals - all of whom reiterate their affinity with a tradition of politics that developed as liberal socialism (Liberalsocialismo).

In Chapter II, I outline the contours of Bobbio's form of liberalism, which is rooted in anti-Fascism. Liberalism for Bobbio is linked to the politics of culture as a methodology of non-violence. It focuses on the question of how one governs rather than who governs. Fascism negates all possibility for political debate and ideological struggle. Responding to this deep inadequacy leads Bobbio to call for the separation of culture from politics – while not ostracizing those who endorse Marxism.

In Chapter III, I analyze Bobbio's conception of philosophy as a political tool. He emphasizes that intellectuals must not wed political causes, but should maintain their distance from politics to prevent culture becoming the maidservant of politics. Some of the tensions reflected in the interaction of political forces throughout the history of the 20th century are illustrated through a comparison with the contemporary intellectuals Rorty and Bauman. Bobbio is committed to the seriousness of moral issues, to classic essentialism and to the belief that the intellectual's role has changed little over time. Rorty and Bauman, among others, present a contrary and "post-modern" view.

In Chapter IV, I conclude that Bobbio pursues a truly liberal agenda that has developed through furthering the primacy of debate and dissension while undertaking a close study of post-war Italian politics. Italian social liberalism can provide a valid model for political philosophers and can thereby enrich liberalism everywhere. Although the historical legacy of anti-Fascism has been subject to attack, Bobbio's method of upholding the politics of culture brings together the strengths of liberalism and socialism in a progressive combination, and as a sound political prescription. This combination envisages that i) liberalism requires socialism to evolve progressively; and ii) socialism requires liberalism for its procedural rules and its credo of self-reliance.

The long Communist parenthesis resulted in the concealment of other possible roads to liberalism. The major political options capable of fusing the principles of freedom with social emancipation were squeezed nearly out of sight by the all-encompassing conflict between anti-Communist liberalism and Communism. Bobbio's anti-Fascism, rooted in the politics of culture, can serve as a guide to intellectuals on the Left. Forging a socialism with a liberal face is still required today, and no longer seems utopian.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AN    Alleanza nazionale
CGL   Confederazione Generale del Lavoro
CIL   Confederazione Italiana del Lavoro
       [Italian Confederation of Labour]
CLN   Comitato di liberazione nazionale
CLNAI Comitato di liberazione nazionale alta Italia
CMRP  Comando militare regionale piemontese
CNEL  Consiglio nazionale dell'economia e del lavoro
DC    Democrazia cristiana
FI    Forza Italia
GL    Giustizia e Libertà
GUF   Gruppi Universitari Fascisti
IRI   Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale
OVRA  Operazione di Vigilanza per la Repressione dell'Anti-Fascismo
Pcdl  Partito comunista d'Italia [Communist Party founded 1921]
PCI   Partito comunista italiano
PdA   Partito d'Azione [Action Party]
PPI   Partito Popolare Italiano [Popular Party]
PSDI  Partito social-democratico italiano
PSI   Partito socialista italiano
PSIUP Partito socialista d'unità proletaria
PSU   Partito socialista unitaria
RAI Radiotelevisione Italiana
RC Rifondazione comunista - Refounded Communists
Biographical Note

Norberto Bobbio or Bindi, as he is known to his closest friends, was born in Turin in the Italian region of Piedmont on 18 October 1909. He has always made Turin his home. His university teaching career spans the years 1935 to 1984. From 1935 to 1972 he taught courses on the philosophy of law at several Italian universities, namely Camerino, Siena, Padua (1940-1948) and Turin. From 1972 to 1979, he taught political philosophy at the University of Turin, where he has been Professor Emeritus since 1979.

Bobbio was awarded a degree in jurisprudence in 1931; his thesis supervisor was Gioele Solari, who had also supervised Gobetti's thesis in 1922. In 1932 Bobbio spent two months in Germany (one month at the University of Heidelberg) and one month, August 1932, with Ludovico Geymonat and Claudio Treves at the University of Marburg. In 1933 Bobbio took his degree in philosophy; his thesis concerned Husserl's phenomenology (supervisor Annibale Pastore).

In 1935 and again, in 1943, he was arrested for anti-Fascist activity (as the Fascist regime intensified its efforts to dissolve Giustizia e Libertà). He was arrested in December 1943 and he was released from prison in the spring of 1944.

Bobbio was an active member of the Partito d'Azione and a major influence in the Resistance. He was a member of the partisan movement Giustizia e Libertà and was among the founders of the Partito d'Azione in 1942. The Italian anti-Fascist movement was divided into two groups comprising activists within Italy and those abroad, know as fuorusciti or exiles; Bobbio has analyzed all strands of the Italian Resistance to Fascism.

From 1976 to 1979, he was a regular contributor to the Turinese newspaper La Stampa. Since the foundation of the Centro Studi Piero Gobetti in 1961, Bobbio has been its president.

In 1946 Bobbio was an unsuccessful candidate in the post-war elections of the Partito d'Azione in Padua.

In 1984 Bobbio was named Senator for Life by former President Sandro Pertini (Pertini was a CLN leader and President of Italy from 1978-1985). In 1992 his name was put forward as a possible candidate for the Presidency of the Republic.

Most of his life has been dedicated to philosophical research and teaching. His principal area of study is the problems of political theory, although in 1993 he wrote a book dedicated to the problems of intellectuals, Il dubbio e la scelta (Doubt and choice). He was among the first contemporary thinkers to undertake research into the philosophy of language, logic and analytic philosophy. Bobbio's major intellectual interests are the philosophy of law, which he approaches through the
study of classical theorists such as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant and Hegel, and secondly the history of political doctrines, which he has used to develop his own political theory, the politics of culture. Bobbio has also played a major role in the development of sociology in Italy. His interests include political debate on current affairs, particularly on issues related to peace and democracy. Ideological debate, discussion of whether it is necessary to leave behind a political scenario of two major blocs and the effort to formulate a third way somewhere between liberalism and Communism have characterized his most recent work.

In 1988 Bobbio became Honorary President of the Association "Comprendre"; previously he had been a member of its Promotional Committee, along with Julien Benda, Benedetto Croce and Thomas Mann, among others.

He has written a vast series of books and essays, some of which can be consulted in the References section below. A more comprehensive list of Bobbio's 2,025 publications can be found in Carlo Viroli's Bibliografia degli scritti di Norberto Bobbio 1934 –1993, Laterza, 1995. A significant part of Bobbio's personal library has been donated and catalogued by the Centro Studi Piero Gobetti in Turin, which is also the home of the Istituto piemontese per la storia della Resistenza e della società contemporanea and the Archivio nazionale cinematografico della Resistenza. In association with the Compagnia di San Paolo, the Centro Studi has compiled a bibliography of all Bobbio's works (http://www.erasmo.it).

English readers became familiar with Bobbio in the 1980s. Bobbio's writings have been translated into nineteen different languages*.

*See Bonenate, L, 2000. 'Norberto Bobbio: Profil bio-bibliographique' in Cités, no. 2
Non che io ritenga necessario e giusto confrontare le particolarità di uno Stato con quelle di un altro. Quando al confine dell'Italia mi ricordo del confine della Russia, questo succede soltanto perché quotidianamente in giornali, riviste e opuscoli il fascismo viene paragonato al bolscevismo, la dittatura alla dittatura e Mussolini a Lenin. Io soggiaccio in qualche modo a un desiderio, ma anche all'influenza dell'opinione pubblica, quando faccio dei confronti. Ma per il momento trovo soltanto differenze (Roth, 1995:18).

INTRODUCTION

Norberto Bobbio's philosophical outlook and political experience can provide us with a better understanding of Italy's historical development and of the country's increasing importance both within Europe and throughout the world. The new millennium has to some extent extinguished the ideologies of the 19th and 20th centuries, and there are even suspicions that liberalism may have depleted the moral, social and economic capital of western states. Bobbio is not entirely willing to change his brand of politics. It is true that the first Italian republic was ridden with scandals and problems of bribery, but he worries that the republic which replaced the first one will prove to be much worse. This new republic, he fears, threatens to undermine the gains of social democracy itself. Bobbio argues in favour of the continuity of the intellectual heritage, although he admits that the arguments in favour of discontinuity are just as strong. In his view, the political legacy of the philosophers of ancient Greece “has lost none of its descriptive and explanatory power” (Bobbio, 1989b:62). The analysis of historical change and comparative politics, as society moves from one form of government to another is “as useful as ever for contemporary political analysis” (ibid.:63), he argues. The themes of war and peace are perennial ones and the commentaries of pre-modern philosophers are still valid, even inexhaustible, sources of instruction that serve to allow intellectuals to compare relations between states in the modern age.

In the pages that follow, I attempt to contribute to the discussion of how the function of intellectuals has changed since the beginning of the modern State. I undertake this task in two ways: i) by delineating Bobbio's conception of the task of intellectuals, including its historical derivatives; and ii) by comparing his view of the intellectual with that of other contemporary thinkers. In the past, metaphysics and religion could give answers that were considered to be sufficient, but the development of secular culture and numerous ethical possibilities have culminated...
in a plurality of values. It has become increasingly arduous to orient oneself, and this is perhaps the greatest intellectual challenge of liberalism.

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the first Italian Republic have unhinged politics: the paradigm has changed. Bobbio’s arguments assist the reader in exposing several key blindspots and muddles of the Left and they help to clarify the advantages and disadvantages of the democratic method (Keane in Bobbio, 1989b:xxvii). The main reason for lack of direction on the Left "is due to the fact that in the modern world, problems have emerged which the traditional movements of the Left never [before] had to face" (Bobbio, 1996c:99). Moreover, some assumptions on which the Left based its plans to transform society have not materialized. "After 1989, the end of Communism, the end of work as production and, in Italy, the end of mass parties, all that was of use to us in understanding reality is now useless" (ibid.), Bobbio claims. The way forward includes a redefinition of the Left, and the definitive healing of the enduring rift between Italian Communists and Socialists, which dates from 1921. That healing process can be furthered by viewing the last century of organized socialism, historically speaking, as humanity’s struggle to leave a condition of inferiority (Foa and Foa, 1995:33).

After the defeat of Communism, Bobbio argues, the world is no closer to having solved its problems and the strength of democracy has been weakened. He agrees with Emmanuel Levinas who says that, although Communism was accompanied by excesses, it represented an expectation that wrongs committed against the weak could be put right. Communists did not devise a ready solution, "but there was the idea that history had a sense and that living was not senseless living" (Bobbio, 1997a:247). Great social change has put enormous pressure on the intellectual to "deliver"; "if we only take the case of Italy, the contemporaneous end of the DC and the PCI also meant the end of two political conceptions: two systems that kept ideology, action and societal vision together have collapsed and we find ourselves considering the future of democracy" (La Stampa, 2/07/98:19). Yet, at the same time, Bobbio argues, “this void has opened up virgin space in political culture and
one can now build the new bases of knowledge required for good government" (ibid.).

In formulating Bobbio's conception of the intellectual, I draw together the identifying features of anti-Fascism based on his essential prescription: the politics of culture. Bobbio's politics of culture requires one to uphold a healthy scepticism, that is, a preference for moderation of judgement and a sense for the complexity of arguments. It means accepting neither a religious nor political figure, whether a god or a populist leader, nor a political system *en bloc*, in developing one's moral code of conduct. A politics of culture means that the individual must develop a set of principles that are not handed down from a higher authority, except where personal security, and that of others, is concerned. The State defends the liberty of the individual and prevents men and women from harming themselves or others; this authority of the State arises through the reciprocal consent of individuals.

The advent of Fascism in Italy, which was both anti-liberal and anti-socialist, caused Bobbio to change the course of his thinking. In the early days of Fascism, Bobbio did not oppose Mussolini's regime with any determination; he joined the PNF [*Partito nazionale fascista*] in 1928. Later he openly contested Fascism, following the persecution of Italian Jews, anti-Fascists and intellectuals. While carrying out the historical reconstruction of that decisive phase of Italian history, Bobbio challenges intellectuals of the Right and the Left to define both the meaning of historical revisionism on the basis of Italian example, and the requirements for a "normalization" of Italian history. The politics of culture Bobbio seeks to preserve includes an interpretation of anti-Fascism that comprises not only a set of unrenounceable values but also what Rusconi refers to as a "soggetto storicamente consistente" [a historically significant branch of knowledge], knowledge that is not subject to revision. That branch of knowledge rests on a rich and vast pool of liberal intellectual sources, although the contribution to liberalism made by each one varies in strength and import. With his politics of culture, Bobbio proposes a method, a "cure", a means of protecting liberal and democratic political culture from contamination, from that which detracts from liberty. The intellectual, he advises,
acts as the promoter of culture who uses culture to influence political debate, yet without marrying a political cause or forgetting about his or her cultural mission to disseminate knowledge and sow doubt.

At the outset of Fascism, Bobbio was at first subject to “the rules and authority of the regime under which he was obliged to live” (ibid.), but his experience as an anti-Fascist and his prominence after the war as a representative of the Italian Left without party affiliation (except for two brief periods when he joined the PdA and the PSU), attest to his commitment to heed the “danger of the Right’ in the name of anti-Fascism” (ibid.). In his work Autobiografia, Bobbio describes the influence that socialism exerted. Fascism, war and the passing of racial laws caused his generation to be obsessed by the danger of the Right. Bobbio admired the strength of the Communist Party but hoped to liberalize Communism by injecting it with democratic principles. We see this synthesized in Bobbio’s private letter to Amendola⁶: ‘We need your strength; but you need our principles’ (Bobbio, 1997:123).

In accommodating a partial revision of Fascism, Nazism and Communism, however, Bobbio argues that the superiority of Communist ideals vis-à-vis Nazism and Fascism must be acknowledged. Bobbio defends Communism as the morally superior “ism” of the three. Before the advent of Fascism, Italy had a liberal and parliamentary government, yet in the space of a few years “Fascism imposed an anti-parliamentary, anti-liberal and anti-democratic regime” (Antonicelli, 1975:153).

In the post-war period, Bobbio undertook an open dialogue with the Communists, using his politics of culture as a pedagogical method which influenced the tone of the debate in a positive sense. It resulted in a less authoritarian version of Communism that was able to wield more national influence. Bobbio’s dialogue with leading Italian Communists ultimately moderated the anti-Communist propaganda which had “created great confusion among the clandestine and semi-clandestine apparatus of the Party” (Bocca, 1973:405) and helped shape an Italian Communism that remained distinct from the Soviet version. Bobbio’s special relationship with the
Italian Left under the hegemony of the PCI was full of contradictions, but also constituted an innovation in Italian political life. Bobbio contested Communism's hegemony, which diminished the importance of the non-Communist Left. The non-Communist Left Bobbio represents has lost none of its validity; it continues to pursue a cultural strategy of non-hegemony and inclusion through democratic dialogue with all political adversaries. That strategy remains the lifeblood of the democratic state.

The values that were forged during the struggle for liberty and democracy in the anti-Fascist Resistance need to be preserved as intellectual tools. They need to continue to be linked to the history of Nazism and Fascism, though their current and future applications may be different. Bobbio provides the basis on which to undertake intellectual struggle through the recognition that there is both moral and political value in being able to identify evil. The liberal state, he thinks, must promote some particular notions of the good, insofar as these notions are historically contingent or known to be true through experience. This view contrasts with the views of many other intellectuals and competing versions of liberalism.

Fascism, Bobbio believes, is the ideology of violence. He does not believe that Fascism and Nazism evolved in reaction to Communism. "The essential nucleus of Fascist ideology occurred much earlier than anti-Communism, anti-democracy" (Bobbio, 1998a:15). Fascism "claimed to be an alternative to socialism" (ibid.) while, with regard to democracy, it embodied its radical overthrow, since Fascism was a regime based on power from above and the principle of hierarchy. Neither Fascism nor Nazism can "morally" compare with Communism owing to their basic concepts, Bobbio contends. Nazism "is, in itself and from the very beginning, theoretically false and morally evil for it is based on the superiority of one race over all others: the horror of Nazism existed in its conception" (ibid.).

He believes it is necessary to move beyond the narrowness of reflecting only on the Italian case, for "the debate on Fascism and anti-Fascism cannot be treated as only an Italian matter" (Bobbio, ee:2). Rather, the Italian Resistance was a fragment of the European Resistance. Resistance took place in all the countries
occupied by German troops, but the merit of the Italian Resistance was that of having Italy participate in a great European movement (ibid.), whether or not its participants were Communists. Whoever forgets European resistance is also forgetting Hitler's aggression and, Bobbio argues, for that reason Fascism and anti-Fascism cannot be placed on the same plane.

In defining Bobbio's politics of culture I find it useful to consider one of the strands of liberalism found in Richard Bellamy's book, *Liberalism and Modern Society* (1992). In the final chapter, 'From Liberal Democracy to Democratic Liberalism', Bellamy refers to a particular liberal tension that also features in Bobbio's prose. Rather than a set of universal truths, Bellamy emphasizes the historically contingent nature of liberalism and the fact that in today's advanced capitalist economies, the social environment that once lent ethical liberalism its coherence is no longer able to function on the basis of one single set of norms (Bellamy, 1992:252). A more reality-based liberalism is required, Bellamy affirms, one that takes account of the historical context and the perennial flux and differentiation of values, which cannot be ordered in terms of correctness or superiority. Bobbio is a realist liberal in that he focuses "on conflict and the role of power in holding a community together" (ibid.:253). He cannot, however, be described as a purely realist liberal, for although he endorses Hobbes' covenant and the diffusion of collective agreements that reflect the rational convergence of views, he is adamant that liberalism must have a moral basis. "Do not kill" and "do not practise violence" have moral meanings for all citizens, Bobbio believes, and there is no need to forego those basic values, which most people everywhere share. The main problem, he believes, is implementing national and international conventions based on democratic consensus, contracts that offer more than mere intentions.

Although Bobbio recognizes that there are many different worldviews, he believes there is an objective way of judging the legitimacy of competing claims to authority. Coexistence can be regulated peacefully through observance of the rules of democratic liberalism and the lawful respect of human rights, but the legitimacy of values must be judged on the basis of "the technique of reason" (Bobbio, nn:3).
The principal task of the intellectual in society is that of the bearer of “a seed of reason of an epoch”, a task that compares to that of sociologists and scientists. Indeed, there is no distinction to be made between the function of intellectuals in contemporary society and the function of intellectuals per se: to be an intellectual is to play an enduring role. The task of intellectuals is to develop, enlarge, fortify and defend the domain of reason (ibid.), even at the price of seeming old-fashioned. Bobbio contends that intellectuals must combat the idols of our time, lending their ears to neither fanatics nor conformists, even at the risk of remaining alone or within a restricted group. The politics of culture is a commitment to remain loyal to the spirit from which philosophy as rational thought was born (ibid.). Bobbio can thus be defined as a classic intellectual rather than a post-modern one, for the post-modern intellectual is not loyal to any particular interpretation or conception of history.

There are at least two contentious aspects of liberalism raised by Bellamy that are useful to keep in mind while examining Bobbio’s politics of culture. Bellamy recommends that to “avoid a moralistic politics, politics must be kept separate from ethics” (ibid.:256). Yet Bobbio emphasizes that anti-Fascism is a moral duty above all, so he thus affirms the validity of anti-Fascism as a common good. The second aspect Bellamy refers to is that “contemporary moral experience lacks the regularity the advocates of a framework of absolute basic rights require [... for] even the most essential of civil and political rights come into conflict with each other” (ibid.). Bobbio, by contrast, emphasizes that the recognition and protection of human rights form the foundation of modern democratic constitutions. Peace within and among states is a prerequisite for the defence of human rights and, he maintains, the process of democratization of international relations is the only road to follow in pursuing the ideal of perpetual peace.

Bobbio’s prescription for government is the inverse of Fascism, thus liberal and socialist government. The tradition of anti-Fascism Bobbio hails is the tradition shaped by the movement Giustizia e Libertà [Justice and Liberty] and the Partito d’Azione [Action Party] (1942-1948). GL was the product of a group of democratic
individuals' generous and rich political-cultural effort. They sought to free socialism from overly narrow and dogmatic ideological conditioning, and to render it a revolutionary force capable of interpreting in an unbiased way the new changes which had occurred in the economy and society of contemporary Italy (De Rosa, 1985:421). That "revolutionary" agenda was the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of the Italian Republic.

Since the Communist Left has been dismantled and to some extent discredited, GL and the PdA represent the "still-standing" non-Communist Left. Attempts are sometimes made to neutralize the importance of Bobbio's philosophical contribution through claims that his main project from the mid-seventies was essentially to expel Marxism from Italian cultural and political life. The political stakes involved in this controversy are enormous. Anti-Fascism produced an authentic ruling elite that was able to ensure that democracy took a firm hold in Italy. That achievement is especially noteworthy in the light of the revisionist claim that "most Italians endorsed Fascism" (Casucci, 1976:809). The preparedness and efficacy of the PdA and the elite that emerged from the Resistance can be seen through that elite's role as a legitimate counter-weight to the forces of the monarchy and the Vatican, the forces of tradition and stability which counted most at the time. The PdA was a new cultural force that was able to convince the allies of Italy's European vocation as a republic. Opposing forces, on the other hand, would likely have constituted a post-war government led by an authoritarian military regime, similar to that of Franco's Spain, and including, perhaps, some of the moderate Fascists who had ousted Mussolini in July 1943. Italy's anti-Fascist elite alone was able to find a "pertinent response to the problems that the collapse of Fascism caused" (ibid.).

Bobbio's strategy was one of engagement with intellectuals of the Left, in order to achieve the reformation of Communism. His success in that endeavour was witnessed by the emergence in the 1960s of a group called the "anti-anti-Fascists", led by Renzo De Felice, who by no means agreed with Bobbio's deprecation of Italy's Fascist past. Indeed, anti-anti-Fascists of today's ilk maintain that the negative interpretation of Fascism has its greatest use in contemporary politics, and serves to
privilege the working class, trade unions and those institutions and ideas which Fascism had opposed and repressed. De Felice and other intellectuals who profess his ideas — some of whom seek to exculpate Mussolini — have concocted a version of the past which has become "grist to the mill of a rising Italian new Right" (Bosworth, 2002:3). The Right's principal concern is to undercut the importance of anti-Fascism. Its members do this by placing it within the context of an ethical and political crisis which persists to the present day. In other words, anti-Fascism would need to be accompanied by the destruction of the "myth of the Resistance" in order for Italy finally to be able to recognize the problem of national consciousness, and to come to grips with the delicate balance between the nation and democracy. The anti-Fascist Left, it is argued, has translated the Resistance and a particular phase of Italian history into ideology. The new Right intends to substitute the centrality of anti-Fascism with a more general scenario in which the Resistance and the puppet republic of Salò are merged into "one history of Italy".

Bobbio does not believe that the Resistance produced the original weakness of Italian democracy. He rejects De Felice's view that the Left produced a patriotic deficit and encouraged both the fragmentation of Italy's political and social life, and the prevalent participation of the Communist Party in the Resistance. Renewed condemnation of "the assumptions of anti-Fascism" are today expressed by Italian politicians like the post-Fascist Gianfranco Fini and Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Fini claims to have paid Fascism's dues and to have brought it through the customs barrier in January 1995 by denouncing Fascism's anti-Semitic past. Berlusconi, "outmatches Mussolini's own efforts to be a journalist in politics by offering instead the spectre of a media magnate in politics" (Monbiot, 2002:13). The influence and consensus-building that the media wields is examined in Chapter II under the section that addresses some of Bobbio's most important concerns about the development of liberalism in modern society. Bobbio's view on intellectuals reflects a great degree of pessimism that derives from such "new contributors" on the cultural front. He laments the fact that intellectuals in the new millennium do not count as much as their predecessors. More than the articles that intellectuals write and the interviews they grant, Bobbio argues, the Italian political scene has been changed by a rude
illiterate like Umberto Bossi, a capable businessman like Berlusconi and an
efficient demagogic orator like Fini (Bobbio, ii:1). To Bobbio's annoyance, he
himself is old-fashioned: he prefers the written word to dialogue, to live personal
interviews and to the unbridled debate that characterizes today's mass media.
Many of those live interviews and debates lead to misunderstanding, he believes
(Bobbio, jj:1). Bobbio sees television and other mass media as performing the task
once left to intellectuals.

In Chapter I, 'Intellectual Alliances Against Fascism', I set out to establish Bobbio's
link with anti-Fascism, with particular emphasis on Gobetti's contribution to Italian
liberalism. The most important ideal Bobbio and Gobetti share is two-sided: i) the
autonomy of the individual before the State; and ii) the condemnation of Fascism
for having attributed ethical value to the State while the individual was reduced to a
mere instrument of political power. By closely following the experience of the
Communists of Turin in the early twenties during industrialization, and as a
collaborator of Antonio Gramsci's publication *Ordine Nuovo*\(^\text{10}\), Gobetti affirmed a
spirit of participation and critical vigilance. The most important outcome of initial
anti-Fascist criticism, following the entreaty of Gobetti, was that liberal intellectuals
were encouraged to broaden the scope of their criticism and to embrace every
sphere of public life. It is this branching-out that laid the foundations of an entire
outlook and political blueprint that culminates in Bobbio's liberalism. Bobbio is
closely linked to Gobetti, morally and culturally. Both affirm a need for a strategy of
inclusion on cultural grounds and have sought interlocutors from all political
streams. Gobetti acclaimed the liberating force of the Russian Revolution and
affirmed the autonomy of culture in overcoming the unnatural divide between East
and West. Bobbio continued that tradition during the Cold War, but did not remain
deaf to the evils of the Soviet empire.

I then examine the influences and historical imperatives imposed on Bobbio's
philosophy by Piedmont. The corpus of ideas culminating in a pattern of action which
Bobbio defines as the politics of culture has Turinese anti-Fascist roots. I introduce a
group of preferred authors or *maestri* that Bobbio has acquired, the members of

\(^{10}\)
which share his political passions – Piero Calamandrei, Aldo Capitini, Piero Gobetti, Rodolfo Mondolfo, Gaetano Salvemini and Carlo Rosselli.

In Chapter II, 'Political Community: Liberalism over Multiculturalism', I discuss the newly emerging challenges for liberalism. In Italy, the liberal experience is unique since for roughly 2000 years Rome has been the spiritual capital of Catholicism. In this sense, Italian liberalism differs from that of all the other European countries. The Catholic Church opposed the creation of secular and independent regions and institutions. Italy was also slower than most European nations in developing a strong state tradition and a sufficient level of industrialization.

Since positivism constitutes a move away from theological or metaphysical knowledge, it contributes to the sphere of liberal thought. In Bobbio's view, then, both positivism and Marxism "could be taken for one another ... because they shared the major ideal of this century, the ideal of science" (Bobbio, 1995e:13). Under the aegis of science, the transformation of society could be better guided and "no longer entrusted to the forces of chance or to the invisible hand of a superior Providence" (ibid.:13). Both are secular philosophies although they do not share the same conception of history; both constitute reformist philosophies but "became the target of concerted attacks from the traditional intellectuals who launched the cultural movements of the new century" (ibid.:14).

Given the many challenges of modern life, the very idea of progress and the individual as the driving force behind it has returned to the forefront of all discussion. Addressing such issues of social concern has a direct bearing on the question of the future of democracy for, Bobbio warns, "the process of democratization has not even begun to scratch the surface of the two great blocks of descending and hierarchical power in every complex society, big business and public administration." (Bobbio, 1987:57). If the success of these two blocks continues to hold out against the pressures exerted from below, the democratic transformation of society cannot take place or be completed. Bobbio fears that that transformation may not even be possible.
In reconstructing the history of Italian liberalism, one must necessarily acknowledge the importance of the resistance to Fascism. I therefore discuss the role of Gobetti as an intellectual influence on Bobbio, and examine their different understanding of liberalism. As the two lived under different times and circumstances, their anti-Fascism developed in distinct ways. Gobetti's death at the age of 25 in 1926 did not permit the full realization of his anti-Fascism, but Bobbio consistently looks to Gobetti for his liberal mission as a publisher and disseminator of Italian, European and Russian historical texts. Gobetti's journals, the first of which he published at the age of 17 (Energie Nove), set an example that Bobbio followed, that of writing and debating his views, thus proffering them for the scrutiny of fellow intellectuals.

By the 1930s, a force with limited membership comprising mostly intellectuals and left-wing politicians developed into a much more broadly based Resistance, which was "formidable, both psychologically and militarily" (Koff and Koff, 2000:13). The PdA, along with the Democrazia cristiana (DC)\textsuperscript{11}, Partito comunista d'Italia (PCI)\textsuperscript{12}, Partito socialista italiano (PSI) and Republican parties, formed a Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale (Committee of National Liberation - CLN) after the fall of Mussolini. Of the parties that formed the CLN, the PdA, which had not existed before Fascism, did not outlast the Resistance. Both GL and the PdA were created to counter Fascism and in this respect they are unique elements of Italian political history. They emerged after the victory of Fascism and were not tied to pre-Fascist ideology. They constituted a reaction to Fascism, "to what Fascism meant and caused in Italian political life" (De Rosa, 1985:422). The PdA signalled a call for renewal, based on a critique of the institutions and parties of the pre-Fascist period. GL and the PdA had a revolutionary and subversive character (Aga Rossi in De Rosa, ibid.). The PdA was the expression of cultural commitment and political vocations that had a radical meaning and included various traditions of progressive Italian liberalism that went from Mazzini to Gobetti and Salvemini.
Bobbio believes Marxism to be on an equal footing with positivism since both “isms” are secular and share the ideal of science. Communism is necessarily included in Bobbio’s vision of liberalism since he believes a rejection of Communism would be incompatible with freedom. Indeed, one of the most interesting debates in Italy is that of intellectual responsibility for the political drift to the radical Right. The vision of an Italy that needs to overcome Marxism to achieve the nation’s modernization, to expel Marxism from Italian history – as Marxism is a totalitarian and pre-modern culture that is extraneous to the thought that emerged through western Enlightenment – is portrayed by Pasquale Serra as Bobbio’s main pursuit. However, Bobbio’s preference for Marxism and his abhorrence of Fascism did not mean that he reserves no criticism for Marxism. It is Bobbio’s conviction that Marx’s genius lies primarily in his achievement as a critic rather than as a system-builder (Bobbio, 1988:163). He reminds us that Marx believed proletarian democracy to be more democratic than bourgeois democracy and also “heralded the emergence of a new type of state which would inaugurate the process of the withering away of the state” (ibid.:106). Bobbio envisages a different relationship between democracy and socialism, wherein it is not the case that all states are characterized negatively.

Communism’s attributes, Bobbio argues, are evergreen, despite the grave errors committed in the name of Communism. The PCI waited several decades before distancing itself from the Soviet Union, as it was caught up in the mythology of the Russian Revolution. After 1948, Italy encapsulated the Communist ideal of difference, of diversity, in a post-war political landscape held in the sway of the DC and, at the same time, gave strength to other non-Communist groups of the Left. Although the PCI was wrong to reject social democracy and caused Italian socialism to oscillate between pro-Communist positions and pro-DC positions, its culture fostered Italian political maturity. Representatives of the PCI formed a major component of anti-Fascism, helped draft the Italian Constitution, defended democratic institutions and also supported a vast campaign to eradicate illiteracy.

In the immediate post-war period, from the pages of the journals *Rinascita* (from 1948-1955) and *Il Politecnico*, Elio Vittorini and Palmiro Togliatti headed two
different ideological currents. Vittorini emphasized the autonomous and separate role of intellectuals vis-à-vis political parties. Togliatti did not deny that separation of roles but was adamant that politics towered over culture; culture, in his view, depends on politics. At the beginning of the fifties, Bobbio sparked new debate concerning these two visions of the intellectual by responding to the initial positions of Vittorini and Togliatti. As the Cold War took definite shape, intellectuals were faced with the obligatory and radical choice of taking sides, given that the world had been split into two blocs. Perplexed by that state of affairs, Bobbio decided to take refuge in intellectual commitment rather than seek an active role in politics. Although he was deeply interested in politics, "he never accepted the diminished role of the 'organic intellectual'" (Mancarella, 1995:39). Bobbio’s position was that of the political critic, without an anti-Communist vision. During the immediate post-war period, he concluded that Italy, in the years leading up to the conflict, had undergone a phase characterized by the divorce of culture and politics. That divorce, he believed, derived from the poor functioning of the "social organism", typical of weak democratic societies. In a society that does not function properly, he argues, it is inevitable that the process of transformation rests on the shoulders of intellectual minorities. It is they who must “educate” or indoctrinate the masses, that is, teach them ideology. Indeed, that process has already been witnessed in history. In the 18th, 19th and, in the case of Italy, early 20th centuries, the influence of intellectuals culminated respectively in the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and Fascism.

Bobbio’s discussion of Italian political culture also includes a dialogue with Catholics and how their direct experience of Fascism culminated in staunch anti-Communism. Their position contrasts with Bobbio’s in that he considered the Communists to be the anti-Fascist allies of the Partito d’Azione. Through his exchange with the Catholic historian Augusto Del Noce, Bobbio emphasizes the lack of democracy that characterized Christian democracy in the post-war period, but also acknowledges the importance of the Catholics in building genuine liberalism. That exchange concerned the necessity of a politics of the centre for post-war Italy, the question of overcoming anti-Fascism and whether Togliatti’s Communist Party would eventually become a democratic party. Although both Del
Noce and Bobbio spoke as direct witnesses of Fascism, there was a fundamental
difference concerning their relationship with the Communists: Del Noce and the
Catholic party of the centre were adversaries of the Communists in the anti-Fascist
movement while Bobbio and the members of the PdA were their allies.

Later in Chapter II, I discuss Bobbio's preference for Hobbes' model of the State.
The span of Bobbio's lifetime has coincided with the "reversal of the relationship
between the state and the citizen, which typifies the formation of the modern state"
(Bobbio, 1996a:viii,ix). Politics today puts more emphasis on the rights a citizen
can demand than on the duties of a citizen. The individualistic conception of
society has all but blocked a view of politics from the sovereign's perspective.
Bobbio proposes the replication of Hobbes' contract between individuals and the
State to benefit nations through international conventions, but this proves to be
ambitious and difficult terrain. International enforcement mechanisms such as the
International Criminal Court have not been accepted by all states and there is no
general consensus on the benefit of states' subjecting themselves to international
standards of accountability. The power of criticism voiced by the media and the
rule of international law lead government leaders to fear prosecution before an
international court. The development of international institutions indicates that the
defence of human rights and the effective administration of justice are not priorities
shared – or shared equally – by all states.

In Chapter III, I discuss Bobbio's formula and recommended agenda for
intellectuals: the politics of culture. The tools required to pursue that agenda are the
research of facts and their interpretation. These lead inevitably to the realization that
the genuine historical danger for Italy was Fascism rather than Communism, since
Communism represented the lesser threat to liberty. Contemporary attempts to
attribute equal cultural dignity to Fascism and anti-Fascism are not acceptable to
Bobbio. This revisionism aims to discredit historical truth, leaving an empty political
space in which anything can be constructed. The cult of power, contempt for
minorities, racist propaganda and praise for authoritarian systems have been
sharpened by the revisionism permeating contemporary Italian culture. Bobbio
implemented his politics of culture by crossing the last century in awareness, and by providing documents that consisted of “watchful recollections” that would encourage debate.

The essential elements of the politics of culture and inclusion comprise, among other things, the cultural activities of debating, writing and publishing and the absolute autonomy of the same, reacting to others’ views, disregarding the dogma of external authorities such as the Church and the party and celebrating the value of diversity through open and varied political association. The process of debate serves to develop new positive values that are required in the political arena.

Bobbio warns us not to identify only those involved in artistic, literary or scientific pursuits, or those who transmit a particular cultural heritage as intellectuals. Intellectuals do not form a homogeneous class “and they are never represented by a party” (Bobbio, 1993a:157). As minute coachmen, the intellectuals who form the intellectual class are not the bearers of a sole body of ideas. Rather, according to the ideas they defend, they are libertarians or authoritarians, liberals or socialists, sceptical or dogmatic, secular or religious. Each group has its own intellectuals and ideals.

Bobbio disagrees with intellectuals who believe that involvement with politics represents a kind of dishonour, but he also warns that they must not betray their primary role as teachers and disseminators of culture. Intellectuals run two risks vis-à-vis culture, he maintains: if the intellectual plays a central role in affirming a particular ideology, he can be said to be betraying his mission. Yet in remaining aloof from politics, the intellectual is able to exert little influence on the outcome of politics. Bobbio identifies the true intellectual as a militant philosopher who must fight the theses that he considers opposite to his own. The intellectual’s major task is that of demonstrating his civic commitment as a teacher.

The ideal figure of the intellectual vis-à-vis politics is independence but not indifference, Bobbio argues. One of the fundamental characteristics of a society
that is not free is the exalted supremacy and imposition of politics over culture. In such a society, the sphere where the battle of ideas takes place is subject to the will of whoever holds power; to retain it the ruler uses the legitimate monopoly of force but also claims to have the monopoly on virtue (Bobbio, oo:1).

As a theorist, the intellectual is limited to developing his or her ideas and framing a vision of the same. This role contrasts with that of the politician – the practitioner – who turns the ideas into action. The coachman can take the lead but the road travelled in political and historical terms is not within his complete control, Bobbio argues. The theory framed by intellectuals is reflected in practice, and the intellectual himself must be capable of translating theoretically elaborate principles into concrete political action. If not, Bobbio argues, the intellectual’s commitment remains sterile and abstract (Mancarella, 1995:40). The role of the intellectual vis-à-vis political power is an enduring theme and I indicate where Bobbio stands in comparison to other intellectuals, particularly contemporary ones like Bauman and Rorty. As concerns Italian intellectuals, his position lies somewhere between that of Salvemini and Gramsci: for Salvemini, the domain of politics is incompatible with intellectual pursuit while for Gramsci the contrary is true, for politics pervades everything (ibid.).

Bobbio envisages a more innovative role for the intellectual, a role that is independent from the two traditional models: politicized culture and apolitical culture. Culture must be autonomous, Bobbio argues, yet not entirely apolitical, for it does occupy a political level, but it also serves other purposes that are not exclusively political. He prefers to use the phrase “politics of culture” in referring to the precise social function of culture, which is not necessarily defined as part of a specific political formation. To define culture as a political formation would diminish its role, for intellectuals are obliged primarily to defend and promote the development of culture, to ensure that suitable conditions in which culture can flourish are maintained.

Bobbio established a form of debate rooted in anti-Fascism that is of perennial validity, for it fills a historiographical gap. He proves that the simple identification of
the culture of the Left with Communism removes the influence of all other ideological matrixes of the Left. The non-Communist Left left tangible signs of its pluralist cultural experience, which are “even more significant than those of Communist culture” (Mancarella). He welcomes the advent of sociology since it brought about a transformation in the intellectual’s role, and split the category of intellectuals into two groups – ideologues, who provide guiding principles, as well as a new era of “intellectual experts” who established a relationship with policymakers. Ideologues and experts represent intellectuals who provide guiding principles and intellectuals who suggest the means to achieve an end, respectively. In society, Bobbio argues that we need intellectuals with good academic backgrounds to organize consensus since most citizens, realistically speaking, do not exert a significant influence on “the way political decisions are made”.

The major opponents of the Fascist regime emigrated to France or elsewhere, to continue their intellectual struggle against the regime as political émigrés. In Paris, the Sardinian Emilio Lussu and Gaetano Salvemini formed “the anti-Fascist movement that took up the task of identifying and promoting methods of revolutionary struggle to topple the Fascist dictatorship” (Internet site h). GL members objected to the placing of members of the Fascist elite within all the vital organs of the State in order to create the hierarchy that would run the country (Corvaja, 2001:v,vi). Those intellectuals expressed opposition to the “culture of politics” that is characterized by what Bobbio refers to as the planning of culture by politicians. The politics of culture must defend liberty by removing the material and moral obstacles that impede the free circulation of ideas. Genuine culture, Bobbio affirms, requires both liberty and truth (Bobbio, 1955:39). Bobbio refers to “truth” as a spirit of approach in evoking historical experience, for culture is not practised in complete isolation from political ideology. The autonomy of culture is, by the same token, not complete; its autonomy is relative. What the intellectual must do to preserve that partial autonomy, Bobbio advises, is that even when he associates himself with a particular ideology he must still maintain a critical spirit that is not influenced by dogmatism. Intellectuals must act when political power uses
dogmatism as a tool of government, for resistance against it and the defence of critical spirit become the moral and political duties of the intellectual (ibid.:40).

Bobbio does not like intellectuals who remain above the crowd, or those who are cynical or only try to console themselves. Impartiality, which is a theoretical necessity, ought not to be confused with neutrality. Bobbio thinks that the intellectual should be an example of moderation. Therefore, to jump headfirst into the mêlée of the daily news, to pass judgement on all and everything based on the little reliable information that comes from newspapers, to give advice that has not been solicited, to accentuate non-essential details, and then lose sight of the overall, are acts which are not befitting to intellectuals. Militant culture does not escape falling into such routine, however, Bobbio warns. The theory of media as a modern means for the public to scrutinize the activities of governments has taken on increasing importance in Italy. This is hardly surprising since public sector television has, traditionally speaking, been riddled with party appointees. The freedom of mass media and the undue influence of business and political interests are one of Bobbio's particular concerns in his discussion of liberalism. Control of the television news and publishing industry in Italy constitutes a threat to democracy. The intellectual is called upon to change this unhealthy practice.

In his consideration of the recurring question of the relationship between intellectuals and political power, Bobbio distinguishes between "experts" and "ideologues" who contribute to the course of history. "Ideologues" refer to principles that guide, while "experts" refer to technical knowledge. The politician and the intellectual are two different figures and, according to Bobbio, "when faced with a problem, the former has the task of taking a decision, whatever it may be, while the intellectual sets about analysing it, to illustrate the pros and the cons of the question" (La Stampa, 2/07/98:19).

The changing role of intellectuals is a subject that has been researched by many contemporary intellectuals. At the end of Chapter III, I look at the views of Zygmunt Bauman and Richard Rorty to see how they differ from Bobbio's conception of
intellectuals. Bauman distinguishes between the differing roles of intellectuals in modernity and postmodernity: formerly the intellectual was a legislator, but in the post-modern era the intellectual is an interpreter of events. Still, both cultural strategies continue to exist. Rorty is disenchanted with philosophy and is convinced that there is no agreed-upon list of central problems that philosophy ought to tackle. That position contrasts with the specific aims that Bobbio sets for intellectuals. For Bobbio, an intellectual must recognize the benefit of competing truths in reinforcing democracy — yet this benefit itself rests on a moral choice to eliminate inequality, all forms of Fascism, and to steer clear of creating a new politics by destroying the moral lessons of Europe’s anti-Fascist past.

Fascism had succeeded in uniting in the political-institutional sphere that which was intended to remain divided in the social sphere. The principle of “each in his place” ensured the perpetuation of a compact and rigidly hierarchical political system. As a result of this stratification, “ideas — not live ideas, workable ones, that are embodied in [individuals] and transformed into actions — but the ideas written in books, were the first and only compass for young intellectuals” (ibid.). This theoretical accentuation reflected the PdA’s cultural opposition to Fascism. The PdA’s approach to politics and opposition to Fascism sought out organizational points of reference such as the universities, publishing houses and magazines. The consideration and dissemination of ideas signalled a widely felt desire for intellectual liberty. This ferment of ideas was also joined by a wish to abandon a limited form of socialization in which “students only fraternized with students; professionals, with men of culture: not a worker, a farmer, an artisan” (ibid.). The openness to consider ideas was united with a strategy of inclusion that opposed Fascism and the capitalism/Communism alternative, where PdA adherents put particular emphasis on the humanist quality of the person, regardless of his or her social and occupational condition.

In democratic society, intellectuals cannot remain aloof, as they would in a totalitarian society where the only alternatives are to serve or to refuse to participate at all. At the beginning of the century, Benedetto Croce believed that
Italian politics were such that a person of culture should do his “cultural job” and leave politics to the politicians. Intellectuals, he thought, would contaminate culture with politics if they acted in the service of politicians. For Bobbio, during Fascism exactly this service was exemplified by those university professors who performed a "professional duty" by teaching that Fascism was not a dictatorship but an ethical, rights-based state that sought to perfect Italy’s constitutional monarchy. Such action, however, constituted a betrayal of their roles as intellectuals. All opposition groups were silenced and the regime was linked with the deaths of many outstanding Italians who had opposed it. For those who praised the regime and sought to embellish the ethical principles of the Fascist state, such as Giovanni Gentile, Bobbio expresses only scorn in recalling their example of intellectual and cultural betrayal.

Cultural militants go from scrupulous but indifferent academic culture to the other extreme of cultural militancy which, although partial and biased, is based on current problems. There is an ever-present tension between academic culture and militant culture. Bobbio’s model is that of the rigorous intellectual who possesses a good academic background and a strong civic passion, with a capacity for critical restraint that does not wane when it comes into contact with daily problems. That kind of intellectual, Bobbio maintains, knows that there are economic, political and social problems whose solutions will affect his own life as an intellectual. When intellectuals tackle those problems, however, they add value to the discussion of them through their sense of critical analysis and their vocation to acquire knowledge with no other hidden purpose. To this, intellectuals add respect for their adversaries’ opinions; awareness of their adversaries develops as a result of mutual study, undertaken to address eternal problems as well as emerging questions.

During the Resistance, the relationship between politics and culture seemed to be reversed, compared to the first stage of “intellectual duty” exercised on a professional level by academics. Fascist academics had demonstrated the use of culture in serving politics whereas the Resistance fighters hailed the triumph of
politics – a new politics – directed at culture but independent from politics. They had given culture the task of leading national renewal. For Bobbio, until the time of the Resistance, Italian intellectuals had been "nothing", yet had been placed in a position to become "everything". The Resistance marked the liberation and redemption of Italian intellectuals from the lowly state they had reached. That liberation was characterized by the efforts of anti-Fascist intellectuals who dedicated themselves to planning the future organization of the Italian State.

At that time, Bobbio believed in the "irresistible force of the Communist Party" and gave little credit to former Socialists and Catholics. He writes: "I thought that intellectuals should have worked together with the new classes to effect a radical reform of the structure of the Italian State" (Bobbio, 1955:199). The PdA took the lead in formulating a politics of after-Fascism. Bobbio does not believe, however, that the Resistance was a revolution undertaken by intellectuals – where writers, originators of ideas and programmes and representatives of cultural and spiritual life played a very important role. That revolution, he says, was caused by the end of Fascist hegemony, where intellectuals were left in "an open sea" (Bobbio, kk:2) of many possibilities. The thought of Croce and Gentile was put aside to consider French and German intellectual sources. For, Bobbio argues, Italian intellectuals felt that it was time to uproot themselves from the national cultural tradition. Part of that need was a reaction to the crude nationalism imposed by the Fascist regime. When the Italian intellectual tradition was finally abandoned, Italian intellectuals experienced an inferiority complex and rushed to catch up for all the years lost under Fascism (ibid.). Initially, the new Italian State, born from the partisan Resistance, "recognized universities and culture as pillars of the new State" (ibid.), although that eventually proved to be an illusion. Bobbio, at least, maintains that all the fervour was not accompanied by a sufficient degree of originality.

Traditional or interpretative frameworks have come under attack since the end of the Cold War, particularly the Marxist remedy for the failures of liberalism. An assessment of the post-World-War II period reveals that there are grounds for scepticism about politics and democracy, as well as about political values
themselves. Under these circumstances, the intellectual's duty is to remain an “eternal doubter”, unlike the political “man of action”. Recently, in a revolutionary shift, the analysis of reality has overtaken ideological values, but “ideology can be refreshed by reality, particularly from historical lessons learned in acutely adverse periods of history, such as during Fascism” (ibid.). A way forward would be “to stoke the fires of anti-Fascism” in order to encourage a plurality of views and discussion from all corners. If parties of the Left can agree that the exercise of dictatorial control, violence and brutality equalled Fascism and constituted a negative experience, then their identities are clearly grounded in whatever is not Fascism. The 20 years of Fascism was a positive cultural thrust. That experience forced those in Italy who still had any human awareness left to think seriously about the country's old and new problems, its history, its historical roots, its development, the reasons for its unification, its possibilities, limits and faults (Garin, 1996:viii). Philosophers then looked for a pluralist source of knowledge and found themselves discussing liberty with Martinetti, justice with Calogero, and non-violence with Capitini. They went back to dreaming of how to achieve perpetual peace.

Paradoxically, political dialogue was easier during the decades of the Cold War when ideological affinities were clearer. Defining the present era presents a deepening challenge owing to the doubts and uncertainties associated with what Luciano Violante, former speaker of the house in the Italian parliament, calls the problem of problems: the age-old consideration of where the dividing line between philosophy and politics lies (La Stampa, 25/5/97:23). At the same juncture, Violante comments that “doubt cannot be the permanent attitude of the politician, since in the end politics is the dominion of choice and decision” (ibid.). Bobbio chooses the metaphor of the labyrinth to describe the human condition in history. Wittgenstein's fly in the bottle is a flawed image, he contends, since “this idea implies that there is a way out, and that outside the bottle there is a spectator – the only one who knows – the direction to the way out” (ibid.). The spectator in Wittgenstein's analogy is the would-be philosopher. Bobbio rejects the notion that the philosopher has a privileged understanding of reality. He believes each individual has the capacity to find the
truth. The labyrinth is also more apt than the metaphor of the fish in the net “that struggles to find a way out, since there is no exit and the fish is unaware of it” (ibid.). The individual who enters a labyrinth is aware that a way out exists, but does not know in which direction it lies. Therefore, the individual proceeds gropingly, realizing that there are some unsuccessful paths that are not to be travelled further, and trying to find which other road will reach the exit.

Bobbio maintains that existence is a continuous attempt to exit from the labyrinth, without succeeding to do so. Bobbio urges his readers to be vigilant in recalling the lessons of history. This philosophical pessimism derives from what can be called an open political wound resulting from unsettled accounts that persistently remain unsettled. The labyrinth is synonymous with Bobbio’s thinking since his thought, Pasquale Serra affirms (Datanews, 1995), “is too complex, owing to the variety of subjects he examines, the quantity of his published writings and his wide-ranging approach, comprising various disciplines, to be reduced to any one aspect or moment in time” (p. 53). According to Serra, Bobbio sought to expel Marxism from Italian politics. He suggests that that process started in 1975, and took on increasing importance with the debate on the “crisis of Marxism” that began in 1985.

In Chapter IV, I conclude that in the post-Communist era “history is moving again” (Lucas, 1999:18), and the current moment in time is an appropriate one in which to consider the validity of differing intellectual approaches. The question of how to proceed amidst the challenges of modernity and the political uncertainty that has followed the demise of Communism have occupied the forefront of politics. Bobbio describes one such challenge as humanity’s dramatically increased ability to exploit, manipulate and deflect nature from its normal course. That manipulation has created moral and legal problems which, increasingly, will require political decisions. As these will be completely different from any decisions taken in the past, there is a greater need for the leadership of intellectuals, despite Bobbio believing that they enjoy only the role of minute coachmen.
Bobbio believes that Communism is morally superior to Fascism, since Communists fought to prevent the existence and expansion of Nazi concentration camps like Auschwitz. Some may counter this argument by stating that the Soviet Union had its own lagers and forced work camps – the Gulag – for those who questioned party discipline and rejected the artificial uniformity imposed by the Communist regime. This regime at times thwarted intellectual creativity and resulted in violence. However, it is important to note, as Bobbio does, that the Soviet Revolution represented a milestone in the development of human rights, in terms of intent. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was part of a process that derived from “the rights of a historical man ... which commenced with the French Revolution and included the Soviet Revolution” (Bobbio, 1996a:19). Bobbio is certain that the job of providing global protection of human rights has not yet been finished. As knowledge widens and technology develops, economic and social conditions will produce changes in the organization of human life and relations that will engender favourable conditions for the creation of new needs and new demands for freedoms and powers. By contrast, Fascism has been described as a disease and the plague of the twentieth century.

Marxism, a positive philosophy, enriched Italian and worldwide political debate and continued to emphasize the force of the Enlightenment tradition. In particular, Bobbio hails Marx's view that progress could only take place by abandoning historical precedent and religious dogma. The Marxist hope of uplifting the masses set the stage for a liberal interpretation of the political struggle as the motor of social progress. Another liberal influence of Marxism was the shift from dynamic participation by the State – which had performed disappointingly in the pre-Fascist era – to participation by the workers.

The cycle or flow of ideas that began with Gobetti is characterized by the need for liberals in all historical situations to bring together the interests of antagonistic social forces. These interests must be defended since they are tools which contribute to the widening of the potential for freedom. The working class not only had the economic objective of higher wages, but the political objective of greater
freedom through greater equality. The strategy of inclusion that still distinguishes the Left so starkly from the Right lies precisely in the will to explicate interests in this way. Further, the Left tries to engage whoever it can in the struggle to better the human condition.
Chapter I INTELLECTUAL ALLIANCES AGAINST FASCISM

In this chapter, I endeavour to establish Bobbio's link with anti-Fascism and to draw attention to some of the contemporary debates concerning anti-Fascism and Italian identity. Bobbio sets out to reinforce the link between himself and Piero Gobetti, as a model of liberal anti-Fascism. He is convinced that that link remains valid even though Gobetti was largely inspirational, and instructive only in an indirect sense. Gobetti was a leading intellectual and influential anti-Fascist of the early twenties who attributed Italy's political immaturity to its lack of a Protestant revolution.

Aurelio Lepre defines Gobetti's liberalism as "existential anti-Fascism", which Giovanni De Luna describes as "a paradigm of identity able to provide a genuine alternative to the models that inspired the Italian formed under Mussolini's time" (Lepre, 1997:50). The "Italian" Gobetti envisaged was an "anti-Italian", who eschewed not only Mussolini's totalitarian project, but also the quietism and resignation of those who preferred to "wait it out", trusting that Fascism would eventually pass. Gobetti warned against the fatalistic and resigned attitude of those Italians who waited it out, those who bore witness to a time that never changed. Gobetti accused the majority of Italians of being attendisti, that is, of being lax in countering Fascism. This conception of Italians developed over time in response to the slow or indecisive adoption of participatory politics in Italy, and the forging of Italian identity.

Some critics emphasize Gobetti's "intellectual aristocraticism" (ibid.:51), and dismiss his "suggestive anti-Fascism" (ibid.) which they find to be very limited. At the same time, Gobetti's critics draw attention to the fact that Gobetti had little affection for the common man, whose presence he once described to his wife as "a smell of bourgeois chattel" (ibid.). Gobetti's perception of ordinary people also had political importance: he believed in the realization of political ends through education, which was the political method adopted by Trotsky and Lenin. He also heralded the new epoch that the rebellion of workers signalled during the 1919
occupation of Turin's factories (ibid.), and personally identified with those workers. However, Gobetti feared that the workers were perhaps too weak to be able to drag the masses into their movement, and that the masses "might not have the strength to suffer and resist but would prefer to give in" (ibid.). The workers in the factories also failed to produce an *epos* or essential stage of their own epic theme, Gobetti argued, for they obeyed their divisional inspectors who commanded by pistol (ibid.:52).

Although Gobetti defined anti-Fascism as being physiologically innate and a question of instinct, he did not have sufficient time to develop a more practical political platform. Bobbio has remained loyal to Gobetti's somewhat immature spirit of criticism and non-conformism in elaborating his own politics of culture. Gobetti in particular was influenced by one of the most important Marxist philosophers in Italy, Rodolfo Mondolfo. In elaborating his own formula of humanistic socialism based on a critical review of the policies pursued by the PSI at the time of its congress in 1908, where Mondolfo had "detected an ideological and ethical paucity that he tried to address" (Pugliese, 1999:56), he tried to defend socialism from its more authoritarian and deterministic variants. Mondolfo was one of Gobetti's intellectual models, for he was an original thinker who looked beyond Marx and proposed other intellectual sources like Feuerbach, among others, in proposing an autonomous cultural alternative to economic Marxism.

Mondolfo was at pains to illustrate the humanist content of Marxism, and to preserve an autonomous interpretation of Marx, one not limited to economic determinism. However Gobetti was, in Bobbio's words, anxious to distance himself from the "inertia and immaturity of Italian socialists vis-à-vis a phenomenon like Fascism which, in his view, they should have easily been able to cripple, if they had had the express political will to do so" (Bobbio, 1986b:95). Although in the early days of *Energie Nove* Gobetti sought to spare Mondolfo from the "continuously harsh and anti-socialist polemics that fill his writings from beginning to end" (ibid.), by the summer of 1922 Mondolfo had become for him the symbol of the politics pursued by Italian socialists. Bobbio describes Mondolfo as a theorist of democratic socialism,
whereas he sees Gobetti as a theorist or champion of radical and anti-socialist liberalism.

Bobbio portrays Gobetti as a theorist who distances himself from the anti-Marxism of his maestro, Luigi Einaudi, and who insists on the distinction between Marx the scientist and Marx the creator of myths. Marx the scientist is condemned inexorably by the science of economics, since liberal or free-market economics "are the only scientific economics" (ibid.:93). However, for Gobetti, Marx the creator of myths is not to be discounted, and he notes that the oversimplification of Marx the economist even serves to boost the greatness of Marx the creator of myths. Gobetti deems that Einaudi erroneously "perceived Marx to be an economist, yet he is a philosopher, historian, prophet, and political agitator" (ibid.). In 1923, in L'ora di Marx, Gobetti renders this distinction clearer, by repeating "the need to differentiate between the dead Marx and the living Marx, between Marx the economist, who is 'dead, along with surplus value, the dream of the abolition of classes and the prophecy of collectivism', and Marx the theorist of historical materialism and class struggle; thus, not only a creator of myths, but [a theorist] who had provided tools acquired forever [to benefit] social science" (ibid.:93,94). This interpretation of Marx, Bobbio says, accrues to social science and not merely to political practice; it is at this precise juncture that Gobetti reveals that Marxism and socialism no longer constitute an identical target. Gobetti's decision to draw closer to Marxism does not attenuate the harshness of his anti-socialist polemics, but is grist for his mill in reinforcing the argument. Indeed, Gobetti praised the liberal aspects of both liberalism and Marxism, to the detriment of socialism, since socialism is based on protection from above.

Gobetti argued that one can be both liberal and Marxist (ibid.). For, he argues, understood as the theory of class struggle, Marxism is perfectly compatible with liberal theory, which has an antagonistic conception of society and history. Liberalism has the advantage of not falling into the illusion of a future society where all class struggle ceases, yet socialism with its acritical and non-scientific faith in economics through the intervention of the state is the antithesis of the
liberal idea. For Gobetti, if Marxism were defined as the theory of class struggle, and if the new protagonist of its historical movement was the working class (e.g. the Turinese Communists who were not socialists), then the first revolution fought in Marx’s name was a liberal revolution. All struggle, deriving from the pluralism of views and the conflict of opposing opinions and values constitutes progressive liberal struggle, in that one class or one force, or a group of forces, seeks to limit the action and political thrust of another force(s).

Bobbio’s liberalism is driven by anti-Fascism. This foundation is crucial to any understanding of his work, as it also nourishes his later arguments about the politics of culture. Although anti-Fascism and Communism had different resonances at the time of Gobetti’s death, Bobbio emphasizes the contribution of the Red Army in waging the final assault and victory over Germany at the beginning of 1945.

The underlying motive for Bobbio’s “acceptance” of, and dialogue with, Marxists rests in his utter condemnation of Fascism. Indeed, in the chapter entitled Revisionismo nella storia d’Italia (Bobbio et al., 1996d), Bobbio admits that historical revisionism is inevitable and that today’s revisionist will be subject to the re-consideration of tomorrow’s revisionist. However he expresses his astonishment at Renzo De Felice’s affirmation that “Italian historians continue to skirt the case of Mussolini, without ever wishing to face and resolve it once and for all” (ibid.:56). Bobbio objects to this stance by affirming that no definitive interpretation of any great historical figure can ever be achieved, given that everyone hovers round such figures.

It seems that this affirmation is an indication of the polemical soul that at times comes close to animosity, with which all historians who have until now concerned themselves with Fascism, anti-Fascism and Resistance are judged … All this historiography is called by a deprecating term: vulgata20 or vulgate of the Resistance (ibid.).

De Felice maintains that historiographical vulgata is aggressively hegemonic and constructed purely for reasons of ideology in order to legitimize both Italy’s new
democracy of 1945-1946 through anti-Fascism, and the democratic role of the Communist Party in overcoming Fascism. He attempts through this declaration to destroy a legend which the first republic kept alive for half a century This legend is the "mythology" of the Resistance, which causes its ageing partisans to describe the world as they would like it to have been.

Bobbio criticizes De Felice's view that history is a science, based on the truth of facts, and asks "if you can call it a science, to which type of science does it belong?" (Bobbio et al., 1996d:58). "Judging from the confidence with which De Felice contrasts true history with the false history of the various vulgata, one would say that it can almost be considered a form of knowledge comparable to that which today is called strong or hard science" (ibid.). It is not so, Bobbio counters.

In tracing the relationship between anti-Fascism and anti-Communism, Bobbio therefore objects to De Felice's premise that history can be written either according to a vulgata based on ideological and dogmatic prejudice, or scientifically written. He finds repugnant the notion of "history as a science, to ascertain what really happened, not to absolve or condemn" (ibid.:56). Historical reasoning is opposed to political interest. Still, when considering the pros and cons of anti-Communism and anti-Fascism, Bobbio rushes to defend the superiority of anti-Fascism. Clearly, he believes all Fascists should be condemned, whereas Communists do not merit categorical rejection. He notes that De Felice mistakenly contrasts the passion of the anti-Fascist vulgata with an equally strong anti-Communist passion. This is unacceptable to Bobbio, for Fascism must be named and shamed for what it represented.

De Felice insists that the Resistance reached its conclusion more than fifty years ago and is too far off to be of significance today. He invites Bobbio and others who share his views to bring their "vague reminiscing" to a halt. Indeed, De Felice considers that the Fascists, the Germans and the Allies all played an unidentified role in the last years of Italian Fascism, and that it is high time that the "tragic
chorus of partisans" desist in its tribute to the unidentified masses who supposedly supported them (De Felice, 1995:12) in the Resistance movement.

Fascism, in its condemnation of Communism, portraying Communists as enemies to be conquered, stands in opposition to Bobbio's own view. He emphasizes that the Communists, as fellow anti-Fascists, were interlocutors and welcome participants in mutual political dialogue. He refuses to accept De Felice's portrayal of the Resistance, and his glossing over of the Communist contribution in defeating Fascism. Today, in Italy, this question remains a burning one, and much of Bobbio's prose is dedicated to an accurate depiction of the forces and events which led to the foundation of the Italian Republic. In some quarters, this mission of the Italian Left is referred to as "keeping the tiny flame alight" and comprises preventive action to keep history from being rewritten.

Bobbio has identified five characteristics of Fascism as a political movement. It can be termed anti-Enlightenment, anti-progressive, anti-materialist, anti-individualist and anti-parliamentarian. In 1994, whilst participating in a debate on the risks of a return to Fascism in Italy, Bobbio stated that "as long as there are Communists, there will be Fascists; both are tied together by a double thread" (il Corriere della Sera, 8/12/94:11). Here, the reader is reminded of Bobbio's particular relevance in the contemporary political configuration.

'Fascism can count on at least two good reasons to raise its head again. The Communist revolution which was opposed most stringently by the Fascists has failed. In part, the First Republic failed, born as it was on the ashes of Fascism, its principal adversary'. ... 'In mature democracies that are consolidated out of history or habit, where Communists do not exist Fascists do not exist, or they only constitute small groups of no political relevance' (ibid.).

The Communist revolution failed, but the problems that existed before Communism remain. Much still remains to be accomplished in the realm of equality, human rights and justice. Here, Bobbio tells us that a social revolution is still required, perhaps in another form, and he foresees Fascist opposition to that
revolution. Moreover, he believes that both Fascists and Communists will continue to exist in Italy until it becomes a mature democracy.

De Felice tends to minimize both the number of partisans who took part in the Resistance, and the attendismo or willingness to wait it out on the part of the Italian masses. This induces him to remark that "the best and most animated forces of history are 'ethical-political' ones, and that a people, such as the Italian people, have always demonstrated a reprehensible ethical-political 'weakness'" (Bobbio et al., 1996d:58). Bobbio claims that De Felice thus suggests a determined, specific vision of history, which contrasts with a materialist conception of history.

Bobbio's discussion of Fascism today draws to a great extent on his own life experience. That experience reflects a political maturity gained through the recognition of the difference between two political traditions which continue alternately to converge and conflict with one another. Medail describes these traditions as a liberalism that is rooted in a call for liberty, and a democracy that is based on equality (Il Corriere della Sera, 18/10/99:25). For Sartori, Bobbio seeks an intermediate way between two extremes: that of politicized culture "that obeys committees, programmes and the dictates of politicians", and that of apolitical culture which is removed from society and the problems that affect it (ibid.). However, through all of Bobbio's meanderings, he remains loyal to the tradition of anti-Fascism and a political legacy that is deeply bound to the city of Turin.

1.1 Liberalism and socialism as the components of anti-Fascism: Bobbio following in Gobetti's footsteps

Although Norberto Bobbio and Piero Gobetti never met, these two thinkers, both from the city of Turin, made an immense contribution in the 20th century to the larger European project of political integration. Both affirm that a stance of cooperation and reconciliation should be pursued on cultural grounds, and that cultural autonomy should prevail in overcoming the unnatural divide that existed between East and West. That divide still exists, in terms of political maturity and
cultural influence, as well as the North/South one that rests on inequality. Gobetti’s initial dialogue with Marxists culminated in a school of anti-Fascism whose adherents can succeed in eliminating those divides through recognition of the positive force of political antagonism.

As fierce anti-Fascists who subscribe to the Enlightenment’s interpretation of human beings as creatures uniquely endowed with reason and aspirations to liberty, both Gobetti and Bobbio look to Communism as a constitutive and necessary component of anti-Fascism. Both advocate secularity yet acknowledge the indissoluble link between democracy and Christianity. In Europe, relations between civil and religious society represented and continue to represent one of the central aspects of ideological conflict and political confrontation, and implicitly constitute an “alternation component”, as required in any healthy democracy.

In Né con Marx nè contro Marx (1997a), Carlo Violi sums up Bobbio’s stance vis-à-vis Marxism: Communism for Bobbio is a bulwark against Nazi-Fascism. He condemns the increasing tendency of some revisionists “to equate those who fought to prevent Auschwitz with those who fought to maintain and expand Auschwitz on a worldwide scale” (La Stampa, 13/12/97:23). Bobbio’s interpretation of political history and his mission as an intellectual reflect Gobetti’s influence, which culminated in his joining the PdA. This influence is characterized by a conception of liberty as both an ideal and a need to act; the call to action is just as strong in Italy today, Bobbio contends, “at a time in which a new political class without roots has demonstrated a tendency to make a tabula rasa of our past, whether intentionally or not” (il Corriere della Sera, 21/2/96:29).

In Violi’s words, Bobbio, “through a direct debate with Marxists, carried out in three different phases over a period spanning a quarter of a century, following in Gobetti’s footsteps, contributed to the birth of a critical and non-conservative radical liberalism different from that of Croce and his successors” (Violi, ‘Introduction’ to Bobbio, 1997a:xxi). While conservative intellectuals in the post-war period treated Communism and Fascism with equal remoteness and therefore
refused all dialogue with Marxists, "progressive intellectuals, although refuting the theory and practice of Communism – above all in its only historical form realized in the land of 'real socialism' – were open to critical confrontation" (ibid.:xxi,xxii). Violi writes that moral obligation fuels Bobbio's intellectual commitment as a philosopher.

With the defeat of Fascism and the arrival on the political scene of the parties of the Left, Marxism – which between the two wars had been an 'underground' philosophy – returned to the light of day, along with the other militant philosophies of post-Fascism: existentialism and neo-positivism. After the discrediting of the idealist philosophies ..., Marxism, as a positive philosophy, could only meet with Bobbio's favour, for as a 'militant philosopher' he was intensely involved in the political debate, which he felt to be a moral obligation (ibid.:xxviii).

Marx echoed the pro-science, anti-superstition premises of the Enlightenment, which held that progress could take place only by abandoning over-adherence to historical precedent and religious dogma. Marxism continues this emphasis.

Spadolini, in his work *Padri della Repubblica*, writes that

Gobetti was one of the most representative exponents of the generation that emerged from the war [World War I], without having fought in it, and one who [witnessed Italy enter into Fascism] against his will. He therefore found himself in the best spiritual condition to condemn the old political leaders who disappeared with the war, and to reject the new leaders who had sprung from the war (Spadolini, 1998:28).

Gobetti rejects state socialism and interprets political struggle as the motor of social progress. The Italian workers' movement of the early and mid-twenties was in his view mistaken in pursuing doctrines that "promised the achievement of a collectivist Eden and harmonious class collaboration under the paternal aegis of the State" (*il Corriere della Sera*, 21/2/96:29). Bobbio's research has continued along these lines, such that socialists must be challenged "to reconsider the relationship between democracy and socialism" (Bobbio, 1988:1) since "concentration on an essentially unworkable goal for socialism, in which so-called 'bourgeois' freedoms are unnecessary, has seriously weakened socialist political
practice" (Bobbio, 1988:1). The task at hand is to "rethink the socialist end in ways compatible with the preservation of the liberal means" (Bobbio, 1988:1), although the task has been rendered more arduous by the fact that "discourse on truth, judgement and taste, which used to seem to be administered completely by intellectuals, is now controlled by forces over which intellectuals have little or no influence" (La Stampa, supplement 12/6/97:2). Foremost among these forces are the new authorities: the market, television and global technologies.

Gobetti's anti-Fascist legacy is tied up with the thought of Antonio Gramsci, Luigi Sturzo and several other Italian thinkers. In formulating their opposition to Fascism, Gobetti and Gramsci aimed at reconstituting liberalism and Marxism, and sought out the Catholics and other possible allies to enlarge their anti-Fascist base. Gobetti's main message was that Italy had never had a liberal revolution, that the Risorgimento had not involved the participation of the Italian masses, and that the Reformation never really reached most of Italy. Above all, Gobetti's liberalism was expressed as a sense of crisis, a tension towards the new, and a wish to avoid the reification of Italy. In place of the nation, Gobetti hoped that workers' aristocracies, which would reach the highest level of development through trade unionism and Communism, would rule.

Like Marx, Bobbio envisages his own form of utopia but, whatever form it takes, it must necessarily be based on the rule of the law.

My utopia, which is ... an enlightenment utopia, goes beyond European unity. The problems of the 'global village' can only be ... solved on an international level — through a process of democratization of the international system. In *Perpetual Peace* Kant not only distinguished constitutional law ..., which regulates relations between a state and its citizens, from international law, which regulates the relation between states that Carl Schmitt later called the *jus publicum Europeaeum*, but introduced ... a third legal category, which he called 'world civil law,' which no longer regulates only relations between states and individuals and between individual states but also relations of individuals within individual states to each other — it is a law based on the principle that human beings are no longer citizens of particular states but ... of the world (Bobbio in Glotz and Kallscheuer, 1989:142).
In Italy, the Enlightenment tradition of liberating minds from dogma, irrationality and murk was reflected in Gobetti's battle against Fascism. He represents, Bobbio affirms, "a way of thinking that has followers; a style that will be repeated by others, a group of ideas that, far from systematic, has had a great force of penetration, and leaves an indelible trace wherever it passes" (Bobbio, 1986b:123).

Coming to grips with Fascism is a theme that dominates Bobbio's interpretation of liberalism, as it did Gobetti's before him. In the early twenties, Gobetti confronted Fascism and its consequences – which grew graver day by day – with a policy of absolute intransigence. He defined Fascism "not as a passing evil but as a hereditary and mortal disease" (Bobbio, 1995e:117). As Italy had experienced neither the liberating process of the Reformation nor the formulation of a protest movement vis-à-vis the Catholic hierarchy, it remained politically immature. Therefore Gobetti called for an Italian Protestantism, though one not strictly limited to the model of modern Protestant nations:

> Among us, the Protestant movement must work on a more painful need, a problem which is absolutely crucial to Italian life. The victory of Catholicism, the conservative and reactionary practice accompanied by demagogic artifices that are found in our history are inevitable as long as the current and traditional economic conditions prevail (Gobetti, 1997:823).

At the end of 1998, Giulio Einaudi of the Turin publishing house Einaudi for the first time "paid tribute to Gobetti in an address given at the University of Turin" (La Stampa, 2/1/99:21). Einaudi affirmed that Gobetti represents a model of the liberal tradition, who taught "a lesson on the 'religion of liberty'" (ibid.). In this century, Gobetti's liberalism stands alongside Gramsci's social-Communist theory and the "utilization and verification of the Marxian method" (Bobbio, 1995e:163); both were prominent in the political life of Turin in the early twentieth century and developed "two youthful movements, each associated with a journal, each aimed respectively at reconstituting Marxism and liberalism" (Adler, 1989:131). Gobetti was only 22 when in 1923 he founded the series *il Baretti*, one of the three journals that he ultimately launched; in the early twenties he also churned out over 100 books on
literature, philosophy, history and politics, over just a three-year period. Gobetti, as Giulio Einaudi wrote recently, "sent out a message of trust and hope in the publishing world of 'creation', in times of insistent re-creation" (La Stampa, 2/1/99:21). As a youth in secondary school Bobbio subscribed to Il Baretti. In considering Gobetti, "Bobbio is perhaps the vital link between an amazing generation of intellectuals which came of age in Italy during the 1920s (Gramsci, Gobetti, Rosselli), and contemporary discussions of pluralism, liberalism and the 'new' social democracy" (Adler, 1989:130,131).

Gobetti elaborated a formula of liberal revolution to remedy the weakness of the Risorgimento, which had not included a mass uprising. He proposed the launching of a new Risorgimento and a workers' revolution "not inspired by the Socialist ideal of collectivism but rather by the classical Liberal ideal of ethical competition and laissez-faire economics" (Bobbio, 1995e:117). Gobetti aimed to link "liberty with the aspirations of the working class, rather than with the traditional bourgeoisie that had become decadent and an obstacle to historical progress" (Adler, 1989:131,132).

The concept of revolution for the foundation of a new society is also present in Bobbio's work. His thought reflects the ideal of the PdA invoking a transformation of culture, though not through a "revolution that slavishly imitated the Soviet revolution, which had already exhausted its capacities for the creation of a new society" (Bobbio, 1995e:147) early in the post-war period. Only a totally anti-Fascist society could bring about the revolution required, building on the lessons learned from Fascism. Hence Bobbio, like Gobetti, wanted to broaden the politics of change.

The historical ideologies that ... fought Fascism and that aimed at dividing its spoils were considered partial ideologies that could never have carried through a total renewal of society because each of them would have tried to remake the world using economic and political structures that Fascism had confronted and defeated. Total renewal could only come from a 'total' anti-Fascist ideology. Since total renewal implied revolutionary transformation, the new ideology opposed all forms of restoration of the pre-Fascist past
that the Liberals held dear, but it also rejected any attempt at ... Soviet revolution (ibid.).

Bobbio remains adamant in acknowledging the decisive role played by Communists in the birth of the Italian Republic, particularly as accounts of revisionist historiography have increased markedly since the fall of the Soviet empire. These accounts call into question the legitimacy of the present Italian state and the ideals of the Resistance.

Up to now, Italians have always accepted the idea that the War of Liberation fought by the anti-Fascist parties that made up the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale – the parties that subsequently gave the Italian political system its structure – was what gave legitimacy to the Italian Republic created after the fall of Fascism and the defeat of Hitler. With the end of Communism, doubt has begun to rise about whether the Resistance could still be considered the principle of legitimacy behind the new Italian state. Indeed, did not the consideration of the Resistance ... as the historic event out of which the new democratic state was born imply recognition that the Communists played a decisive role in that birth? (ibid.).

This decisive role of the Communists in defeating Fascism has had an impact on Bobbio’s favourable yet qualified opinion of Italian Communists. Initially, his own attitude towards Fascism was one of forced complicity, for "intellectuals, artists and professionals were forced to join a single syndicate and to swear an oath of allegiance to the State, and most did so" (Pamphlet, 1996:2). At the end of the thirties, Bobbio “redeemed” himself by joining GL, when he was teaching at the University of Camerino. First having sworn allegiance to Fascism, then having constructed his anti-Fascism on an exclusively ideal approach, he “matured” and moved on to become an active and informed anti-Fascist militant, along with Calogero and Capitini. It can be said that in his career he sought to redeem Communists in the same way. He made allowances for them, and hoped they would undergo a similar maturing process in the same manner, and evolve towards a cultural transformation.

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1.2 Gobetti’s anti-Fascist legacy

After World War I, Gobetti and Gramsci aimed at reconstituting liberalism and Marxism, respectively. The Catholic position, too, is an essential component of early Italian democracy. "While the Communists of L’Ordine nuovo presented theses that took their abstract inspiration from Lenin, with little regard to differences in the historical situation, to depict a utopia set in the future ..., the Catholics, on their return to politics after the war, attempted to respond to the highly concrete problem of Catholic participation in the life of the state" (Bobbio, 1995e:113). Gobetti promoted active association with Gramsci as well as with the Catholic leader Luigi Sturzo. Sturzo, however, sought a middle road that kept liberals and socialists on the sidelines:

The basic theme of Sturzo’s politics and the novelty in the programme of the new Partito popolare italiano (launched ... 18 January 1919), was to combat the pantheistic state ‘in its two facets: tampering with the rights of local entities and of the citizen in his free personality and activities; and functional and bureaucratic centralization, in contrast to administrative decentralization.’ Under the cover of this state, ‘which subjects everything to its force: the internal and external world, man and his reason for being, social forces and human relations,’ Liberals and Socialists had worked hand in hand, only pretending to be adversaries. Sturzo rose to the defence of liberty against them both, by which he meant not the liberty of single ... individuals but the autonomy of groups and the subordination of political society to civil society (Bobbio, 1995e:113).

While Gobetti sought deep social renewal and the emergence of another, truly different Italian state, yet to be realized, Sturzo, in the face of Fascism, became a companion in arms rather than an adversary.

Giovanni Spadolini, in Padri della Repubblica (1998), recalls that Gobetti’s “encounters, his books, his newspapers and memories of old Turin” serves to give one a sense of his activism and liberal spirit, for example, when “not having reached the age of 20, he wrote theatre criticism for Gramsci’s socialist paper ‘Ordine nuovo’, which was located in four extremely modest rooms in an old building undergoing demolition in the centre of Turin” (Spadolini, 1998:37).
Gramsci and Gobetti became friends despite their lack of shared political objectives. In *Primo Levi: Tragedy of an Optimist* (1998), Anissimov confirms that 1919 was the year "when the National Socialist Party was founded in Germany and when Mussolini created the *Fasci italiani di combattimento* ... [1919] was also the year Gramsci, Tasca, Togliatti and Terracini launched the Communist weekly *L'Ordine nuovo*, in Turin" (Anissimov, 1998:14). Turin is a city that symbolizes intellectual vigour, "a city which ever since the early days of Fascism seems to have been a proving ground for generations of political ideas in Italy" (ibid.:327). *Ordine nuovo*, as the most important publication of Italian Communism, aired the views that were developing among the workers of Turin.

Spadolini stresses the cultural, intellectual and political debt owed to Gobetti and the importance of his message that Italy had never had a liberal revolution. In reading Gobetti’s view of the Risorgimento, its myth as a people’s revolution is debunked: “Liberalism was the sense of crisis, and tension towards the new and the Risorgimento had been more of a compromise with tradition than a revolutionary crisis, more of a return to the past, to Catholic and Roman Italy, rather than a leap towards liberal and modern Italy” (Spadolini, 1998:28). A key concept here is Gobetti’s objection to national reification -- to portraying the nation as a concrete entity rather than an abstract term. In place of the nation, Gobetti “seemed to see the future ruling classes in the workers’ aristocracies, elaborated through trade unionism and Communism” (ibid.). Although he rejected the idea of the victorious conquest of the Risorgimento, “he remained loyal to the heterogeneous currents present in the unification process” (ibid.). Spadolini writes of Gobetti that he was a conservative by birth, education and taste who aspired to revolution; above all, a moral one. Gobetti was an intellectual, who hoped to free himself from intellectualism.

In Gobetti’s *Rivoluzione Liberale* (RL)22, the central theme is the lack of initiative which characterized the Risorgimento, such that Italy failed to demonstrate authentic spiritual and political initiative.
Spadolini describes Calogero, a professor of philosophy at the University of Pisa, as a prophet of dialogue and tolerance. Calogero’s marrying of justice and liberty resulted in a programme that, in Bobbio’s words, “sought to rekindle fighting ardour against democratic ‘inanities’ and reach beyond liberalism and socialism, summing up both theory and programme in the slogan ‘justice and liberty’” (Bobbio, 1995e:138). Indeed this slogan would become the name of the movement GL, founded by Carlo Rosselli in Paris in 1930 after he escaped from exile on the Sicilian island of Lipari. Bobbio writes that “liberal-socialism began as an intellectual political movement in Tuscany in 1936-37 among politically inexperienced students and young intellectuals inspired by Capitini’s ethico-religious dynamism and Calogero’s philosophical theories” (Bobbio, 1995e:212).

At the beginning of the century, “the dominant cultural figure of the age [was] the wealthy philosopher and historian ... Croce” (Duggan, 1994:177). Croce reacted negatively to Calogero’s programme and accused him of possessing a persistent and neo-democratic Enlightenment mentality which resulted in “poor philosophers and poor politicians daring to place philosophical principles like liberty and an empirical concept like justice on the same plane” (Bobbio, 1995e:139). Yet what Croce viewed as merely a “compromise formula” was to become the cornerstone of the anti-Fascist movement: “In 1935, Bobbio joined an anti-Fascist group tied to GL and headed by Vittorio Foa” (Adler, 1989:132). Spadolini writes that Calogero fuelled the debate on the compatibility between liberalism and socialism. This would be “the synthesis of the moment of liberty and the moment of justice, which would be decisive in the history of the origins and the creation of the PdA – an essential pillar of cultural and political resistance to Fascism, which later became military resistance” (Spadolini, 1998:122). In this context Bobbio writes:

The liberal-socialist attitude towards Communism was no different from that of the social democrats, who viewed the way the Soviet revolution had evolved as a totalitarian degeneration incompatible with socialist ideals. The structural remedy that liberal-socialism proposed and that was written into the programme of the Action Party was a renunciation of total collectivism and a division of the economy into the two sectors of public and private. What distinguished liberal-socialism from the other version of anti-Fascist ideology that converged with it in the Action Party was ... a different
evaluation of the Soviet Union and ... a different opinion on the need for collectivism (Bobbio, 1995e:152).

Towards the end of the Fascist regime, Bobbio wrote of his conviction that the ethical presupposition necessary for democracy is the autonomy of the individual which precedes the State, while Fascism, by attributing ethical value to the State, had reduced the individual to a mere instrument of political power. Today, Bobbio is acclaimed for having "attempted to connect the liberal conception of a necessary limiting of state institutions with the socialist tradition" (Glotz and Kalischeuer, 1989:134).

In one of Gramsci's last essays before his arrest, in which he writes about the southern question, he attributes Gobetti with a positive role in developing Italian nationhood. He writes that Gobetti helped the proletariat and that Gobetti's friends would continue the difficult and gigantic task he had undertaken. These friends – northern and southern intellectuals alike – understood their national role as bearers of the two social forces of the future: the proletariat and the peasants. Paolo Spriano reinforces the significance of Gobetti's liberal mission, particularly his warnings that large-scale industrial development should not take place without the contemporaneous development of the proletariat and its ability to defend and conquer (Spriano in Gobetti, 1997:L). Those contemporaneous developments Gobetti envisaged as the key to future European history; he invited readers of Rivoluzione Liberale to reflect on that truth.

1.3 Modern Turin and Bobbio's path to Gobetti

Bobbio was among the collaborators of Giulio Einaudi at the Einaudi publishing house in Turin and this circle "enjoyed a close and controversial relationship with the Italian Communist Party (PCI)" (The Guardian, 9/4/99:11). This aspect of Turinese culture reflects a recent polemic, for the influential publisher's critics "accused him of helping to create a Communist hegemony in Italian culture and of practising rigid self-censorship over the Soviet system's shortcomings" (ibid.).
During the time of World War II, "the Einaudi company continued publishing despite persecution by the regime and the destruction of offices in an allied bombing raid; Einaudi fled to Switzerland, later returning to participate in the Resistance in his native Piedmont" (ibid.). Einaudi, over a span of 50 years, compiled "a catalogue of 5,000 titles – a history of 20th century Italian intellectual life" (The Guardian, 9/4/99:11).

There is also evidence that Bobbio supported the work of the publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli. Before his tragic death in 1972, Feltrinelli financed a "publishing house connected with the PCI, the Cooperativa del Libro Popolare (Colip) which published, among other things, an invaluable paperback series called 'Universale economica' to circulate the texts of the international socialist tradition" (Petrillo, 1998:517). Another important publication, Movimento Operaio23, was "the first Italian journal specializing in the study of the workers' movement, and the nursery of an entire new Marxist and Gramscian generation of historians" (Petrillo, 1998:515). In 1958, "with Feltrinelli's financial support, ... Rivista storica del socialismo (Historical Journal of Socialism) [was published], a periodical intended to speak for the Italian Marxist historiography alternative to the Gramsci line" (Petrillo, 1998:525). These Feltrinelli publications, followed by those of the Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli give the reader an idea of the type of research conducted by the Foundation.

Although Bobbio "paid the price imposed by Fascism of a purely formal adherence to the regime ..., during the years of the Resistance he was active in the ranks of the Action Party" (Bobbio, 1995e:xx), as were many other Turinese. Noted for his criticism of the political representation offered by the state in Italy, Bobbio at this time claimed that Italy's permanent defect was that "of an excessive centrism, and an insufficient rotation of power" (Bobbio, 1988:82), yet at the same time affirmed the validity of the Left/Right distinction in politics, and elaborated his own definitions of those terms. Massimo Salvadori, in the foreword to Bobbio's Ideological Profile of Twentieth-Century Italy (1995e), maintains that the relationship Bobbio has with Turin is of particular significance, since he lived "in the
capital of Piedmont in the company of other outstanding figures in the realm of philosophical and historical culture, such as the famous existentialist philosopher and historian Nicola Abbagnano and the celebrated historian of Russian populism and the European Enlightenment, Franco Venturi" (in Bobbio, 1995e:xx). Since joining the active anti-Fascist resistance in the late thirties when, while teaching the philosophy of law at the University of Camerino, he became a member of Guido Calogero's Liberal-Socialist Movement, "Bobbio has lived his career as a scholar by locating himself, more than anyone else, at the centre of Turinese cultural life and its cultural institutions, from the Einaudi publishing house to the Centro Studi Piero Gobetti and the Fondazione Luigi Einaudi" (Salvadori in 'Foreword' to Bobbio, 1995e:xxi). Bellamy, too, agrees on the cultural significance of Turin: "The cultural and social environment of his native city has a special importance in explaining Bobbio's intellectual and ideological allegiances" (Bobbio, 1987:2).

As the foremost exponent of an Italian liberal democratic tradition inspired by the PdA, Bobbio has, in Salvadori's words, become "the 'Turinese philosopher'" (in 'Foreword' to Bobbio, 1995e:xxi), much in the same way that Croce was "the Neapolitan philosopher". Yet "there is no hint of provincialism in Bobbio's loyalty to Turin ... thanks to the city's role in the twentieth century as one of the major cultural and political centres of Italy" (ibid.). On the centrality of Turin, Adler writes:

To understand or at least get at the roots of Bobbio's intellectual formation, one has to return to 1920s Turin, which had displaced Florence as the intellectual centre of Italy – at least so far as the young generation was concerned. Turin had been associated with Italian liberalism from Cavour to Einaudi. It became associated with Marxism in response to rapid industrialization (particularly the automobile industry) and the development of a powerful, self-conscious labour movement. Yet by the early 1920s both liberalism and Marxism were in crisis and soon Fascism would come to power (Adler, 1989:131).

It must be mentioned that Turin's historical and political predominance had briefly been challenged by the radical thinkers active in the city of Florence at the beginning of the twentieth century. Those thinkers were neo-idealist, hostile to socialism, and represented a "broad current of anti-modernist, anti-democratic
thought that ran through the Giolittian period" (Duggan, 1994:178). The Florentine magazine *Leonardo*, founded in 1903, “carried in its first number a characteristic attack on the wireless telegraph” and voiced the view that such technical discoveries “might make life quicker, 'but not more profound'” (ibid.). The intellectuals grouped around *Leonardo*, and the later Florentine magazine *La Voce* (1908), aimed to construct an intellectuals' party “whose task would be morally to regenerate Italy and forge a new ruling elite” (ibid.).

Turin, a city that with the foundation of the FIAT automobile company at the end of the nineteenth century largely led the way in the industrialization of Italy, also became home to a Centre of Methodological Study (University of Turin) in the post-war period. This Centre provided a forum for “philosophers and scientists, jurists and economists, mathematicians and physicists to take up a renewed 'discourse on method'” (Bobbio, 1996b:125). Bobbio affirms that it was thanks to his active participation at the discussions of this forum that he was able to “take a decisive leap and leave the ambiguities of the past and the wanderings of his youth behind” (ibid.:125). Above all, this milieu was successful in generating a different cultural outlook; Bobbio adopted a dual approach to the science of politics by never separating theoretical study from historical study.

He took up the theoretical direction first travelled by another Turinese, Piero Gobetti, who, as we have seen, was a champion of radical and anti-socialist liberalism. Gobetti maintained that there was a need to differentiate between the dead Marx and the living Marx, between Marx the economist, who is “dead, along with surplus value, the dream of the abolition of classes and the prophecy of collectivism” (Bobbio, 1986b:93,94) and Marx the theorist of historical materialism and class struggle. This later Marx is not only a creator of myths, but a theorist who provided tools that will forever benefit social science.

Gobetti is both an honourable and dishonourable figure in contemporary Italian politics, as can be seen from “the yet to be concluded debate on the PdA, as Gobetti’s thought is considered to be one of its original sources” (La Stampa,
Gobetti is believed to be the inspiration behind what remains of the PdA and its original ideals. However, Bobbio contends, “the most astute critics tend to distinguish between Carlo Rosselli’s liberal-socialism and what is called Gobetti’s liberal-Communism” (ibid.). For Bobbio, “Gobetti is a young hero of high ethical and political engagement” (Bobbio, 1995e:xxxi) who, while still a young man, died in Paris over seventy years ago. Gobetti established an important association with Antonio Gramsci, who had studied at the University of Turin. Gramsci had been a socialist leader in Turin and in 1921 he was among the founders of the Partito Comunista d’Italia; in 1924 he became the party’s Secretary General. However, in Italy, even among men of culture, “Gramsci remained little more than a name until 1947 when the publication of Lettere dal carcere revealed his great humanity and intellectual stature” (Badaloni, 1977:vii). Yet Gobetti did not fail to appreciate Gramsci’s theoretical writings and critical analysis of Marxism, long before the letters appeared.

Gobetti describes Gramsci as “a prophet suspicious of all humanity, of the entire present time” (Bucchi, 1997b:102), whose “socialism is first of all an answer to society’s offences to his solitude as a Sardinian émigré” (ibid.:100). “By comparing Lenin and Marx, Gramsci realized that the way to rediscover the genuine spirit of Marxism was to return to its origins in Italian and German idealistic thought, and that Marx himself was ‘contaminated by positivist and naturalist encrustations’” (Bobbio, 1995e:111). As Lenin’s revolution had not taken full account of Marx’s revolution against capital, Gramsci praised the dynamism of events where “the canons of historical materialism are not so rigid as might have been and has been thought” (Bobbio, 1995e:111).

And indeed Gramsci was busy implementing his ideas in 1920: “In April 1920 Factory Councils of workers modelled on the Bolshevik soviets, and led by Antonio Gramsci and Palmiro Togliatti, the future leaders of the Communist Party, took over the main industries in Turin and Milan in protest against management plans for radical restructuring to meet peacetime conditions” (Absalom, 1995:103) According to Kirkpatrick, “There were altogether 1,881 strikes in 1920 ... the
movement petered out and by the end of the month [April] the factories were quietly evacuated, but the episode was a shock to the country” (Kirkpatrick, 1968:95,96).

From 1921, Gramsci’s *Ordine Nuovo* switched to daily publication from its previous weekly appearance. Gobetti was put in charge of theatre criticism and literary review (Cabella, 1998:87). But, Adler tells us that

Gobetti’s group was more diverse and eclectic than *Ordine Nuovo*; it was not directly engaged in politics but primarily a literary circle including Carlo Rosselli, Ernesto Rossi, Lelio Basso, Carlo Levi ... Despite obvious differences, there were points of contact. Gobetti was a friend of Gramsci [... and Gramsci] had written for *Energie Nuove* – a journal Gobetti founded in 1918 at the age of seventeen ... Moreover, both groups separately analysed Fascism as an outcome of the Risorgimento’s shortcomings, as a product of failed liberalism. Both groups became part of a joint struggle against Fascism; both became part of the city’s intellectual and political patrimony (Adler, 1989:132).

Gramsci endeavoured to elevate the proletariat culturally, and to undertake a discussion of the new problems that the October Revolution in Russia had brought. As Badaloni tells us, he was especially concerned with problems concerning “the creation of a new type of State” (Badaloni, 1977:xxi), the worker state that Lenin had created.

For his part, Gobetti’s political experience, enriched by the constitution of the factory councils set up in the factories of Turin against the backdrop of the Russian revolution, was woven into his brand of anti-Fascism. The demands put forth by the workers of Turin came to epitomize Gobetti’s conception of liberalism. Cabella writes: “He was convinced that the upper and middle classes were not capable of renewing a society that appeared sluggish and incapable of change: he therefore had hope in the creative attitude of workers and peasants; he hoped that the men who rose from the multitude would continue and perfect the work of that small handful of aristocrats and liberal bourgeois who had made the Italian Risorgimento” (Cabella, 1998:31).
The red thread linking Gobetti with Gramsci is entwined with the white thread linking Gobetti with the most progressive figures of the Catholic Popular Party. His intense correspondence with those individuals who dominated the political and cultural world of his time, his "literature of testimony", renders him, in Bobbio's words, "a Plutarch-type hero, who stands alone in his greatness" (Gariglio, 1997:17). De Rosa recalls how Gobetti waged an intransigent battle against Fascism and against "the infinite transformistic ability of the moderate class, which affected all political factions and parties during the liberal State's years of agony" (ibid.:9). The vice of trasformismo\textsuperscript{25}, it must be said, indicates the tradition of switching sides regardless of previous alliances. Yet, De Rosa adds, Gobetti was a dynamic purveyor of culture, the craftsman of a rich network of relationships built around his publishing house that extended from Turin to Milan, to Romagna, Rome and Sicily. "In the wide network of Gobetti's correspondents, Catholic intellectuals were privileged and, in one way or another, inclined towards the figure of Luigi Sturzo, who embodied a secular and modern, liberating democratic conception of Church-State relations and those between State and society" (ibid.). Sturzo's Popular Party, which aimed to occupy the centre of the political arena, "was to protect Catholics from the secular state but also, by means of a coalition of organized Catholic forces, to defend a social order threatened by revolution" (Bobbio, 1995e:32).

Gobetti developed a more positive attitude towards the Popular Party (PPI) as the Fascist movement began to gain success in the spring of 1922. However, he sought out not the PPI in general, but only those men of the PPI such as Sturzo who took up a position against Fascism..

Gobetti's acknowledgement of the ethical-cultural and civic validity of popularism was not immediate; he also shared in the liberal world's climate of suspicion and reserve vis-à-vis Sturzo's party ... Many had at that time re-evoked the spectre of anti-Risorgimental clericalism and had spoken of the PPI as a Trojan horse that had entered the moderate citadel (Gariglio, 1997:10).
Gariglio, in analyzing the change in Gobetti's view of the PPI, mentions the influence that Gramsci's thought had on him, for its use of the concept of overturning praxis. By using a language of liberty, Gobetti thought, the PPI would end up becoming liberal, beyond the actual intentions of Catholic leaders. The notion at work here, the overturning of praxis, is a key concept of the early Marx: the idea is that human beings have the means to change their circumstances. This idea was reflected in the work of Antonio Labriola, Rodolfo Mondolfo and Gramsci.

Indeed, this expectation, that individuals can autonomously find solutions to problems through *il mestiere di vivere* or the occupation of day-to-day living, with no divine intervention, was to some extent borne out. "Don Sturzo conceived of the entrance of Italian Catholics into their nation's political life as both natural and necessary: they would appear not as agents of the Papacy, but as citizens offering the contribution of Christian ideals towards the solution of the social and political problems of the age" (Webster, 1961:19). It is clear that Sturzo's written work is centred on a criticism of "an increasingly gigantic and suffocating state bureaucracy and the defence of local government, which must be freed from state controls: a blueprint for pluralistic democracy" (Bobbio, 1995e:113). Gobetti capitalized on Sturzo's political action, on "his anti-transformist rebellion, his messianic will to reform, which made him an extraordinary figure amid a political class that had started to perform the last act of surrendering institutions to the hands of Mussolini" (Gariglio, 1997:11). Gobetti edited and published Sturzo's works, as well as those of other members of the PPI.

Both Bobbio and Gobetti consider the Communists to be their interlocutors; in *Autobiografia*, Bobbio affirms that "he saw Communists, particularly Italian Communists, not as adversaries but as interlocutors" (Bobbio, 1997:104). This reveals a more general political design to pursue a strategy of inclusion. Bobbio seeks to exchange civilized dialogue with everyone – with Catholics and Communists alike (Bobbio, 1997:104).

As for me, I have tried to follow a mode of reasoning that weighs the pros and the cons, so as not to eliminate all space for another's opinion, and not
to render his reply impossible. This attitude allowed me to maintain cordial relations not just with Communists ..., but also with the party ... The debate that led to the collection of articles in *Politica e cultura* started with a civilized dialogue with Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli and Galvano Della Volpe, my two principal interlocutors. ... Today it is difficult to imagine the spirit of the crusades that pervaded the opposing parties and what little willingness there was to understand the reasons of one another. The articles in *Politica e cultura* represented an attempt to make a breach in the wall that divided us. [Those articles] demonstrated that a dialogue was possible, even during those times that were marked by the ... Cold War (Bobbio, 1997:104,105).

The city of Turin is unique in that it fostered the emergence of northern elites. Thanks to its modern industrial civilization, a number of historical forces culminated in formulation of the liberal-socialism of Gobetti and Bobbio. As Gramsci wrote in *The Historical Role of the Cities* (translation, 1994), referring to the example set by the Turin and Milan of his time:

> Turin is not the capitalist city *par excellence*, but it is the industrial city, the proletarian city *par excellence*. The working class of Turin is compact ... and distinct as in few other cities in the world. Turin is like one great factory ... (Gramsci, 1994:137).

Italian "Protestantism" was experienced first in Turin, as will be described in the next section. Protestantism introduced a liberal element into Italian politics, what Gobetti would refer to as an “experiment in the politics of Enlightenment” (Bucchi, 1997b:59). The early experience of Protestantism in Piedmont resulted in the Piedmontese developing a practical method with which to understand human action and to accept the benefit of posing problems. Within the complexity of social life, problems are excellent points of reference, even tools to use in identifying both crises and vital forces present in political equilibrium (ibid.:59).

Camillo Cavour played the greatest role in shaping Piedmontese politics after 1849 and gave them their liberal imprint. His success has been attributed to the fact that he had Swiss-Protestant relations: “It was largely from them that he absorbed some of his concern for freedom, religious tolerance, and the work ethic" (Duggan, 1994:122). Cavour, in seeking to end the Catholic Church’s monopoly of
education, attempted to reduce the dominance of "one Church" as a centre of power. More than a century later, another Piedmontese recalls that society is best governed when power is distributed, when centres of power are many and those centres remain vigilant vis-à-vis the corridors of central power (Bobbio, *La Stampa*, 21/09/76:3). The Protestant legacy of Turin fostered the development of secular politics in Italy where "Protestantism" became a bulwark of the liberal state.

1.4 Italian Liberalism and the "Protestant" inspiration of Gobetti’s Turin

During the Italian Reformation, things took a turn different from that in England. There, in the early 1700s, tolerance could be equated chiefly with the political thrust of the Whigs to ensure toleration of dissenters, and with a move to put the entire Church establishment on the defensive, given the rising secular challenge and reaction to it. In Italy, however, individual conscience was unduly influenced and limited by the presence and strength of predominantly one Church.

Gobetti looked to the English as a mature people who "believed in precise ideologies and were willing to face danger to ensure they prevailed" (Bucchi, 1997b:61). He envisaged the worker in Italy as an indispensable dynamic element in the productive process, where the experience of work was synonymous with a school in which the worker could learn pride, humility, and the dignity of labour. In other words, "this apprenticeship was the latest great revolution, after Christianity" (ibid.). Above all, Protestantism in Italy "had to fight economic policy sustaining parasites and the unanimity of the petite bourgeoisie" (ibid.), a process through which the workers could demonstrate their ability to lead, that is, to produce capable leaders with a need neither for dictatorship nor theocracy. Yet, for Gobetti, change in belief was also the core of freedom, in this case, the workers’ freedom to prepare their own leaders through the experience of the production process.

There is something Protestant – in an extended sense – about the heritage of ideas in and around Turin. The towering presence of the papacy in central Italy
made it more difficult to adopt a form of Protestantism as envisioned by Gobetti, in which class struggle takes on all the energy and ferment of the Reformation. The papacy has generally demonstrated its intransigence towards Protestantism. Yet such a “Protestant” movement was alive in Italy long before the Reformation. In the twelfth century, Pierre Valdès, a merchant from Lyons, founded “The Poor of Lyons” movement. Adherents were to live in poverty, in the imitation of Christ, and were to preach the gospel. But the Church, increasingly worldly, resisted the movement, and it dispersed. Only a few groups survived, and these settled in the Piedmontese Alps. After the Synod of Chanforan in 1532, these groups were associated with the Reformed Swiss. It was only in 1848 that the king, Charles Albert, issued an edict granting religious freedom. This edict, which included the Jewish emancipation of 1848, also assured “that the Waldensians26 achieved religious freedom and started a vast missionary campaign in Italy and in other countries” (Enciclopedia del Novecento, 1989:884).

Gobetti adopted Protestantism as a form of historical consciousness. He did not limit himself to religious issues but addressed political concerns as well, setting out to mitigate the influence of Italian Catholicism. Gobetti notes that Northern Europe and Britain were more advanced in having a plurality of cultures. He saw pluralism — in this sense, the view that there are many moral values, some of which are or can be incompatible — as acting positively on a country’s development, and fostering its progress.

At the time of the Fascist regime, Gobetti and those allied with him sought another “space”, a Protestant space focused on the city of Turin. Turin was the centre-piece of the Resistance, of progress and of modernization. From Turin, the seat of anti-Fascism, the Church received the message that belief in the word of God was only one dimension of pluralistic Italy. As the workers’ movement gathered strength, Protestantism stood out as the middle way between Marxism and the Church. Human responsibility, not the economic process envisaged by Marx, and not the word of God, was at the core of Gobetti’s conception of Protestantism.
Gobetti sought to revive and encourage new forms of consciousness through his liberal revolution modelled on a plurality of cultures.

It must be recognized that various outlooks in European society originated with Protestantism but have not remained confined to Protestantism. The religious pluralism brought about by Protestantism has made secularism possible. For Gobetti, and those thinkers who followed in his footsteps, the pluralism introduced through Protestantism is intrinsically good, and secularism constitutes a liberal revolution.

In Italy, there was never any large-scale Protestantism. Still a minority of Protestants, including Jews like Mondolfo and Rosselli, who were "Protestant" in their intransigence and in their pursuit of individual liberty, introduced ideas and attitudes to Italian thought which can be traced back to the earliest forms of Italian liberalism. By denying the universal authority of the Pope, this minority pursued a political agenda.

This "meeting of new ideas with the Latin world" cannot be overlooked, and has been well documented by Giuseppe Gangale in *Revival* (Sellerio, 1991), a work which constitutes a "solid basis for any serious discussion of heretical movements in Italy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (Gangale, 1991:108). Gangale's Protestantism was adopted by Gobetti to imbue Italian philosophy with different strands and to enrich Italian cultural debate in terms of human identity. Gobetti's view that Italy had not undergone the Reformation and that it was in the absence of protest that the reasons for the immaturity of Italian ideals and politics could be found led him to seek a relationship with Gangale. A closer look at Gangale's Protestant interpretations presented him with a chance to weld pluralism to Italian experience, and to ensure the expression of dissenting views. For the Protestant revolutions across Europe had "demonstrated their vitality in the creation of new moral types; Luther and Calvin had been the harbingers of the morality of work postulated by the newly born democracies of production" (Bucchi, 1997b:60).
According to Gangale, "In 1818 there were no Protestant groups in Italy other than the Waldensians" (Gangale, 1991:10). Sismondo dei Sismondi, from an Italian family exiled in Switzerland, "was the vanguard voice of that group of Italians in Geneva ... that would create the first Protestant nuclei in Tuscany around 1840" (ibid.:11). Sismondi was a political liberal who rejected Mazzini and the socialists, both of whom he believed to be theocratic. Gangale identifies Sismondi’s influence on this Protestant revival, centred on spirituality and moderateness. Though it originated in Switzerland, it “spread, in Piedmont, among Waldensians and, in Tuscany, among Jansenists” (ibid.:13).

From the political point of view, there was clearly foreign interest in the Italian problem of effecting religious reform, and it was the Protestant voice in Switzerland that first mediated in Italy. The question of humanitarian Christianity was also at issue, given the servile situation of many small Italian states. Religious reform was supposed to result in spiritual reform in the Italians themselves and produce greater liberty.

Cavaglion comments on what the word ‘Protestant’ has come to mean in the Italy of today.

‘Protestant’ is a ... metaphor, almost a category of the spirit. The term ...is used to indicate something that is equivalent to anti-conformist, rebel, opponent, radical, one of a third force (neither Catholic nor Communist), anti-concordat, pacifist, anti-militarist, against violence, ascetic. There are cities, for example Turin, whose Calvinist vocation is continually displayed ... There is a paucity of serious studies on the evangelical presence in the culture of our century. Given the semantic amplification of the word, ... writers of different persuasion and politicians who share ... the common denominator of strenuously Kantian, inflexible moral rectitude, have been catalogued as ‘Protestants’: Gaetano Salvemini, ... Ernesto Rossi, ... Goffredo Fofi. Yet ethical rigour is only one aspect of Protestant reality. It is its genealogy – in its Methodist, Waldensian and Lutheran ramifications – naturally, it cannot be limited to an arbitrary list of Protestants (ibid.:107,108).

Bucchi adds that Luther and Calvin proclaimed the religion of autonomy and sacrifice, of initiative and frugality, to the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Capitalism was
born from this individualistic revolution of consciences educated in personal responsibility, the taste for property, the warmth of dignity. In this sense, the spirit of Protestant democracies is identical to the liberalistic morality of capitalism and to the libertarian passion of the masses (1997a:60).

It ought to be mentioned that Gobetti took up the theme of Protestantism from Gangale. He published Gangale's works and then published eight articles of his own in Gangale's journal *Conscientia*. This journal was meant for "all those who believed that the future of Italy was closely linked to its spiritual renewal" (Gangale, 1991:115). Gobetti lauded Gangale's Protestant revival not so much for the purpose of reawakening religious faith but for its cultivation of new ideas and respect for diversity.

Here again, Gobetti demonstrates a particular regard for minorities, thus revealing his "strategy of inclusion". He is in dialogue with all and sundry voices to establish a pluralism of views and spirits that could unite in defeating Fascism. In 'Piero Gobetti's Interpretation of Culture as a Form of Historical Consciousness' (Bagnoli, 1998a:2), Bagnoli considers Gobetti's liberal approach to culture as a component of anti-Fascism:

> Behind his intention of shaping an alternative Italy to the official Italy ..., Gobetti paid particular attention to minorities, to the defeated and the heretical. This attention did not derive from a solipsistic minority-inspired vocation, but was an official choice to have the history of Italy rewritten according to a potential thread of political culture. Gobetti wanted to demonstrate that the arguments he sustained were not abstract, but had a strong historical foundation; that culture is such only if it is rooted in a general process of liberty, which does not necessarily accompany events or can be taken for granted, but which only a willingness to subscribe to values and the exercise of politics can generate (ibid.).

Bobbio later adopted a similar stance in seeking a cultural revival after the fall of Fascism; "the reawakening was marked by an impatience to explore new terrains that had emerged and to test their fertility" (Bobbio, 1995e:159). This cultural renewal was also characterized by a strategy of inclusion, as east and west were
offered equal participation in the world of culture, despite the hardening political divide. There is a big difference, however. Gobetti and the young intellectuals who had believed in World War I as a war of liberation for Italy suddenly found themselves among the vanquished owing to the intensification of the Fascist dictatorship. On the other hand, "after World War II, the new generation that had participated in the war of liberation found themselves, or persuaded themselves, once the ogre had been felled, that they were on the side of the victors" (ibid.). At that time, the chief enemy was "once again spirituality" (ibid.). It turned out however that the gains of the Resistance – unity, the spirit of innovation – did not survive in politics. The political scene was fragmented, the people dispersed and lived day by day with no clear overall goals. Where the spirit of Resistance did survive, however, was in culture (ibid.).

1.5 Defending the Gobetti heritage today

Bobbio accuses his cultural opponents in Italy of committing Thersitism, or of being examples of Tersitismo culturale, that is, acting in the manner of Homer’s Thersites27. Such behaviour constitutes a form of impropriety resulting from their unacceptable and indecorous conduct. Bobbio aims to overcome this Thersitism, reaffirming that the intellectual movement of the post-war period still constitutes a valuable cultural heritage for Italy and beyond. In addition, he endeavours to preserve the heritage of Protestantism against new attacks from neo-liberalism and its proponents. Neo-liberalists, claiming to be a "new" culture, portray the Left in a simplified form as a dwindling army of straw men.

Today, both Gobetti and the members of the PdA, including Bobbio, are exposed to the same criticisms. In 1996, Bobbio identified these as: (i) an elitist conception of power; (ii) a moralistic interpretation of politics; and (iii) an anti-Fascism so radical and intransigent that it becomes the opposite, namely Fascism (La Stampa, 16/2/96:8). In addition, the followers of the PdA have been (iv) accused of legitimating Communism. The first criticism amounts to mere fanciful chatter; the
second, concerning the PdA’s moral approach to politics, is considered to spring from an abstract utopianism; and the third criticism, that of the detrimental effects of virulent anti-Fascism, is identified as the reason for PdA’s political failure. Yet according to the La Stampa, “On the political level, ... the major fault of Gobetti’s followers and PdA members is alleged to be that of accepting the responsibility of legitimating the Communist party – as a democratic party” (ibid.).

Bobbio attributes the demolition of Gobetti’s myth as well as that of the PdA to two sources, but on opposite sides: “from the Catholic intransigence represented at first by Del Noce, and in more recent years by Communion and Liberation28 and some of its disciples, and from Galli della Loggia’s and Dino Cofrancesco’s neo-liberalism, as well some contributors to the magazine Liberal” (ibid.). Although this debate is not new, it is tied to current accounts of revisionist historiography. According to Bobbio, this revisionism is manifest in two ways: “that of attenuating the wrongs of Fascism and, on the contrary, of rendering more intense the wrongs of anti-Fascism and that of affirming, in some respects, the continuity - from the Fascist regime and the first Republic - of both the excessive power of political parties and the exaggerated expansion of the public sector of the economy” (ibid.).

The two political groupings share the belief that Gobetti and the PdA, though they claim to represent the liberal democratic tradition, are in fact extraneous to it. Still, as La Stampa indicates, there is a difference between the groups:

For Del Noce, the ‘intellectuals’ party’ [PdA] was politically defeated, but it had its victory in the sphere of culture, so much so as to impose secular reforms such as divorce and abortion on the politically hegemonic Catholic party; for the neo-liberals, the harmful influence of Gobetti and the PdA, allies of the Communists, supposedly impeded and slowed down the development of a liberal democratic culture in our country (ibid.).

In the late 1990s, there was a new interest in Gobetti’s “liberal revolution”, and consequently in the PdA. La Stampa noted in 1996 that Paolo Flores d’Arcais, the editor of Micromega, in his introduction to the 1995 edition of Gobetti’s La
Rivoluzione Liberale, discusses the “surprising currentness” of Gobetti’s thought. He urges the present Left to become libertarian, azionista — and Gobettian.

For Bobbio, all exaggerated forms of aversion towards Gobetti are expressions of “tersitismo culturale”.

I can add that one’s judgement of whether or not a person or a group of ideas is of current [contemporary] significance depends on the subjective judgement each one of us has of the situation in which we live. If one speaks of Gobetti’s bearing on the present, this cannot be measured here and now. His contemporaneousness transcends history. It is the contemporaneousness of Alfieri’s hero, the ‘odiator dei tiranni’ [hater of tyrants] - he himself being a tragic hero - who inspired his first book on the political thought of Vittorio Alfieri29 (La Stampa, 16/2/96:8).

The problem posed by the opponents of the PdA, according to D’Arcais, is that "against the Italian Right which [he accuses of being] plebiscitary and Peronist, a liberal revolution is needed" (Internet site e:1). This is the solution D’Arcais proposes to the Italian Left: he invites all democrats and progressive reformists to back-track to the path Gobetti prescribed, to ensure that a bourgeoisie respectful of institutions prevails, and to reach a pact with workers (ibid.). The true Italian handicap is “the ‘D’ factor” — the lack of a democratic Destra (Right); “it is not Communism” (ibid.). Repeating Bobbio’s accusation that many neo-liberals are the expression of cultural Thersitism, Arcais judges opinion makers of the “centre”, such as Panebianco, Colletti, Vertone, Pera, and Della Loggia, “guilty of ‘not perceiving the problem, or of passing off as liberal a Right that is not liberal at all’” (ibid.).

1.6 Italy’s flawed post-war settlement

In L’anticomunismo e l’antifascismo in Italia (1997), Aurelio Lepre discusses Franco De Felice’s conception of the debate on how to reconstitute Italian citizenship. This debate is centred mainly on two interpretations of Fascism. One includes “a reductive revision of Fascism”, to the point of diminishing its
importance as well as that of the Resistance. In this view, anti-Fascism has lost its utility and its relevance has been exhausted; it ought to be put aside as it cannot enrich the great debates about Europe’s future. This interpretation views anti-Fascism as the “bearer of ambiguity and unsolved contradiction that weighs upon the modernization of Italy” (Lepre, 1997:10). The second interpretation is based on the “rescue of citizenship through critical historical evaluation that steers clear of simplification” (ibid.). Such evaluation must include a clear statement of the importance of anti-Fascism and the Resistance, both historically and currently. Franco De Felice links that task with the complex theme of historical memory and its construction. At issue is the “transferability of that experience” (ibid.), and the context of the European and international significance of anti-Fascism and the Resistance.

The term “anti-Fascist party” expressed a convergence in its identification of a common enemy, and proposed what De Felice refers to as the reconstruction of the nation and of democracy. The anti-Fascist “party” was able to grasp the relationship between class and nation, and mediate between the two.

The ‘anti-Fascist party’ delineated a proposal of social organization that diverged more and more from the Fascist one. [The Fascist Party] proposed an internally militarized and an externally aggressive solution while anti-Fascism sought to renew the pact between those who governed and the governed by not only preserving democracy but by guaranteeing social security and work (ibid.:11).

Lepre recalls Bobbio’s affirmation that Italy, unlike any other country in the world, is one where “Fascist” and “Communist” are still common epithets in the political debate. Communism and Fascism as they existed in the historical experience of the 20th century are no longer with us and “we all agree that if democracy is to survive it must be neither Fascist nor Communist” (Bobbio, 1994d). Lepre contests Bobbio’s affirmation. He believes that “the accusations of Communism and Fascism have lost a lot of their virulence while post-Communists and post-Fascists consider each other as adversaries rather than enemies” (Lepre, 1997:7). Indeed, Lepre believes that, as methods of political struggle, anti-Communism and anti-
Fascism have been entirely abandoned, thus allowing for calm and sober analysis of their origins. In Italian history, Lepre affirms, the conflict between Fascism and anti-Fascism and Communism and anti-Communism did not represent an anomaly, but derived directly from the construction of democracy in Italy.

Lepre warns that anti-Fascism is not an appropriate political term, for there were many anti-Fascisms expressed by different generations in Italy over the course of time. All of them, it is true, were a form of what Marco Revelli describes as "esser contro", of "being against", of demonstrating even more democracy than ordinary "democratic culture" (ibid.:9). Lepre refers to another anti-Fascist, Vittorio Foa, who describes anti-Fascism as "the anxiety of needing to intervene against injustice, whether of small or large scale, and to counter every threat to liberty" (ibid.). Anti-Fascism, adds Foa, is both political pluralism and social pluralism that legitimates diversity; democracy represents participation as well as a guarantee.

Lepre calls anachronistic those who follow Bobbio's formula of "stoking the fires of anti-Fascism", believing that power emanates from below. The values anti-Fascists embrace and the identity they claim today, Lepre argues, are but a throwback to 1968, expressed as ideology rather than political practice. The genuine forces of the Resistance, those who gave life to real anti-Fascism – from the Communists to the liberals – are not included in that 1968 conception.

Lepre contrasts the position of anti-Fascism with that of Pietro Scoppola, who denies that anti-Fascism is a form of enhanced democracy. Quite the contrary, anti-Fascism offers less than democracy, for "the identification of democracy with anti-Fascism is not reversible: democracy can only be anti-Fascist but not all anti-Fascisms are necessarily democratic" (ibid.). Scoppola also argues that anti-Fascism lacks a complete set of democratic reasons and values.

To make progress in the Italian political debate possible, Lepre recommends that the study of anti-Fascism not be separated from that of anti-Communism. He urges that the similarities and differences between the two be set out, and greater
emphasis be placed on the many strands of anti-Communism. Lepre’s aim is to redeem some of those strands, since unlike the case of anti-Fascism, there has been no identification of anti-Communism with democracy. That absence “cannot be explained through a purported hegemony of Communist intellectuals on Italian culture” (ibid.:11). The genuine problem, he believes, is that Fascism’s use of anti-Communism in the 1920s and 1930s rendered it suspect after 1947, when the government of national unity, comprised of all anti-Fascists parties, fell (ibid.).

Within the anti-Communist ranks, there were non-Communist forces that chose anti-Fascism over anti-Communism because they believed that anti-Fascism offered greater democracy, Lepre argues. That is the true lesson of Italian history. Since there had existed a Fascist regime in Italy, anti-Fascism was able to build its foundation through actual experience. But there had never been the risk of a Communist regime taking hold in Italy. Thus, Lepre argues, anti-Communism appears to have been an imported ideology that had to resort to experiences that were not its own to give itself valid causes and political collateral. Since those experiences had not been lived directly by Italians, but only indirectly, many fell prey to propaganda that had no national foundation.

After the war, Bobbio withdrew from active politics at a time when “many intellectuals returned to their studies” (ibid.:136). In Autobiografia, the very first paragraph is a sort of ode to experience and to a generation of new intellectuals “who had lived through a time riveted by two opposing Italian realities” (Bobbio, 1997:3). Bobbio writes:

In a given moment of our life – the twenty months that separated 8 September 1943 from 25 April 1945 – we were involved in events that were bigger than we were. From a total lack of participation in Italian political life, ... we found ourselves ... morally obligated to occupy ourselves with politics in exceptional circumstances, which were those of German occupation and of the war of Liberation. ... Afterwards we were therefore no longer as we had been before. Our life was divided into two parts, a ‘before’ and an ‘after’. ... In the twenty months between September 1943 and April 1945 I was born into a new existence, completely different from the previous one, which I consider as a pure and simple anticipation of authentic life, which
started with the Resistance, in which I participated as a member of the PdA (ibid.).

This passage gives one both a personal and political picture of the drama Italy had undergone. The historical debate concerning the Italy that emerged from Fascism is a subject of lively debate today.

Only one wing of the PdA was of liberal-socialist inspiration, but Croce's input was to influence the Catholic philosopher Augusto Del Noce (d. 1989). Del Noce wrote of the opposition between "the Christian, who must first of all adopt methods of struggle that respect the human person, and the PdA member, who sought 'the genuineness' of Marxism in his conciliation with the idealistic culture of Croce's 'religion of liberty', or the secular faith of modern man" (Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:13). Del Noce's view, or rather the criticism of his view, is therefore a key to understanding Bobbio's account of modern Italy and his specific brand of liberalism as it compares with orthodox liberalism. Bobbio considers Del Noce as a political adversary, and has undertaken an examination of Del Noce's objections to the PdA. An anti-Fascist during the years of Fascism, for moral reasons Del Noce soon found himself in disagreement with the culture of anti-Fascist unity that had formed in Italy immediately after the conclusion of World War II, As early as 1945, Del Noce affirmed this position in a series of articles. "Curiously the reasons for anti-Fascism and those for the rejection of the myth of anti-Fascist unity are the same" (il Corriere della Sera, 29/12/94:31).

For Del Noce, Fascism found its cultural synthesis in the philosophy of Gentile\(^3\). Gentile took Marx's dialectic and separated it from its materialistic part, from the economic analysis that identifies the proletariat as the instrument for the affirmation of a new conception of the world, totally immanent and atheist. In discussing Del Noce's "politics of the centre", Bobbio writes that his condemnation of Actionism was not only cultural, but also political. Starting from the consideration that democracy can only find its place at the centre — where the middle classes are — Del Noce maintains that all forms of abstract revolution would end by pushing them towards the Right. Del Noce believed that "Jacobinism does nothing but work
for reaction". The PdA was a political failure. This failure was, for Del Noce, the best proof of the philosophical error on which it was founded, and a historical demonstration that democracy can only be constructed on Christian values, foremost among which is respect for the person (Bobbio in Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:13).

In the post-war configuration, those Catholics who had participated in the Resistance were of particular interest to Bobbio. During the Resistance, parish priests and local peasantry had helped partisan detachments and “in the postwar Italian Republic these masses became the bedrock upon which the Christian Democratic electoral plurality rested” (Webster, 1961:162.). Italian Catholics, after their experience of Fascism, had to admit that the 20th century could not be reduced to purely religious categories. As one of the major parties that dominated post-war politics, along with the Communists and socialists, the Christian Democrats were instrumental in thwarting the revolution of the Left, even if cabinet positions were filled successively by many of the liberal elite’s jurists and economists.

Italy came out of World War II in a truly revolutionary situation. The State’s prestige and authority had touched bottom, the reigning dynasty was discredited, and the three parties of the Left – the Communists, the Socialists, and the Party of Action – were ready to govern the nation through the Committees of National Liberation, the organs of the Resistance. Only the Western occupying powers and the Catholic movement upheld what was left of the State and kept it from falling into the hands of the Left. From 1945 to 1947 an uneasy ... coalition of the parties of the Left and the Centre ruled Italy under Allied supervision (ibid.:178).

In 1995 Bobbio chose to publish a "posthumous" interview with Del Noce precisely to reaffirm his own ideals, which derive from Piero Gobetti, Carlo Rosselli, and his fellow members in the PdA. These men lived through conflicting Italian realities but also strived to maintain a lively dialogue with both Communists and Catholics, and to include the views of all those who had made their anti-Fascist stance clear. Bobbio’s membership in the PdA reflected his criticism of both the Italian dictatorship and Stalin’s Soviet dictatorship, as had been expressed by Rosselli in
Socialismo Liberale. But it also makes clear his respect for the opinion of others in helping him to formulate an understanding of all aspects of any question.

In an article entitled 'La psicologia del ceto medio' (Psychology of the middle class), of January 1946, Del Noce observed that the middle class, by virtue of its nature and social position, is not a revolutionary class. Rather, it tends to lean towards the Right when it fears the threatening prevalence of the revolutionary Left. Therefore, "its politicization cannot take place along revolutionary lines" (Del Noce in Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:15).

Political prudence and mediation were to inspire a "politics of the centre which constituted the only exit from Fascism; the Democrazia cristiana would perfectly embody this role, by preventing a frontal confrontation and its resulting consequences between the groups of the Right and of the Left" (Del Noce in Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:5).

For Bobbio, "after the victory and the expansion of the Soviet revolution ... it became a choice between civilizations and a choice that militant Catholic thought could not escape" (Bobbio, 1995e:165). For Del Noce, Marxism was an "overturning, and its decisiveness lay in a shift in Marx's thought from a concept of philosophy as understanding to a concept of philosophy as revolution" (Bobbio, 1995e:165). He writes:

Even if the explanation that Del Noce gives of the anti-revolutionary quality of the middle class, which would derive from 'a greater cultural awareness' compared to the proletariat, and therefore from a greater concern for methods, is not at all convincing, the conviction that only the middle class can form the strong nucleus of democracy rests firm. ... If Right means conservation and Left innovation, the centre in the positive sense of the term should represent a position of 'creative fidelity'. A difficult politics, but also the only possible type in an age of moral, cultural and political reconstruction after ... Fascism, if one doesn't want to fall into the same old errors (Bobbio in Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:15).
Although Del Noce embraced the centre party of the middle classes, he entirely rejected the parties of the Left. The parties of the Left were seen as revolutionary ones “that would want to impose the Republican solution by force” (Del Noce in Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:16). “For Del Noce, Marxism, as a practical fulfilment of the atheism implicit throughout the course of modern rationalism, was absolutely irreconcilable with the tradition of Christian thought, which meant that the road to a ‘restoration’ of Christianity lay beyond Marx” (Bobbio, 1995e:165). Del Noce’s hostility towards the Left contrasts with his attitude towards the Right: “A party of the centre, that depends on the consensus of the middle classes, must know that the politicization of the middle classes cannot come about by raising the flag of revolution and that, between the fear of revolution and safety through reaction, the lower middle class chooses the latter” (Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:16).

Having identified Del Noce as the most authoritative contributor to the revision of the history of the Italian Resistance, Bobbio notes Del Noce’s insistence “that a religious vision of history is a prerequisite of a free and just society” (Bobbio, 1995e:201). This view is “in contradiction to the secular culture that has long held sway in Italy” (ibid.). Bobbio recapitulates that Del Noce considered democracy to be a form of government that excludes the use of violence as a means of resolving political conflict. Yet by defending the political centre as the party of democracy, between Left and Right, Del Noce defines “democracy as ‘giving to all the means to live and to express freely one’s own will’: therefore democracy is the ideal of pacific and free cohabitation” (Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:14). He writes:

A ‘real’ democracy ... includes ‘a profound and structural economic reform’, as there can be no true democracy if the inequalities of property are not contained within the limits of real equality of power (not formal, as in the pre-Fascist democracy). ... There cannot be full democracy if, in addition to the values of non-violence and liberty, one does not include, within certain limits, the value of equality (Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:16).

What Del Noce is describing is a programme of social democracy which, Bobbio notes, is not that different from that of the deprecated PdA, even if Del Noce’s criticism was directed only at the Jacobin faction of the PdA. “The motto of the PdA
was ‘democratic revolution’: for the moderate wing this expression meant that after Fascism and during the pre-Fascist era when there was no real democracy ... democracy for our country represented a revolutionary turning point that aimed to re-establish the rules for that free political struggle in Italy that Fascism had repressed" (ibid.:16,17).

Although Del Noce and Bobbio seem to be describing the same type of democracy, there is a marked difference. As Bobbio has repeatedly said, for the PdA, to go beyond Fascism meant to oppose a regime that had been illiberal in politics and capitalist in economics with another regime, one inspired by the principles of liberalism in politics and of socialism in economics. For Del Noce, as Bobbio reads him, this meant opposing a regime of the Right, whose reaction could have provoked a move to the Left, with a regime of the centre, neither to the Right nor to the Left.

The most obvious difference between Del Noce’s “centre” ground and that of the PdA was their relationship with the Communists. The PdA was an ally of the Communists while the Catholic party of the centre that Del Noce joined was then and throughout the first republic the major adversary of Communism. Del Noce had hoped that the Parri government would fall, to the benefit of “the three parties of the Right, the Christian Democratic, Liberal and Democratic Labour parties” (ibid.15,16). Del Noce wrote that if the Communist idea could not evolve in a democratic sense, the Communist Party, being made up of people who were destined to live and to work within a certain context, i.e., a democratic one, could still evolve towards the full acceptance of democracy. Bobbio agrees that from this point of view Del Noce was absolutely right. Many young people had rallied to Communism exclusively from fear that the other parties would not have sufficient force to defeat Fascism; Del Noce argues that such youths had been motivated by sincere democratic conviction. Therefore, Del Noce did not exclude the possibility that praxis influenced theory and therefore that “if brought to the level of democratic practice, the Communist Party could finish up by ... slowly transforming itself into a democratic party” (ibid.:17). There was no need to teach democratic
theory to Marxists. One could be confident that the democratization of the Communist Party would take place as its members would be operating in a different context from that of Soviet Communism.

Reading the writings of Del Noce is worthwhile because of their historical interpretations, but also because Del Noce examines several linkages between democracy and Christianity. In his analysis, "the centrality of the Catholic party in defending democracy from two extreme ideologies – Fascism and Communism, both of which are anti-democratic – is evident, given the political failure of all secular parties, and in particular, the PdA" (Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:18). Here, Del Noce is criticizing the political platform of the PdA, but implicit in his criticism is a condemnation of ontology, interpreted as "intelligence of the real". For Del Noce, the sphere of isms "is that of perversion, where human activity is transformed into an idol". Such perversion "is rationalism ... which in the modern age emerged as secularity" (Castellano, 1992:83). For Del Noce, contemporary history is simply the epoch in which the phenomenon of atheism is manifested.

In the aftermath of the liberation, proponents of liberal-socialism were the sternest of all political formations in their condemnation of Fascism. They sought to develop "realistic expedients to prevent Communism from degenerating into totalitarianism" (Bobbio, 1995e:153). Absalom describes that effort thus:

In the first place, the attraction and power the Church possessed was a focus, after the removal of Fascism and its institutions, for all the forces of reaction in Italian society, whether ... monarchists, Fascist-trained bureaucrats, landowners ..., or industrialists threatened by the new militancy of their workers. In the Church they sought and found ... a doctrine ... and a legitimation for opposing all the pressures for social and economic change: insofar as the Church's secular political representation was the Christian Democrat party, it was inevitably to that party that they turned ... (Absalom, 1995:193).

Although Del Noce was convinced that a historical comprehension of Fascism was necessary for a practical overcoming of it, "he did not agree that the doctrine of
counter revolution, or Fascism and Nazism emerging in reaction to Communism, constituted a way out of Fascism" (Bobbio and Del Noce, 1995a:7).

Material and moral poverty were the causes underlying Fascism, in Gobetti’s view. He believed that in Italy the "most serious attempts at heresy corresponded with the period of free economic activity that flourished under the city states or communes" (Gobetti, 1997:824). Local forces surfaced to foster prosperity "in many Italian cities in the early Middle Ages [following] the breakdown of centralized political control after the ninth century" (Duggan, 1994:37). This "economic heresy" was a genuine form of liberty that eventually declined under the centralized monarchy following the age of Italian city-states. The highly centralized state resulted in widespread universal poverty, which was particularly acute following World War I: this poverty became a weapon of the Church. The strong state, Gobetti warned, formed an alliance with the nobility and the Church, and that alliance thwarted economic development and brought the dynamic force of heresy to a halt. He writes:

With ... the discovery of America, the Italian economy entered a standstill phase: commerce was undergoing a crisis; agriculture ... had been damaged by feudal domains belonging to the nobility as well as by ecclesiastical domains which were run according to a regime of charity; a class of industrious crop-growers could not be identified; the artisans were only sufficient in number to lessen the hardship of a few Northern cities. In these general conditions of life, one could only celebrate the triumph of the Counter Reformation34 (Gobetti, 1997:824).

According to Gobetti, the Church’s response to pagan Rome and the modern State resulted in “a dogmatism that imposed itself upon obedient and humiliated spirits” (Gobetti, 1997:824). Moreover, he believed the lower classes remained Catholic mostly owing to the solace of charity. In this manner, moral renewal was toppled, whereas all the Protestant revolutions of Europe "had proven their vitality in creating new moral types" (ibid.). Fascism, on the other hand, Gobetti saw as a form of moral pauperism which undermines personal consciousness and self-reliance. In his view, Catholicism requires liberalism since its historically dogmatic character – such that it eschews all forms of secularism - needed to be tempered
by other streams of human thought. As that counterbalancing never took place before Gobetti's time, and has taken place at a slow pace during Bobbio's time, it can be said that in Italy Catholicism opened the door to Fascism. "With perfect logic, Fascism is Catholic: if one considers that it places itself in the Italian crisis in a moment of economic unemployment, and scholastic reform, is [acutely] reactionary and uses religious teaching to take away any boldness of rebellion in the popular classes" (ibid.).

Because of Catholicism, no individualistic revolution occurred. As a result, maturity did not develop in the masses, and this contrasted with the democratic spirit of the Anglo-Saxon peoples who embraced capitalism. They followed the message of Luther and Calvin who praised the work ethic and the "religion of personal autonomy".

At the close of World War II, Italian intellectuals busied themselves with assessing the Fascist period. For Bobbio's generation, which had endured five years of war culminating in the German occupation of a part of Italy and a domestic fratricidal conflict, the war left deep wounds that have still not healed today. As Bobbio describes it:

For someone like me who had undertaken juridical and philosophical studies and had been forcibly occupied with politically ascetic studies, it was natural that when the war ended and liberty had returned the great problems to be tackled were democracy and peace. The history of my life as a scholar began there and all that had gone before was prehistorical (Bobbio, 1996b:164).

What Bobbio describes as the "prehistorical" cannot be ignored. He is convinced that there are no definitive political solutions "and that one must take one step at a time, without ever having the pretension of wanting to start anew, although one must be ready at all times to take a step backwards" (Bobbio, 1997:193). He has indicated his interest in peace, one of "the great problems", and has written of war and peace in Una guerra giusta? (1991). War, a state of antagonism, he also defines as a "competition between opposing forces or for a particular end"35.
1.7 Turin as the fulcrum of anti-Fascism: Giustizia e Libertà

In Italy, no city compares with Turin and no region compares with Piedmont as emblematic settings of antagonistic forces and social transformation. Turin's early and successful industrialization, the fact that the first factory councils in Italy emerged there, the effects of migration of workers to Piedmont from the south, and Turin's key role during the student protests of the late sixties, reveal a crucible which has had a strong influence on the rest of Italy. Labour and industrial development were among the first concrete entities that animated politics since the mediation between the two sectors endowed politics with new margins of power. In 1975, Turin's Communist mayor, Diego Novelli, spoke of the "two lives" of the city, its "working-class, union-led life and its bourgeois life that seemed impervious to the [dramatic condition of the] proletariat" (Bobbio, 1997:172).

As I have discussed above, Turin was an important working-class city and one of the centres of the anti-Fascist movement. Claudio Magris describes Turin as

the city of a new bourgeoisie and a new proletariat that acquired the self-consciousness of liberalism, of socialism and Communism; the Italian Detroit or Leningrad that elaborated a culture that took care in reconciling the progress of the masses, the masses' possibility of becoming a ruling class, with liberty, a culture which was open to great European perspectives and nourished with the robust ... virtues of concreteness, hard work and responsibility which made it an intellectual capital [... and] a bulwark of anti-Fascism (il Corriere della Sera, 20/11/98:35).

Alessandro Galante Garrone, in Il mite giacobino (1994) recalls how on 25 April 1945, the day of Italian liberation, after he had hidden for a couple of days in a tannery with other partisans of the Comando militare regionale piemontese (CMRP), the German command advised them through the Curia of its willingness to evacuate Turin. The condition was that two German divisions could march through the streets of the city over a period of 48 hours. The reply of the Comitato di liberazione nazionale (CLN) was that only an unconditional surrender would be
acceptable. This was despite a representative of the local archbishop repeating the German request for the third time on 27 April, and relaying the message that if the occupying forces were not given permission to leave Turin as they wished, they would perpetrate "a second Warsaw". The reply of the CLN remained unchanged: unconditional surrender. The Germans left. Today, Galante Garrone recalls that moment of Turin's triumph as a stimulus which, nonetheless, leaves him with a sense of regret for the end of that magic moment and enthusiasm which failed to be incorporated by Italian reality.

Contemporary Turin is a vanguard of industrial conflict and trade unionism owing to its being home to Italy's largest private company, FIAT. As *La Stampa* puts it, "The history of FIAT is above all the history of an irreducible conflict between company management and that which was once called the workers' movement" (*La Stampa*, 23/11/98:14). Workers occupied the FIAT factory in 1920. Since then, industrial relations have evolved with the growth of trade unions, with management change and of course with technological progress. A great number of Southern Italians left their home towns to work in the North, swelling the population of Turin. This migration resulted in a social fabric that exists nowhere else in Italy, and it has presented social challenges and new social issues.

This industrial conflict was a positive force, as the historian Giuseppe Berta reminds us:

> In this reconstruction which retrieves pieces of collective memory, the idea that the mark of Gramsci is imprinted upon the working class movement in Turin is fundamental; that is, ... that the workers should oppose management power: that workers, because of their professional value, felt themselves to be the real managers of the firm (ibid.).

Berta goes on to say that the management of FIAT has always needed an antagonist on which to base its strategy; now that this antagonism no longer exists, one ought to be concerned. In the heated years of 1919 and early 1920, "Agnelli [the founder of FIAT] looked to America and his model was Ford; he succeeded in re-establishing significant entrepreneurial control over the workers" (ibid.). The city
of Milan did not enjoy the same success in managing its industrial relations, and in 1921 and 1922, Fascists intervened there to quell workers' protests. Turin, however, did not undergo further industrial conflict.

Modern Turin has made its influence felt in many different ways. As Bobbio puts it, "the history of Turinese culture and politics merges with Italian culture at its highest levels" (Bobbio, 1995e:xxi). Like all hegemonic cultures – as Turin's was for a long time – this culture had its faults and limitations, but overall it represented the best Italy. It embodied the continuity of tradition and innovation, the unitary sense of the State and cosmopolitan life, and liberalism and democracy (il Corriere della Sera, 20/11/98:35).

Secular politics are very much associated with Turin and the industrialized North, given their role at the forefront of the socialist movement. Ginsborg tells us that "A survey of 1961 revealed some remarkable facts: the Democrazia Cristiana (DC) had nearly three times more members in Foggia than in Florence, and almost as many in Cosenza as in Genoa, Turin and Milan put together" (Ginsborg, 1990:168). The greater influence of the Church in southern Italy corresponds with a lesser degree of industrial development, investment and technological capability. The northern city of Turin stands as an example of both the pros and the cons that accompany widespread industrial development and employment questions. Those involved in formulating current regional and European policies on immigration, for example, may stand to benefit from the study of Turin's experience of southern Italian migrant workers and its development of suitable integration strategies.

Following the assassination of the socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti and Mussolini's own admission of responsibility in his death, "Mussolini stated (3 January 1925) in a speech before the Chamber that he assumed 'political, moral, and historical responsibility for all that has happened'" (Bobbio, 1995e:211); "Matteotti became the symbol of anti-Fascism and of anti-Fascist heroism" (Rosselli, 1988:265). When Rosselli and Gobetti met him in Turin, "they were struck by his seriousness and anti-rhetorical style" (ibid.).
Mussolini recruited his first Fascist squads from the masses of veterans who returned victorious from World War I but found hardship and unemployment at home. Popular discontent was intensified by waffling politicians and Mussolini's focus on striking unions. Rosselli's involvement in the war caused him to be inspired by the brotherhood he had experienced at the front and he hoped that Italy would undergo a process of reform that would culminate in justice and liberty, the name he gave to the movement and the journal he founded. Vittorio Foa recalls the time he joined the ranks of GL, which developed into Italy's principal non-Marxist anti-Fascist organization:

The group had few illusions about overthrowing the government; its purpose was to keep independent and anti-Fascist thinking alive until the day when Fascism would stumble. Its primary tool was its newspaper, published in Paris. Since GL's leaders were in exile, they depended ... on a network of sources within the country to cut through the smoke-screen of official news. Operatives collected information about Fascist economic and military policy, about working conditions, unauthorized ... strikes and peasant uprisings (Stille, 1991:98,99).

The early leaders of GL in Turin were investigated by the Operazione di Vigilanza per la Repressione dell'Anti-Fascismo (OVRA), and on 31 March 1935 Sion Segre and Mario Levi were arrested by OVRA as "Jewish anti-Fascists working with exiles abroad" (ibid.:100). As Fascist police investigations and interrogations continued with the help of an informer37, more arrests came in May 1935, including those of Foa and his brother.

While not a material threat to the regime, GL had great symbolic importance because of the prestige and cultural sophistication of its members and the writers and readers of its paper. Composed mainly of intellectuals and professionals of the upper middle class, the ... members of GL moved in tightly knit, respectable circles, bound closely by friendship, blood and, sometimes, religion. Tracking their movements did not automatically reveal who the leaders were; unlike the full-time revolutionaries of other groups, they went on with their normal lives (Stille, 1991:102,103).
The Turinese intellectual milieu of the thirties included the writer and painter Carlo Levi, who "used his artistic pursuits as a cover for conspiracy, having Foa and other GL members sit for portraits while discussing political plans" (ibid.:103). His trips to Paris were often a pretext which allowed him to consult with GL leaders there. The close proximity of Piedmont to France was also important as this facilitated communication between Rosselli in France and the Turinese members of GL.

Salvadori writes of the symbolic importance of the GL circle and Foa's personal recollection of the Turin of the late thirties as valuable tools in giving one an understanding of Bobbio's "unceasing scholarly attention to Turinese cultural and political history" (Salvadori in 'Introduction' to Bobbio, 1995e:xxi). Bobbio understands history "primarily as a reconstruction of the various personalities who have played prominent roles, hence his predilection for 'portraits'" (ibid.). He applies this method to the legacy of Gobetti and Foa, in his adoption of a style that clearly reflects his "ethical and intellectual penchant for biography" (ibid.).

The partisans of GL made an immense contribution to the defeat of Fascism but in Duggan's words, "their contribution to political mythology was much more significant" (Duggan, 1994:244). Bobbio and other PdA members today strongly object to this use of the term "myth" in describing the partisan movement. For them, it was closer to what Gramsci described as "the effective historical forces ... of Turin and Milan" (Gramsci, 1994:137), of the industrialized North in general. As Duggan relates events,

With the end of the war in sight, a general insurrection was proclaimed to liberate the main cities ahead of the Allies. The number of partisans suddenly grew from about 80,000 in March 1945 to about a quarter of a million by the end of April; and ... the major centres of the North were handed over to the British by anti-Fascists. This was of great psychological importance; but it was economically significant, too, for the partisans were able to prevent the Germans from blowing up factories ... as they withdrew (Duggan, 1994:243,244).
In the wake of the German departure, there was hope that "the new order in Italy would be built upon the 'values of the Resistance': democracy, freedom, honesty, accountability, openness, and modernity" (ibid.:244). It was hoped that "Italy would begin again: it would wipe away the stains of Fascism and liberalism, destroying the old structures of power and releasing the pure pent up moral energy of its people" (ibid.). Stille describes it thus:

At the end of World War II, the anti-Fascists who had been outcasts suddenly became the leaders of the new democratic Italy. ... a number of ... former co-conspirators were elected to parliament as members of the newly formed PdA, the successor of GL. But the Italy of the anti-Fascist resistance was short-lived. ... Italy underwent no socialist transformation. The PdA [was ... composed] mainly of intellectuals with little mass following, it was ... 'an army with all generals and no infantry' (Stille, 1991:322).

Yet, "the cleansing 'wind from the North', as it was known, was combined with a deep sense of national humility and a strong desire to be accepted back into the international community" (Duggan, 1994:244). But it was not defeat alone that awakened this desire. "It was also part of Italy's long dialectic with modernity, that had begun in the eighteenth century and then continued during the Risorgimento, and which had given rise over the decades to much political impatience and anger" (ibid.).

The moral renewal that was hoped for never materialized, as lamented by Calamandrei in Questa nostra costituzione (1995b). The South had not had the same level of participation in the resistance as it "had been liberated by the Allies and had thus produced no resistance movement and no new ruling elite" (Duggan, 1994:244). Indeed, in Southern Italy, the end of the war "meant a confirmation of the old order: the big landowners and their bourgeois (and mafia) clientele, who by turns had been liberals and Fascists ..." (ibid.). More generally, across Italy, "renewal broke down in the face of political realities" (ibid.). The elite who emerged from the resistance movement in the North did not have the necessary experience to be successful at statecraft, a criticism also advanced towards Mussolini's squadristi of 1922.
Many of the Resistance leaders were Communists or revolutionary socialists and the funding of Italy's reconstruction after the war by the USA, and the extremism of the Fascist years sealed their fate; "the era of the Cold War put them beyond the pale" (Duggan, 1994:244). The failure to institute a new moral order and the recycling of the men and the institutions inherited from the Fascist state constituted a recipe for instability. Duggan writes:

The symbols, the rhetoric, and even the constitution changed; but most of the old personnel and many of the former institutions remained untouched. For those who had believed in a new moral order, the sense of disappointment was great; and their frustration was to prove a major source of instability in the [future], encouraging anti-system parties, protest movements, and terrorism ... (ibid.).

Turin, home to great industries, was again the centre of much tension and debate. Anissimov relates that "In the eyes of Marxists who called the tune in working-class Turin of the 1960s, work was pure alienation" (Anissimov, 1998:267). Once again, Turin was the focus of the labour movement, and remains so today, although the numbers of factory workers continue to dwindle. There was an economic boom in Italy during the 1960s. During that time, Anissimov writes:

Turin ... saw its population double in ten years. Workers arrived in the thousands to join the production-lines, ... where the many strikes ... were met by violent police repression. ... Six months after May 1968 in Paris, Turin witnessed the upsurge of a violent radical movement in which students joined with workers in open warfare against the consumer society, capitalism, and private property. Turin lived through the era of Lotta Continua, Potere Operaio, and the Red Brigades, while far-right neo-Fascist groups with Mafia links developed their 'strategy of tension' by organizing murderous terrorist attacks (ibid.:293).

The southern workers who had migrated to Turin in the sixties had epitomized the North-South divide. Still today, for Bobbio, in his conception of the Left, going beyond the nation state is not as crucial as the economic divide between North and South and the international order. Indeed, as he sees it:
If we understand the ‘Left’ as those standing on the side of the socially underprivileged – the poor, the oppressed ... – then today this principle has its meaning above all in that we take a position with respect to the relation between North and South in the world economic order. We are concerned with two-thirds of humanity. But if we broaden the problem to the international order, then we are concerned with a relation of not only two-thirds of the poor and oppressed, but perhaps as much as nine-tenths of the world’s population as opposed to one-tenth in the industrial nations (Bobbio in Glotz and Kallscheuer, 1989:141).

It is clear from the discussion above that a re-examination of the historical origins of Italy is necessary. Such an endeavour would illustrate the overriding role played by the region of Piedmont in the process of Italian unification. The heritage of Piedmont was taken up by Gobetti and Burzio in the early twenties, and it was at the forefront of other traditions, namely liberalism, opposition to Fascism, and re-evaluation of the concepts of politics, intellectuals and elitism. But as Bagnoli says, “The theme of Piedmont ... is indicative of a fundamental tendency that animates the other themes as well, owing to the way of life in this region in terms of shaping their values and the ethical dimension they use to interpret history and politics” (Bagnoli, 1998:30). During the postwar years, Turin has remained at the centre of Italian cultural development, as Anissimov makes clear:

In Turin, a group of intellectuals with links to the Resistance had gathered around the president of the Piedmont Liberation Committee, Franco Antonicelli, publisher of If This Is A Man [by Primo Levi]. They explored a whole range of ideas about the relations that had to be established between culture and politics, and between men of culture and the masses. They founded an association, l’Unione Culturale (the “Cultural Union”), which held meetings and organized lectures ... they debated the question of whether the new culture ought to be popular ... or whether instead they should push for an avant-garde culture, which Fascism had stifled. ... A centre for methodological studies also started up in 1946, under the influence of Ludovico Geymonat38 ... The circle included mathematicians, physicists, and biologists ... In the cultural landscape of postwar Turin, the Communist Catholics also enjoyed a short-lived influence ... (Anissimov, 1998:270,271).

Turin, the city that most symbolizes Italian liberalism, was also the city that voiced the greatest opposition to Fascism. The form of liberal politics hailed by Gobetti in the 1920s was taken much further by Bobbio, since he sought to achieve an Italian
liberalism by reforming Communism and by drawing from the thought of liberal thinkers from abroad. A closer look at liberalism generally, and at Bobbio’s discussion of Italian liberalism in particular follow in the next chapter.
Chapter II: POLITICAL COMMUNITY: LIBERALISM OVER MULTICULTURALISM

Every society suffers from the same fundamental problem, Bobbio declares. Quite simply, there is conflict between the different spheres of human action in politics, private life, art, law, and so forth. Some fundamental and general rules of human conduct, habitually called moral laws, are necessary. Without them, human "cohabitation" would not only be very unhappy, it would virtually impossible (Bobbio, 1994c:105).

Bobbio begins with the premise that there are three stances that can be taken vis-à-vis any form of government, namely: (i) all existing forms are good; (ii) all existing forms are bad; and (iii) amongst the existing forms of government some are good, some are bad (Bobbio, 1976:6). Point (i) above is the historicist view, whereby every form of government springs from the historical events that preceded its inevitable emergence. Point (ii) recalls the Platonic assertion that all forms of government are bad in that they are removed from the organic ideal of initial perfection (ibid.:17). Point (iii) is perhaps the closest to the truth, and owes something to Aristotle. Individuals and associations tend to nostalgic recollection of the "good government" of their forefathers, attempting to reconstitute a previous form of optimum government. This usually involves idealizing this or that historical model or form, whether crystallized around the figure of a particular politician, mass movement or spiritual star.

The spiritual star guiding Italian social liberalism in Bobbio's view is the ideal of equality (Bobbio, 1996c:60). That equality is not based on multiculturalism and ethnicity, but on the reciprocal agreement to recognize principles, rules and institutions. Particular cultural roots, which cannot be generalized are deliberately left aside. Bobbio's sense of laicità – of belonging neither to the religious clergy nor to the hegemonic clergy – concerns the institutions of the state. These attempt not only to neutralize the claims of different cultures and religions and promote tolerance, but also to erect a legal contract as a means of protecting diversity. Yet that protection
also comprises a method of “overcoming” diversity in that individuals of all races and preferences acquire equality in terms of their status in law, although there are differing levels of awareness in the perception and utility of that status. This approach to democratic liberalism aims, in Bellamy’s words, to construct “a workable set of democratic institutions capable of providing the modus vivendi necessary to arrive at these agreements” (Bellamy, 1992:261). The importance of equality is also seen in Bobbio’s additional comment concerning how to distinguish between good and bad forms of government. He calls attention to Aristotle’s affirmation that good government does not depend on consensus or force, on legality or illegality but rather on whether government reflects the public interest or l’interesse personale [individual interest] (Bobbio, 1976:36). Good government exists in states where those who govern do so based on the public interest rather than that of the individual.

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how Bobbio’s anti-Fascism builds on the initial foundations of liberalism rooted mainly in religious and material concerns and comprises a discussion of i) the issues important to Bobbio; ii) how he constructs his own liberalism (and with whom he debated it); and iii) what residual problems arise in evaluating it. In assessing Bobbio’s liberalism, I attempt to illustrate to what extent it is a response to historical events. Bobbio’s politics of culture can be seen as an ethical thrust. Specific debates about the state, the autonomy of scientific research, the independence of magistrates, and other questions, are then different contingent expressions that “reflect the cultural core” behind Bobbio’s method of debate.

2.1 The anti-Fascist thread that runs through liberalism

Historically speaking, liberalism developed based on the ideas of the Enlightenment particularly the “conviction that the power of reason which human beings have in common enables us to improve our condition” (Gray, 1998a:49,50). Western society’s emancipation and progressive liberalism are centred around two
spheres: religious/spiritual matters and material concerns. Both of these spheres are reflected in the relationship between morality and politics. Bobbio writes: "Among moral questions, the relationship between morality and politics is one of the most traditional ones, along with that of the relationship between morality and private life ... or that of the relationship between morality and law, between morality and art" (Bobbio, 1994c:105). Morality, in the case of liberalism, is not based on content or particular truths but on procedural rules under which politics, private life, art and the administration of law are carried out.

The Church cannot be placed on the same level as the empire and the city-state, as its raison d'être was not to oversee social and political life, but Manent notes, "by its very existence and distinctive vocation, it posed an immense political problem to the European peoples" (Manent, 1994:4). The Church was a new form of association. Here it is essential to establish that "the political development of Europe is understandable only as the history of answers to problems posed by the Church" (ibid.). The primary aim of the Church was to pursue human salvation but as overseer of human actions, an unnatural grafting of secular and religious functions resulted. This, in turn, led people to seek a form of government which would limit the Church's intervention, as "paternalism was the hallmark of papal rule" (Gross, 1990:7). The Church maintained that its control over all political regimes was exercised indifferently, thus acknowledging that it did not wish to impose a particular political regime. Consequently, when the secular world later regained its strength, it had the latitude to seek the political form that could best resist the Church's claims (Manent, 1994:5).

By the end of the eighteenth century, liberal ideas had gained much ground. "Liberals believed that the people had a right to some say in government and that this was best achieved by a representative assembly or parliament, elected by property owners" (Stiles, 1986:8). The middle class favoured constitutional monarchy, for they feared the two political extremes of absolute monarchy and republican democracy. Such political extremes, they believed, were a "threat to their political, economic and social position, for most liberals were middle class"
In opposition to the middle class were the radicals and extremists "who wanted social reforms and a redistribution of wealth and were prepared to use revolutionary means to obtain them" (ibid.). Their aim was for political power to rest with the people rather than parliament.

Below – need to say more about this debate and who Toglia. Is since unclear why mentioned here

Bobbio's vision of liberalism can be read as offering a series of abstract principles rather than responses to events, but his intellectual approach takes up all the main themes of the Italian, European and wider cultural debate. Bobbio's debate with Togliatti provides an example of intellectual commitment in its discussion of the task of the PCI. The question is how to build an appropriate agenda for the Italian Left, and what the impact of the Cold War has been.

Bobbio's liberalism is driven by anti-Fascism and that anti-Fascism feeds into his later arguments about the politics of culture. Indeed, as the Fascist regime began to suppress all forms of non-Fascist political expression, those intellectuals who did not adhere to or support the Fascist Party "put their noses into their books". This was a crucial lesson, Bobbio reminds us, that pursuing research is a liberal activity that was not then permitted in the public sphere. Research was a specifically anti-Fascist pursuit which brought into view the separation between culture and politics – and the nobility of the former.

Bobbio advises that "one way of understanding the present liberal revival is by seeing it in terms of its historical progression ..., which can be summed up as follows: in the past the liberal crusade was directed against socialism, which in its collectivist version ... is its natural enemy" (Bobbio, 1987:115). In Italy, that crusade took on a particular urgency in the 1880s, when the vote was extended to seven percent of the population. Although that small electorate was "manageable", all Italian politicians were preoccupied with the social question, "what to do about that great mass of the population who remained outside the political system" (Bosford, 2002:48).
The cultural traditions of both the middle class and the more radical groups were later reflected in European opposition to Fascism. This antagonism constituted a bifurcated intellectual heritage, an independent liberal consciousness against all forms of academic and scientific inhibition. The positive effect of this natural reaction of thinking people was a turning point as significant as the fall of Soviet Communism, but of gargantuan proportions. It signalled the beginning of a natural process, whereas the end of the bipolar world was a return to nature, in that, historically speaking, the upturned balance of political influence caused a new form of chaos. Yet it must be recognized that during all the years of the Cold War the Italian Communist Party was excluded from government and only recently has the Left finally won power at the national level.

Under Fascism, the conception of liberty based on a sense of the inviolability of the person and human freedom was obscured. Consequently, definitions of Fascism, the reasons for its advent, and how the country emerged from the dark years of its regime are all vital components of the historical significance of Italian liberalism. In Italy, there remains an indistinct demarcation -- what Arrigo Levi refers to as a "grey zone" -- between what was known as actually existing socialism, inspired by Lenin and Stalin, and socialist ideals that have a significantly different temporal and historical dimension. Today, ex-Communists and ex-Fascists have begun an intensive effort to "re-read" the past; that effort is complicated by an earlier mistaken reading of history. The participants at the International Conference of Writers for the Defence of Cultural Freedom [Paris 1935], for example, lauded the reign of Stalin by claiming repeatedly that only in Soviet Russia had liberty and the new man triumphed. These writers, including Gide and Malraux, maintained at the time that all "bourgeois" countries, on the contrary, were "Fascist" (Il Corriere della Sera, 2/4/98:3). Salvemini was one of the few writers and historians who rejected this opinion, which contrasted with the view of the majority of the 230 delegates at that conference. Indeed, "the Communist Ambrogio Donini said he had 'listened with nausea' to Salvemini's ... denunciation" (ibid.). On that occasion, Salvemini had explained that one cannot place all bourgeois societies on a par with Fascism.
because there was a considerable difference between, on the one hand, the Italy and Germany of 1935, and, on the other, "bourgeois" countries like France and England. Above all, the liberal must be aware of differences and ensure that not all things be considered alike. His warning to Gide, who had bowed to the would-be 'individualist communist society', was that "one must not scorn one's liberties, but defend them obstinately" (ibid.).

An example of Bobbio's liberalism through pursuing an agenda of anti-Fascism is illustrated by the importance he attaches to books. He takes up the theme of liberty by defending the need to preserve libraries and the books in them as part of cultural heritage. His message prevails upon politicians to protect culture. That protection is part of Bobbio's wider project of superseding "the aristocratic concept of culture". He calls attention to the negative characteristic of many intellectuals: they do not have either sufficient regard for books or adequate organizational skills to ensure the preservation and dissemination of books as a cultural resource. Although there is an abundance of books, there are no adequate structures to ensure their circulation among readers. There are, Bobbio emphasizes, books that deserve to be read and they ought to be read by those who wish to do so (Bobbio, ff:1). A good library must satisfy the needs of readers in any particular community as rapidly as possible. Moreover, Bobbio insists, a good library must ensure that "the right books are purchased at the right time and are made available to as many as possible in the shortest time possible" (ibid.).

During the Fascist regime, "the subject of history was disciplined and twisted ... to illustrate Italian 'primacy' in many ... fields" (Mack Smith, 1997:364). Certain books were eliminated altogether. "Over a hundred history textbooks were forbidden by a special commission in 1926, and ten years later [only] a few standardized texts were in compulsory use" (ibid.). Bobbio's liberalism demands that the individual not only ascertain facts, but try to interpret them. Under Fascism, access to facts was limited, or facts were twisted for political purposes. Indeed, culture was used as a political tool to thwart liberal education. The result was that young Italians
educated under Fascism did not benefit from a great democratic culture (Bobbio, 1997:91).

Bobbio's prime task as an intellectual is to conserve the memory of anti-Fascism, for it was the foundation on which the Italian Republic came into being. Since the Resistance comprised partisans of many political views, it was a genuinely liberal movement and remained so even during the worst years of Fascist violence. The exercise or practice of liberalism gave the partisans a "special licence" to be at the forefront in building the new Italian State after the demise of Fascism. The school of anti-Fascism was, therefore, a lesson in liberalism that involved formulating a new government and constitution by first coming to terms with the Communists and with those Italians who sought the restoration of the monarchy.

Laws and rules are to be followed by all in an economic system based on free enterprise, in a society free from the excesses of fanaticism, national rhetoric and ideological attack on cultures and peoples. In the liberal state, a citizen exchanges his precarious natural liberty for civil liberty, but the exchange is made with his own resources and responsibility rather than through an authoritarian ruler.

2.2 Liberalism: continuity and change

Other than the quality or state of being liberal, "liberalism" can be defined i) as a movement in modern Protestantism emphasizing intellectual liberty and the spiritual and ethical content of Christianity; ii) as a theory in economics emphasizing individual freedom from restraint and usually based on free competition and the self-regulating market; iii) as a political philosophy based on belief in progress, the essential goodness of man, the autonomy of the individual and the protection of political and civil liberties; and, finally, iv) as the principles and policies of a liberal party (Webster's, 1985:688). The study of liberalism can be approached from several perspectives. In this section, the question has been tackled by a) establishing the principles of liberalism and their derivatives; b) taking
stock of the common ground found in "liberal thinkers"; and c) examining Bobbio's claim that socialism must have a liberal character. The power of the west is still rooted in the fact that it found forms of social, economic and political organization which allowed individuals to make more of their human potential than had ever been possible before (Buzan and Segal, 1998:22). Breaking down the excesses of earlier institutions - family, class and state, which had hitherto blocked the possibility of individual development, freed the individual and served to unleash huge resources of energy and creativity which could be translated into new forms of power and cultural variety.

Although the core principle of liberal doctrine is the theory of the minimal state, it is nevertheless necessary to identify "which liberalism" one is referring to. The values which underpin a particular definition constitute "minority cultural values" vis-à-vis the norms of liberal secular culture. Bobbio writes:

[Liberalism] can be investigated in the same way as any ideology generally is, by providing answers on such matters as when it originated, what its main ... 'schools' have been, which authors play a major role in its evolution, etc. However, ... liberalism is a movement in the history of ideas which develops via a host of writers that are quite distinct from each other, such as Locke, Montesquieu, Kant, Adam Smith, Humboldt, Constant, John Stuart Mill, Tocqueville ... (Bobbio, 1987:104).

The liberal or limited state is based on the philosophical presupposition of natural rights or natural law. All persons, regardless of personal will or the will of others, by nature possess fundamental rights to life, liberty, security and happiness. The state, or those with legitimate power, must respect and guarantee these rights.

To attribute a right to someone is to recognize that the individual ... has the capacity to act or not to act just as he pleases, and also the power to resist, availing himself in the last instance of the use of force ..., against whoever may transgress that right: so that potential transgressors have in turn a duty to abstain from any action which might interfere ... with this capacity to act or not to act (Bobbio, 1990:5).
The State, or a surrogate of the State in particular communities, is required to permit human activity to take place. Human activity requires the security provided by the State. Otherwise a segment of the population will emerge that takes over the State's function by providing security in the manner it deems fit, with little or no accountability. "In the absence of a superior ... safeguarding power, individual forces try to preserve themselves ..., uniting with each other according to their closest affinities, and thus provide that minimum of security which is indispensable to ... their activity" (de Ruggiero, 1966:1).

Most versions of liberalism can be derived from a limited, universally valid set of authoritative prescriptions. The moderate intent of liberalism includes a gradual transformation from absolute regimes to constitutional regimes where legitimate representatives undertake legislative and economic reform. This contrasts with Mazzini's utopian vision of the God of humanity living through the people rather than through the Catholic religion. The earliest beginnings of liberal doctrine hold that the state of rights founded in law emanates from civil society; "John Locke considered civil society to be the source of the social pact, and the origin of legitimate legislative and executive powers" (Ferrari, 1995:27). The minimum conditions of economic and political liberalism also require the rule of law and an independent judiciary to prevent the manipulation of democratic political procedures by those hostile to liberal democracy. In addition, a free and varied range of mass communications media is required, "for this preserves the possibility of criticism of those in power and allows the public an informed choice at elections" (Roberts and Lovecy, 1984:2).

Three additional pillars of liberalism are freedom of conscience, of speech and of religion; these tenets are based on the affirmation that every view either leads to the truth or does not do so. Each view must therefore be explored. The pluralism of views, identities, associations and natural difference is essential to the democratic state. This endorsement of pluralism - a real acceptance of diversity - provides a guarantee for equality before the law, equality of opportunity in education and in the workforce. If put into practice on a larger scale, it would lead to greater
academic and artistic creativity and the flowering of human potential. The positive attribute of liberalism is its celebration of unity in diversity, and its creative freshness.

2.3 Issues of importance to Bobbio

Bobbio advises his readers to accept the fact that classical liberal ideals are in the continuous process of being re-evaluated in the light of new problems. Many of these problems have international as well as personal importance, such as pollution, religious fundamentalism, ethics and the future development of fields such as science and genetics. As Bellamy says, "Compromises and rules can only emerge in an ad hoc manner" (Bellamy, 1992:261); the effort to control abuses of power is articulated on the basis of each new political debate. Indeed, for Bobbio, the central theme of all political debate is that of power. To his mind, there is "no doubt that the working class movement was primarily interested in the various ways that power can be seized" (Bobbio, 1988:34). That primary interest was mistaken, since the question of "how power is exercised" (ibid.), once it has been attained, is the genuine liberal concern.

Pluralism and participation form part of the characteristic prescription of the historic Left. However, a society characterized by the ideal of equality vis-à-vis public affairs carries with it, Bobbio argues (in the fashion of Tocqueville and Mill), the danger of "the tyranny of the majority". If all participate as equals, it is as if no one participates. Participation in capitalist society is not between equals, for inequality is the founding principle of society. Power requires authority, a hierarchy of powers that have achieved consensus, and thus inequality means that not everyone can participate in power. The pluralist response intends "to legitimate and stabilize social conflict, maintain the status quo and mediate conflicts where central authority is unable or unwilling to do so" (Fraser, 1981:198,199). This response includes an argument against the bureaucratic repressive state, which does not permit participation. When the majority is all-powerful, such as is the case in some contemporary democracies, this populist majority can actually undermine
democracy by fostering conformity and the elimination of legislative autonomy. In this case, Bobbio argues, numerous ill effects ensue, among them the instability of the legislative body, the often arbitrary exercise of power by officials, conformity of opinion, and a dearth of people worthy of respect in the political domain (Bobbio, 1990:53).

Pluralism is problematic in that the state must remain unassailable to permit human activity to flourish. Bobbio calls attention to the importance of Tocqueville's question of whether liberty can survive in a democratic society (Bobbio, 1990:52). However, Bobbio is confident that political parties can bolster the power of the state. "There seems ... a logical distinction between participation against, or outside, the state, which is a critical and potentially conflictual relation, and participation on the periphery, represented in ... a pluri-party state which is supportive and confirms power hierarchies" (ibid.). Political parties are the legitimate means through which contemporary disagreement and agreement are voiced. Consensus is shared, however, in that all parties agree on the rules of competition, or the rules of the game. The onus is also on the parties to preserve the reasons of the state, that is, to preserve democratic political life (Mauro in Bobbio, 1995b:xiii).

Bobbio stresses that there are two different aspects to consider in defining the "limited state". One limit refers to the powers of the state, and the other concerns the functions of the state (Bobbio, 1990:11). Limits to both the power and functions of the state are parameters that influence types of liberalism. "In respect of the limits of power one speaks currently of the rights-based state, while the term minimal state is used in reference to the limit on functions" (ibid.). Today, liberalism conceives of the state as both rights-based and minimal. By contrast, Bobbio maintains, the social state is rights-based and non-minimalist, while the state of Hobbes' Leviathan is minimal yet not rights-based.

The rights-based state is counterposed to the absolute state, while the minimal state stands opposite the maximal state. At the historical level and in practice, the
two emancipatory impulses do not always coincide and this is the fact on which Bobbio's view of liberalism hinges. It also explains to some extent why it was necessary for Bobbio to take Hobbes as a model, and also to build on that Hobbesian model (this will be considered below under section 2.6).

Bobbio and his forebears believe that the liberal state can be a socialist state, since it preaches liberty and the philosophy of liberty. Social democracy is a form of renewed liberalism, "fighting everywhere for individual freedoms, political freedoms, freedom to vote, and freedom of conscience" (Rosselli, 1994:84). The freedom attained by independent states sets an example in liberal practice. Later, individuals sought their emancipation as workers, based "on the proletarian struggle and the proletarian ascent, on the effort of ... society to supersede the ... unjust terms dictated by bourgeois society, on the eternal thirst for ... freedom" (ibid.).

Those who support liberalism today stress civil rights, such as the right to education, to health care and to a healthy environment. Individual responsibility is of paramount importance in preserving these rights. Human responsibility is rooted in the fact of living with others: "The man who acts according to duty is no longer alone in the world; he stands face to face with another, in whom his original self is duplicated; and this fundamental relation is the source of all human relations" (de Ruggiero, 1966:352). The question of duty is a constant element in Bobbio's form of liberalism; he appeals to our sense of the moral values reflected in all human action, though he focuses primarily on the political sphere. It is in the name of a universal morality, superior to professional and corporate ethics, that Bobbio contemplates Italy's shortcomings. Scardocchia identifies some of these failings as corruption, malfeasance, mass illegality and the political and intellectual mediocrity of Italy's ruling classes (Scardocchia in Bobbio, 1995b:x).

Liberalism is primarily an approach to economic and political development. It has therefore been called "a capitalist front". At first the employing classes in Northern Italy viewed the Allied occupation of Italy as a shield against social revolution, but
when the demands of the Communists took on sharper contours, these classes were swift to act. Many entrepreneurs and businesses made their fortunes under Fascism, but after its collapse they tried to protect their assets by converting to free market liberalism. The employers wanted nothing to do with state intervention that included socialist planning.

For some, liberalism seems profoundly impoverished because of its secular basis and its lack of emphasis on collective morality. Some intellectuals link their criticism of liberalism to a perception of morality; more specifically, the morality of individuals is to be considered as one thing, and that of collectives another matter altogether. Yet Bobbio seeks a common public morality to limit the consequences of *sottogoverno* [the invisible level of government underneath visible government], and he warns against creating separate public moralities. Hegel identified the Enlightenment as the struggle against religion, a "critical spirit, as 'pure ingenious thought' tearing down everything that stands" (Goldmann, 1973:6). Yet in the liberal mindset, public and private actions are morally different. John Stuart Mill distinguished between self-regarding actions and actions which injured others, the former being private and exempt from legal control, while the latter public actions could be subject to legal control.

Part of the historical rethinking of liberalism has been to determine whether there is room for socialism within liberalism. "Classical liberalism's conflict with central planning was not over the shared goal of enhancing the well-being of the greatest possible number of people but over the way to achieve that goal" (O'Driscoll, 9/5/95). Arguably, therefore, liberalism and socialism are not directly opposed. Socialism's aims hold merit, even if both freedom and economic success were thwarted by central planning. Liberals thus criticize the means used to realize socialism. Particularly in Italy, a politics based on social liberalism that culminated in the formation of a distinct school of intellectual thought played a central role in the moral and political reconstruction of the nation after Fascism. Other illiberal effects of capitalism, such as the widening social polarization between rich and poor, might also bring liberalism and socialism closer. Anderson challenges
Bobbio's belief in reforming liberalism, because liberalism has culminated in so many failures, such as "trends within the major capitalist democracies towards attenuated civil liberties, chauvinist intolerance, and increasingly secretive administrative-political elites" (Anderson, 1988:1). The inadequacies of liberalism, and disenchantment with classic liberal ideals do signify, however, that "the project of a liberalized socialism, or of a socially responsible and authentic liberalism, may well appear to hold out the best of both worlds" (ibid.). While Anderson proposes injecting some socialism into liberalism, Bobbio today proposes injecting liberalism into socialism, in the manner of the young hopefuls who emerged from Fascism.

In Italy, liberalism acquired new meaning after Fascism's oppressive dictatorial rule. The preceding phase of liberalism, that of the early years of the nineteenth century, was also the subject of much criticism, however, owing to the ultraconservative stance of many Italian liberals who did not pay sufficient attention to the needs of the emerging working class. The progressive reform of Marxism by Bobbio and his peers was a liberalizing task, as they argued that Marxism required the injection of liberal values.

In the kaleidoscopic conditions of Italian society after the First World War, in which so many social and ideological elements were shaken into unfamiliar patterns, liberalism did not fade but took on some new ... colours. ... Among a younger generation, further to the Left, the ... force of an insurgent working class - and sometimes of the Russian Revolution beyond it - produced an ... array of ... attempts to weld proletarian and liberal values into a new political force (ibid.:14,15).

Bobbio reminds us that the first and most celebrated attempt to weld proletarian and liberal values was Gobetti's programme for a "Liberal Revolution". Gobetti had published Mill in Italian; he upheld free trade, yet he also admired Lenin and collaborated with Gramsci in L'Ordine Nuovo. Later, the path of Italian liberalism encountered many challenges, since Bobbio and his contemporaries faced a certain "limit" in their political intention. The doctrine of liberal-socialism was forged on the basis of their struggle against Nazi-Fascism, where anti-Fascism constituted, in Foa's words, a "narrow path to politics" (Foa, 1991:87). Liberal-
socialism formed the basis of GL's and the PdA's political action and "was certainly a solemn and strong affirmation of the values denied by Fascism - liberty and social justice - but at the same time it was both restrictive and simplified" (ibid.). As Fascism began to lose ground from about 1935, liberal-socialists had only succeeded in skimming over the historical antithesis between liberty and social justice. "This complex question forms the basis of contemporary history and could not simply be limited to the robust and valid negation of Fascism" (ibid.).

As Anderson suggests, Bobbio's political coordinates are in some ways more complex than those of his principal predecessors, for he represents three major contending traditions - liberalism, socialism and anti-Fascism. By conviction, Bobbio is a liberal, albeit a liberal of anti-Fascist ilk.

But Italian liberalism has always been a phenomenon apart ... In Italy, ... national unification was achieved not over the body but under the very banner of liberalism. Moreover the liberalism that emerged victorious from the Risorgimento had a double legitimation: it was both the constitutional ideology of the Piedmontese Moderates, codifying the structure of their dominance under the monarchy, and the secular definition of an Italian State created against the will of the Roman Church (Anderson, 1988:13).

The emergence of new social classes and political parties is a feature of the liberal, rights-based society. Bobbio asks us to take a look at those classes and parties to consider whether they require myths to survive and develop in a democracy, which, after all, is a very different political system than the authoritarian regimes of the past. A committed ecologist would not consider ecology to be a myth, but a utopia. Does power require myths and legends like the figure of Che Guevara?

For Bobbio, the word "myth" is mostly negative, particularly in Italy; perhaps it is true that to ask oneself whether ecology is a myth is to view it with suspicion. The evocation of the past and the future assists in the creation of myths. Myth, Bobbio argues, appeals to our faculty of desire, whereas ideology bases its efficacy on the claim of meeting our interests (Bobbio, gg:2). Myth excites our passions, while
ideology offers the hope of fulfilling our needs. The practical and major function of myth is to build a principle of legitimacy of power. In Bobbio's conception of liberalism, the only principle of legitimacy attributed to democratic power is the execution of free elections on the basis of established rules. In a genuinely liberal polity, only ideals are above the rules. Bobbio maintains that Marx and Marxist movements deal with the realms of science and utopia, that is, two forms of reason, one demonstrative and the other constructive. Utopia is a rational construction projected towards the future, while myth appeals to passion and is rooted in "the time of times", in the time of a lost past whose historical memory has been lost (ibid:1).

A key issue for Bobbio is the inclusion of Marx's utopian vision in political liberal debate. Scientific discourse that is purely theoretical is valid; it rests on an ideology that addresses our needs. He sees the direct and practical function of myth as both non-scientific and linked to the followers of Fascism, who sought to "form political will through a gospel of political fictions that trigger political energy as a primitive form of battle" (ibid.).

The border shared by politics and power is a facet of liberalism that must accompany any discussion of the modern state. Bobbio warns that vigilance is necessary in all areas of public life. Later in this section I have considered one particular aspect of political power that affects liberalism: that of the control and use of mass media. Bobbio is convinced that television helps politicians to speed up the realization of their aims. Mass media can detract from liberalism at the international level and even culminate in its demise, he argues, for economic and political power have joined forces to transform their power. The anomaly is the absence of regulation to provide "liberal balance" in the relationship between political power and the power of television. The wider political debate concerns the illiberalism manifested in those societies where political power and the mass media have formed alliances, thus no longer providing the cultural variety and facts necessary to forge liberal citizens. Television, the press, internet publications, mobile telephones, in addition to the potential new technologies that can be
mastered by political agents: all this gives liberals cause for concern. Governments prefer "a press that makes their job easier, that allows them to proceed with minimum public accountability" (Stephenson, 2001:18).

The current debate concerning the redistribution of power exercised by Italian television is but one example of a discussion that defines the prerequisites of a minimal but rights-based state. Bobbio draws our attention to the real and fundamental problem of contemporary society: new forms of power. Traditionally, power has been conceived as ownership of the means of production or, antagonistically, as organization of the labour force. Now, however, power derived from the possession of means of communication is very much in play. The excessive power of Italian television must be corrected, Bobbio argues, particularly since Berlusconi, the successful entrepreneur and Prime Minister of Italy, is engaged in an intense political mission of fusing state and corporate power through the channels he controls. As Monbiot comments,

In Italy [that power has] condensed into the ... figure of ... Berlusconi [... who] is worth around $14bn. ... His control of most of the private media ... and most of the public media (through the government) means that he can exercise a dominion unprecedented in a democratic nation over the thoughts and feelings of his people (Monbiot, 2002:13).

In more general terms, the public/private debate is a crucial issue for Bobbio. There is a contemporary tendency of Right-wing governments in the developed world to deregulate employment while granting concessions to big business. Intellectuals, he argues, are in a position to describe the historical and psychological effects of government, including any threats to liberal government. Intellectuals must reinforce the human ideal of individual liberty by "transmitting and re-elaborating the juridical techniques of free cohabitation", making sure that the rules of the game are respected (Bobbio, hh:2).
2.4 How Bobbio constructs his own liberalism

Bobbio teaches that the bourgeois state need not necessarily be an illiberal one; Nazism, Fascism and Soviet Communism constituted genuine threats to liberalism itself, more than to the liberal state. Bobbio cooperated with Palmiro Togliatti to formulate "una politica possibilista", a possible politics that the PCI could follow to overcome the ambiguity of the Stalinist line, so as to ensure that the "two truths of the popular front and the revolution could co-exist" (Bocca, 1973:242). Whereas Bobbio concentrates on the theory of the state, that is, the study of those institutions through which political power is exercised, Togliatti's focus is the role of the party. Bobbio emphasizes that reformist and revolutionary socialism have an identical concern: the transition to a new state.

Fear of Hitler caused both Bobbio and Togliatti to respond to Nazi-Fascism, but one major difference separated the policies they advocated: Togliatti invited the PCI to work within Fascist organizations. Thus we read Communist propaganda referring to "black-shirted brothers" (ibid.). Bocca argues that penetrating Fascist organizations to reach the masses was not an option for other anti-Fascist forces, including GL, "for whom the aversion to Fascism was moral, above all" (ibid.).

Bobbio claims that from the time of the French Revolution socialism has been linked with liberalism. The principles of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man were a historical milestone that influenced governments and served as an inspiration and as a model of enlightenment to other men. The restoration of the social contract inspired the people who were struggling for freedom, but at the same time it was an object of contempt for reactionaries of all confessions. The right to freedom of thought and freedom of the press, Bobbio recalls, was considered by Pope Pius VI, who lived through the revolution, to be a "monstrous right inferred from the equality and liberty of all men" (Bobbio, 1996a:114). It is important to realize that such a counter-revolutionary stance existed, since in itself
it testifies to the gains – and threats – of freedom. The Church was one of the first institutions to condemn the establishment of equality and liberty.

Bellamy sums up Bobbio's position on Marxism when he writes that "Bobbio had not denied the inadequacies of liberal democracy, but had doubted whether Marxism had the resources to transcend these problems in a realistic manner ..." (Bellamy in Bobbio, 1988:25). Throughout his exchange with interlocutors from the PCI, Bobbio criticized the PCI's efforts to combine liberal democracy and Marxism; hence, he believed "that the PCI must ... concentrate on how to achieve a socialism compatible with liberal democracy" (ibid.). The best solution, one that he continues to prescribe, is that of "reconciling the individualist premises of liberalism with socialist notions of distributive justice" (ibid.:26).

In the course of creating a prescription for liberalism with a socialist character, Bobbio built on Salvemini's denunciation of Stalin's Russia and his protests against the methods of the Nazi Gestapo and the Fascist OVRA. Salvemini was one of the first historians in the mid-thirties to warn against the Soviet political police and the failings of the Communist utopia, when most members of the European Left were still enthusiastic about the initial promise of the Russian Revolution. For Arturo Colombo, Salvemini was the only one to express candidly that "in Germany there were concentration camps, in Italy there were islands used as prisons, and in Soviet Russia there existed Siberia" (ibid.) and the gulags that were the final destination of Soviet political prisoners.

Another theme that reflects Bobbio's views on liberalism is that of non-violence. It is important to distinguish between the violence that quashes free speech and thus smothers life, and the violence that allows free speech and leaves space for resistance. "Daily life is full of violence of this latter type: there is violence when one does not alleviate poverty, degradation, physical or moral handicap; this violence, however, has two sides, one of oppression but also one of possible or real resistance" (Foa, 1991:90). In this sense, the ability to vocalize one's disagreement or alternative view is an antidote to "daily violence". This antidote,
coupled with the acceptance of diversity and the socialist aim of the equitable division of resources, is definitive to Bobbio's liberalism. As Bellamy writes, "socialists need to establish a plausible basis for the more equitable division of resources on which a socialist democracy must rest [and ...] these foundations must be consonant with the traditional liberal political rights protecting the individual" (Bellamy in Bobbio, 1988:25).

At the same time, Bobbio does not eschew Erasmus' ideal nation of Christian Europe or the community of the Church. He cites Erasmus' teaching to illustrate the credo that the only republic is the one that transcends borders, where scholars recognize one another and argue different points of view: "If the name of [a] nation serves to unite, we must recall that [our] common nation is the world" (Bobbio, 1997b:39).

Bobbio holds the conviction that faith in reason is not as absolute as faith in divine Providence, despite the fact that Providence is losing ground in the popular mind. The reason for this condition is that reason "non è, ma diviene" (Bobbio, 1994c:198) - reason "is not but becomes". Rational beings, he maintains, have always suspected or professed the possibility of error, and admit "the insufficiency of their knowledge without divine help" (ibid.:197). For Bobbio, the affirmations of rational humans are subject to continual revision. Questions that they cannot answer through their reason are metaphysical ones, ones that concern the problem of evil – whether caused by nature or history.

It is ... a fact that the history of the liberal states coincides both with the demise of confessional states and the rise of states ... agnostic in their attitude to the religious beliefs of their citizens; ... the demise of the privileges ... of feudalism and the emergence of the demand for free disposal of wealth and liberty of exchange [mark] the birth and development of the bourgeois mercantile society (Bobbio, 1990:16,17).

The Italian political experience is unique "in the sense that it differs from all the other European countries in one essential fact: Rome has been for almost 2000 years the spiritual capital of Catholicism and the home of the papacy" (Allum,
1995:112). Therefore, the relations between Church and state in Italy are significantly different from those of other European countries.

In view of the historical Right's complicity with Fascism and Giolitti's failure to tame the socialists, the consideration of Church-State relations is useful in analysing the process of Italian modernization. The deepest liberal significance of those relations lies not in the attempt of the State to assert its independence, and even control, of the Church; nor in the attempt of the Church to resist interference on the part of the State; for ... each of these liberties conceals an aspect of servility; but in their conflict itself, as cancelling out many of their ... claims, ... thus facilitating the free development of the individual's conscience" (de Ruggiero, 1966:397,398).

Although for many centuries popes held temporal sway over central Italy, in 1859-60 and 1870 the Papal States became part of the Kingdom of Italy. The dispute with the Church was settled only in 1929, the year in which Mussolini agreed to a concordat between the State and the Vatican40, which stipulated the independent sovereignty of the Holy See and included financial compensation for the Roman Catholic Church's loss of temporal power in 1870. The sovereignty of the Church is embodied in the Italian Constitution of 1948, Article 7.

Bobbio has adopted a rational stance vis-à-vis religion although his scepticism is more apparent in his later works. For Bobbio, fear of God is not a necessity for personal or public morality. He states "none of the constitutions in force in liberal states, democratic and secular, ... [preclude] the liberty of having no religion" (Bobbio, 1994c:172).

Bobbio distinguishes between religion and religiosity (religiousness). By religiousness he means having a sense of one's own limits, knowing that human reason is but a tiny flame that illuminates a minimal space, compared to the immensity of the universe. The only thing of which he is certain, within the limits of his reason, is that he is not a man of faith, for to be of the faith is something that belongs to a world that is not his own. He does, however, experience the sense of
mystery, which is common to both the man of faith and the man who does not believe in any religion. The profound sense of mystery surrounds us, Bobbio says, and that is what he refers to as religiosity (Bobbio, 2000:7).

In one of Cavour's speeches of 1861, he called for "a free Church in a free state" (Absalom, 1995:55) and he tried to make Rome - the spiritual capital of Catholicism - the capital of the newly unified Italian State. In Martinengo Cesaresco's view, "more than any man of any party he had reckoned the cost of ranking the Church with its vast potential powers for good, for order, for public morality, among the implacable enemies of the nascent kingdom; therefore, his last public utterance was a cry for religious peace" (Martinengo Cesaresco, 1910:338). The events that resulted in the unification of Italy also culminated in the decidedly secular aspect of Italian liberalism. Thus, Tortarolo writes, "the entire decade that preceded the proclamation of the Kingdom ... was marked by the discussion and ... promulgation of measures inspired by the effort to do away with the ties between public institutions and the Catholic church" (Tortarolo, 1998:60).

From the time of Cavour, Italy struggled with the issue of religion vis-à-vis public life. "In the complex legislative panorama of those years the liberal democratic Left in the Piedmontese Parliament fought for measures that aimed at the secularization of the life of the State" (ibid.). The Siccardi laws, which were approved in 1850, and provided for the abolition of the ecclesiastical court, resulted in a "politics centred on the redefinition of the competence of the State in secular terms" (ibid.). Moreover, a wide consensus was reached, particularly among the parliamentary forces and the educated middle classes, whereby the process of secularization was considered to be an opportunity for the comprehensive modernization of the Italian State. Secularization was envisaged as providing a premise for the aspirations of national unification, regardless of the form it would take.

Secularization thus contributed to the realization of liberalism, for it contrasted decisively with the Hapsburg Empire: "the Constitution of 1849 repudiated the
separation between State and Church" (ibid.). Above all, among the secular Piedmontese, Cavour played a key role in orientating the politics of Piedmont vis-à-vis the Church. "In Cavour we can find direct experience of the irrepressible vitality of freedom" (ibid.:61). Cavour's conception of the relations between Church and State was dominated by his consideration that both the Christian religion and the State should welcome the requirement for liberty in the modern world and should therefore abandon their traditional dogmatisms and principles of authority. To paraphrase Cavour, "Might Italy not forget the cradle of her liberties when her seat of government was firmly established in the Eternal City!" (Martinengo Cesaresco, 1910:337,338).

Cavour appealed to the Pope and asked him to renounce temporal power in exchange for freedom: his appeal is important politically and intellectually since it illustrated the effect of Italy's contact with liberal European culture. It indicates a fully secular awareness of religion as a stabilizing element in society and as a natural constituent of the human soul. Cavour's secular attitude was characterized by "an element of energetic state interventionism, that obliged the ecclesiastical institution to respect the secularity of the cosa pubblica [public domain] as well as the 'free institutions and the national cause'" (Tortarolo, op. cit.:61).

Cavour's attention to the question of Church-State relations was a central theme of all the Italian liberals who followed him. "Cavour [perceived] the backwardness of the milieu in which he [lived] and knowingly [used] the instrument of the State to endow the emerging liberal society with public opinion, [to render that society] a subject aware of the public space made available by the new institutions" (Cavour, 1995:10). He proclaimed the full liberty of all religions as one of the fundamental tenets of the social pact. Above all, the institution of laws to separate the Church from the State derived from his conviction that "the Catholic clergy, penetrated by the truth of the dogmas it professes ..., should not seek by force, by privilege, by restriction, [to buttress] the cause of religion (ibid.:104).
In line with that tradition, Bobbio's call for and defence of "the rules of the game" moves the nucleus of human existence and society to the republic: the focus and beneficent source of morality lies in the republic, not in the prayers of men. This "new" morality is more in keeping with the modern spirit and moves civic awareness away from the mysterious, non-predictable sphere of divine revelation.

Bobbio follows the tradition of Salvemini, Gobetti and Capitini in claiming that all humans, as members of a universal community, merit equal treatment under the law. It is only through a documented legal framework that one can ensure objective and universal tutelage of all individuals. The objectivity of law, however, is based on a subject's decision to respect it. Thus such precepts as promoting behaviour conducive to harmonious coexistence need to be developed in the contractarian state.

Gobetti sought to include the Communists and the Catholics as interlocutors of liberal Italy; Bobbio continued on the same path and this "strategy of inclusion" induces him to consider the rights of all, regardless of their religious affiliation. As illustrated by Colletti (1974), Marxism was concerned with one society only - modern capitalist society. Bobbio, however, discusses society in general and "regards the factor of 'consciousness' as the specific element of human society and history, and accordingly holds that societies should be investigated exclusively at the level of ideological social relations" (ibid.:3). Lenin objected to this approach to the study of man:

For in this perspective the juridical and political forms of such societies ... must inescapably appear as 'originating in this or that idea of humanity' and hence as mere products or moments of thought. It follows that analysis cannot engage with a real object, but only with an ideal objectivity. The relation between the theory and its object contracts, due to the ideal character of the latter, into a mere relation of idea to idea ... The object of analysis thus slips through our fingers; it is impossible for us to undertake any study of the facts, of social processes, precisely because we are no longer confronting a society, a real object, but only the idea of society, society in general (Lenin in Colletti, 1974:4).
By concentrating uniquely on capitalism, Marx is concerned with a particular historical occurrence, a particular event in time. Marx's weakness is that he is bound to the particular in a way that Bobbio, with his larger historical agenda, is not. Bobbio's strategy of inclusion does not alienate those who do not work or have no business interests. He seeks to build on Capitini's lesson of benefiting the weakest members of society, whether they be minority groups, the ill or the handicapped, and to have them represented in this "age of rights". Bobbio seeks the protection of all citizens, not through morality, but through law, where "it is not good law which makes the good ruler but the wise legislator who brings about good government by introducing good laws" (Bobbio, 1987:150).

It is clear that our moral problem is not relativism but pluralism, or the enduring conflict between competing definitions of "the good". Michael Ignatieff expresses it thus: "A liberal has to acknowledge that his own values are not hegemonic; in place of consensus we have confrontation" (Ignatieff, 1998:20). Religious and racial differences shape the liberal society but also remind one of the double-edged truth of liberal value neutrality in terms of religion, such as described by Ignatieff: "Liberal secularism - to a convinced Muslim - masquerades as value neutrality; in reality, it is not value neutral" (ibid.). Indeed, despite Europe's multicultural society, "Islam made us realize that core identity was less secular than we had supposed" (ibid.). Christianity played an important role in promoting the institutions we associate with liberal democratic-capitalist modernity; Christianity provides a complete narrative, or rather a number of different narratives that serve to make sense of the confusing universe. The question of faith illustrates the existence of "majority culture", an ever-present challenge to liberal values.

This need for a pluralist variety of all religious and non-religious views is echoed in the work of Bobbio and the thinkers who figure in his intellectual biography. Capitini, for example, defined the essence of liberalism as

the sense of present [spontaneous] creation, of the ongoing and full presence of the soul, of spiritual creation through values (aesthetic,
philosophical, ethical, political, etc.), which constitutes inner liberation and an affirmation of the best. Whilst the Roman Church was established on the basis of the revelation of some facts like miracles and angels, attested to by a book, and interpreted by an institution that has dogma in its structure and culminates in Papism, we today believe that history is broader than any institution, however much institutions maintain a simply historical value (Capitini, 1996:40).

History is a broader sphere than any one church or institution, and the workings of the soul are “more profound than history” because the soul – the individual person – adds value to history through his intervention in the historical process. In other words, the concept of "value" ought to be separated from religious value and instead be appraised on the basis of individual value. The individual’s intervention in history corresponds with “the modern conception of occurring value” [valore in atto]. This value is at the same time immanent, non-spatial and non-temporal. If we take temporal to mean "of this life" or secular, we see that Capitini places the individual’s expression of liberty on the same plane as religious experience. This experience is not of the Church, but constitutes a fundamental affirmation of liberalism in that individual interiorità has a liberal value. Thus every religious need has an explicitly liberal character.

It is apparent that all nations in the modern age must use their state education system to teach the values of secularity and science. Without such a core, religious minorities will secede from the community and reproduce themselves on the basis of values which would make their young people unfit to understand or participate in the wider national culture (ibid.).

After the events that occurred at Auschwitz, Bobbio argues, God can no longer be considered omnipotent. "God is not omnipotent and for this he suffers" (ibid.:198). This has resulted in a condition where "It is no longer God who saves us but we who must save God" (ibid.). Society nowadays is torn by anxiety that derives both from a weak theology and a weak philosophy. One can consider God to be impotent and fallible and, Bobbio asks, "how far away is the radical overturning of the traditional view of the universe, according to which God is the creator and man
is the creature, in the equally radical humanistic vision according to which God is a creation of man?" (ibid.). What one is confronted with is a God who, like modern reason itself, is in a process of "becoming" rather than in a permanent state of being. This new, fallible and impotent God, he affirms, increasingly resembles man.

As a liberal and an "intellectual mediator", Bobbio chooses to subject both the dogma of the Church as well as the doctrine of Marx to critical review. Socialism must not be based on a doctrine of salvation, whether terrestrial or divine. The moral thrust of Christianity and that of Marxism is limited, respectively, to Christians and Marxists; both thus exclude the participation of the other members of society.

Bobbio's consideration of justice in his discussion of evil reflects his view that all human suffering involves a wrong perpetrated by those who cause it. Bobbio distinguishes between two types of evil which exist through two types of human reality: maliciousness and suffering. Maliciousness can be described as active evil, and suffering as passive evil. "When we consider evil in general we think of an episode of violence or of pain" (ibid.:199), he writes. All suffering is at the same time a cry for justice, Bobbio argues, since suffering springs from an active evil. "The model of this interpretation can be found in the daily life of any human society in which one of the fundamental rules that must be respected, so that pacific cohabitation is possible, establishes that crime must be followed by punishment" (ibid.:200). The entire universe, over time, has always been governed "according to the fundamental principle of retributive justice" (ibid.:201). Therefore, Bobbio argues, "as long as there exists a link between evil and human behaviour, one can still sustain the cause of retributive justice: man in general is responsible for all the actions of men" (ibid.:203).

Bobbio highlights the fact that "though democracy has, for the last century at least, been considered the natural progression from liberalism, its ideologies prove to be no longer compatible once democracy has been taken to its logical extreme of a
mass democracy, a democracy of mass parties, which produces the Welfare State" (Bobbio, 1987:114). Rather than a philosophy of choice, Bobbio's reformulation of liberalism can be called a philosophy of ideology where the language of politics and aesthetics constitute evocative forces, and the state, whether strong or weak, is the factor on which liberalism hinges:

If the banks which were theoretically supposed to confine the state have burst, it is difficult to deny that what happened is that they were swept away by the flood of popular political participation which was unleashed by universal suffrage. It has often been said that the Keynesian economic strategy was an attempt to save capitalism without abandoning democracy, so rejecting the two opposite solutions of either destroying capitalism by sacrificing democracy (Leninism in practice) or destroying democracy so as to save capitalism (Fascism) (Bobbio, 1987:114).

The doctrinal texts of Soviet Russia were crammed with citations from "canonical texts" and this use of citations "belongs to the logic of a system founded on the principle of authority" (Bobbio, 1997a:31). For a proposition to be considered true in a book of Soviet doctrine and to be included in the system, the following criteria had to be met: "(i) the same proposition had to be found in a text of Marx or Engels; or (ii) from any proposition one had to be able to extract, through the usual expedients of textual hermeneutics, the same proposition in (Marx and Engels); or (iii) it had to be in conformity with the propositions affirmed in official party texts ..." (ibid.). Bobbio uses one of Lenin's texts in illustrating that the value of original sources is based largely on authority rather than empirical verification.

Marx's doctrine is omnipotent because it is just. It is complete and harmonious, and it gives men an integral conception of the world that cannot be reconciled with any superstition, with any reaction, with any defence of bourgeois oppression. Marxism is the legitimate successor of all the best that humanity has created during the XIX century, classical German philosophy, English political economy and French socialism (ibid.:30).

Bobbio asks us to imagine the same words he has italicized being spoken by a physicist praising the discoveries of Newton or Einstein - on doing so, one can immediately recognize a false note. If one were to change the identity of the
speaker – to that of a loyal subject or believer – within the same context, such words would not seem strange, as "he would be reciting his adhesion to the doctrine of salvation of which he is a follower" (ibid.).

2.4.1 The liberal challenge: future of the Welfare State

The debate on the Welfare State that ensures the welfare of the citizen "from cradle to grave" is a contentious one. An increasingly anarchic global market that has followed the technological boom has served to bolster business interests attached primarily to profit. That reality has caused many intellectuals on the Left to warn that the statist solutions pursued by the old or traditional Left are no longer sustainable. Some thinkers, such as Paul Hirst, even argue that globalization is a myth designed to "sap political will among those committed to old-fashioned left ideals of solidarity and ... conservative concerns about social stability" (Gray, 1998:43). Although the middle road between state socialism and laissez-faire capitalism does not yet incorporate a significant body of political thought, it is interesting to take a look at Bobbio’s views on the current necessity to maintain the achievements of the Welfare State, particularly as concerns the defence of democracy.

Stalinism and a lengthy enunciation of the shortcomings of planned economies are no longer required to justify the mixed market, which provides a system of checks and balances where "[a] stable and prosperous economy could be secured through macro and micro government economic policy; the ensuing economic growth could provide the tax revenue to fund an expansion of the Welfare State" (Eatwell and O'Sullivan, 1992:5). In recent years, the liberal crusade, often referred to as neo-liberalism, is "directed against the Welfare State, i.e. against the watered-down version of socialism" (Bobbio, 1987:115). This crusade is effectively against democracy, however.

Not only is the Welfare State jeopardized, in other words the great historical compromise between the working-class movement and advanced
capitalism, but democracy itself is at stake, i.e. the other great historical compromise which preceded it between the traditional privileges of the propertied classes and the world of organized labour, which gave birth directly or indirectly to modern democracy (via universal suffrage, the formation of mass parties, etc.) (ibid.).

Proponents of neoliberalism in Italy question the role and strength of the State. Bobbio warns that these people, who are not true liberals, criticize the Welfare State on two counts: (i) the Welfare State is not a minimal state, the best state according to liberal doctrine; and consequently (ii) the Welfare State is no longer able to carry out its principal function, that of governing. The issues are rendered more complex by the hope of "strong"-state neo-liberals to attain their goal of working towards the demolition of the Welfare State. But Bobbio refutes such arguments:

The antithesis minimal state/maximal state, which is the aspect of the controversy most frequently discussed, is not to be confused with the antithesis strong state/weak state. Two different oppositions are involved which do not necessarily overlap. The charge which neo-liberalism makes against the Welfare State is not just that it has violated the principle of the minimal state but also that it has given rise to a state which is no longer capable of carrying out its proper function, which is to govern (the weak state). The ideal of neo-liberalism thus becomes one of a state which is both minimal and strong (ibid.:116).

Political society is a joint undertaking, "the plans for which need to be constantly ... reformulated, a project which is never definitive, but needs to undergo continuous revision" (ibid.:116,117). Although Bobbio agrees that after the events of 1989 and the fall of real Communism it is appropriate to attempt a redefinition of liberalism, he does not see that attempt as itself a liberal process. If the dismantling of the Welfare State were to be included in that effort, "the danger is great not only for party political reasons, but also for philosophical reasons in the widest sense" (ibid.116). Social contracts, collective decisions and written agreements reflect what Bobbio refers to as a "new contractarianism" that could, as part of the Left's agenda, oppose those who would have the Welfare State dismantled44.
The reactionary character of neo-liberal policy continues to thrive "because it is rooted in a philosophical outlook which ... gave birth to the modern world: the individualistic conception of society and history" (ibid.:116). The Left's failure to come to terms with this philosophical outlook as a force in our simultaneously capitalist and democratic societies, and to identify the content of what would constitute a counter-proposal to "the new social contract" sought by neo-liberals is a matter that must be redressed, according to Bobbio. The task of the Left is to ensure that the content of any new contracts reflects both the theoretical and practical tradition of socialism.

The Left also needs to heed Hobbes' teaching on contract theory, Bobbio argues. Individual passions and interests are regulated, according to modern contract theory, in the human progression from a state of nature to forming part of an artificial society where individuals are "predisposed to join together ... so as to safeguard their own lives and freedoms" (ibid.). For Bobbio, the only way liberal-socialism can be discussed "without straying into abstractions or outright contradictions is to devise a new social contract" (ibid.:117), one based on distributive justice. The ideal of "justice" did, as we saw, form the basis of GL and flow into the creed of the PdA. Yet the hostility of the current Italian government to the Welfare State provides a major and positive opportunity for the Italian Left: the Left's role is to exercise a critical spirit in all situations. The new contractarianism to be pursued by the Left will both deepen and liberalize Italian democracy, particularly since the current government opposes the Welfare State. Still, Bobbio asks:

But which social contract? A social contract which allows contracting individuals to ask ... the government ... only for protection, which is historically what contractarians asked for, and what the new generation of liberal writers are asking for once more ...? Or should there be instead a new social contract, in which what is at the centre of negotiations is some principle of distributive justice? ... The crux of this debate is to see whether, starting with the same incontestable individualist conception of society and using the same institutional structures, we are able to make a counter-proposal to the theory of social contract which neo-liberals want to put into operation, one which would include ... a principle of distributive justice and
which would hence be compatible with the theoretical and practical tradition of socialism. There is new talk ... of liberal-socialism (ibid.).

Bobbio thinks that the Welfare State can best be defended once the Left finally comes to terms with the philosophical outlook of the individualistic conception of history and society. However, that task needs to be accompanied by a move to build on the principle of distributive justice. The Left needs to formulate and implement a new contractarianism. Further, it must be made clear that whereas the Left is concerned with equality, the Right leaves world markets free to take care of everything.

2.4.2 Liberty as a moral value and philosophy as a liberal occupation

Political philosophy, in and of itself, is a liberal activity, Bobbio maintains, for it helps to clarify the role of different political forces that animate a democracy. To sustain a contract that safeguards the interests of individuals (human interests), liberalism must take account of their complex reality. The research carried out by Gaetano Mosca, although he was a political conservative, constituted a great leap from abstract doctrinairism to the analysis of real forces. One of the most interesting aspects of Bobbio's liberalism is the importance he gives to the field of scientific research in incorporating "the new" in the area of political science. In Mosca's *Elementi di scienza politica*\(^4\), published in 1896, there was reflected the role of the true scientist reaching out towards the new. Bobbio describes him as "an aggressive and authoritative youth who concentrated his studies on the advent of the Left in power" (Bobbio, 1966:vii). Mosca integrated the old with the new, to "expose the great laws that regulate the organization of governments" (ibid.). He dismissed Marxism as a philosophy of history rather than an economic dogma, for, in Bobbio's words, "history cannot be the story of the political vicissitudes of classes conceived as entities; ... it can only be the record of the rise and fall of oligarchies" (Meisel, 1965:148). If this is true, then the vision of a classless society is an illusion, and though humans may well progress, the new world risks being just like the one it replaced.
Mosca considered the strength and weakness of political power and he concluded that it is never the majority who hold political power. As Bobbio interprets Mosca, irrespective of ideologies or leading personalities all political rule is a process - now peaceful, now coercive - by which a minority gratifies its own interests in a situation where not all interests can receive equal consideration" (ibid.:136). Through observation of the facts, Mosca sought to confute the errors which hindered states in their development, and his primary target was the parliamentary regime. He proposed that the intellectual class be considered as the new protagonist between two antagonistic forces: wealth and work.

Mosca comes from a school that is both conservative and realistic; "conservatism and realism often go hand in hand" (Bobbio, 1966:xxxii). For the liberal mind, what is to be extracted from his thought is the realism, "that of the scientist and not of the politician" (ibid.). Bobbio contends that "political studies have always been based more on the ... observations of conservatives, who only have eyes for the past, rather than on the constructions of reformists who have their eyes fixed on the future and often do not realize where their feet lead them" (ibid.). In this sense, the cause of liberalism can be bolstered through any novel approach to the study of government and society. Bobbio thus urges that Mosca be re-read and that his views be freshly made known. Socialism, too, would stand to gain from novel and reformist approaches.

Liberty is a moral value for Bobbio. "We are nowadays so accustomed to an exclusively economic critique of the Welfare State that it is hard to recapture a sense of the strong ethical charge carried by early liberalism, and to remember that the critique of paternalism had as its principal raison d'être the defence of the individual's autonomy" (Bobbio, 1990:22). Individualism and liberalism go hand in hand in their net break away from holism and organicism. "When government intervenes outside its allotted sphere of action in the maintenance of internal and external order, the result is to create uniformity of behaviour in society and thus to stiffle the natural variety of character and temperament" (ibid.:21).
Variety and conflict are to be encouraged, contrary to the organicist view that harmony is good, even attained by force, and that parts must be subordinate to the whole. Bobbio highlights the positive influence of opposition between individuals, groups and nations, "whence the praise of warfare as a nurse of popular virtue" (ibid.:22), which has fostered humanity's technical and moral progress.

On the basis of such a general conception of mankind and its history, it is no mystery if individual liberty - conceived as an emancipation from the chains in which for centuries individuals had been imprisoned by tradition ..., and authorities both religious and secular - came to be viewed as the essential condition allowing the realization of the 'variety' of individual personalities to be viewed as compatible with conflict, and conflict itself as promoting the perfection of all (ibid.:22,23).

Antithesis is the mainspring of progress, and "where a society is founded on a single ... doctrine it will be closed and hence static, and where there is a plurality of doctrines in permanent ... rivalry with each other, the system will be open and progressive" (Bobbio46, 1987:101). Bobbio endorses the view that power can be limited and closed systems prevented by the 'grafting on' of alien doctrines; these serve to upset the original equilibrium of any system. While he agrees with the mainstream view that Mill's essay [On Liberty] is the "ABC" of liberalism, he also holds that those who support liberalism have not yet got to "Z". He argues that "the task of reconstructing a new doctrine of liberty is more arduous than a nineteenth-century utilitarian thinker ... could have possibly imagined, and ... more arduous than is realized by those strenuous advocates of monetarism who have decreed the death of the Welfare State" (ibid.).

Bobbio argues that the principle of justice must be interpreted as fair distribution or equality in terms of burdens and rewards, but also as distributive justice, which he considers essential to the unity of a society. The criteria used to effect such distribution are of the utmost importance, given that "the current debate on the Welfare State arises from the divergent answers to this simple question" (ibid.:103). The principle of justice underpins liberal theory:
The principle of justice which is Mill's sticking-point is that of *neminem laedere*, i.e. do harm to no one. ... But, ... after the *neminem laedere* ... comes *suum cuique tribuere*, or render to each his own. ... Mill himself recognizes ... that the conduct which government can impose consists first ... 'in not injuring the interests of one another', but goes on to say that ... government must ensure 'each person's bearing his share (to be fixed on some equitable principle) of the labours ... incurred for defending the society or its members from injury' ... what are these 'equitable principles' if not principles of fair distribution? (ibid.:101,102).

The transition from the *laissez-faire* liberal state to the social-liberal state would mean a shift in the legal apparatus, from negative to positive, Bobbio claims. Instead of serving a protective-repressive function, the legal apparatus would be designed to "foster or promote the features of an ideal society" (ibid.:102). The transformation of the economy would not be sufficient to establish true democracy and the proposals of liberal thinkers could best be utilized by the Left as tools in creating its own alternative. Bellamy writes:

The manifest shortcomings of liberal democratic states have induced many critics on the left to insist on the need for a profound transformation of the economy as a necessary ... condition for 'true' democracy to emerge. However, the experience of actually existing socialist states casts serious doubt on this claim. Bobbio, in contrast, shows that the left must take the criticism ... of liberal thinkers seriously if it is to provide a workable alternative of its own (Bellamy, Introduction to Bobbio, 1987:4).

Bobbio argues that every juridical system consists of negative and positive precepts. However, Bobbio maintains, the administration of justice based on penal law is not the true or complete role of the state. Ensuring that others are not harmed is not the sole function of the state. It also extends "its sphere of action to promoting behaviour conducive to harmonious coexistence or to sheer survival, e.g. by encouraging civil defence initiatives as advocated by Mill" (Bobbio, 1987:102). But as Bobbio points out, the role of the state in introducing elements of distributive justice, and elaborating a set of criteria to determine these elements, is complicated by the fact that there is no universally agreed upon formula for what is to be distributed. Furthermore,
Whether the positive function of the state is large or small (not only prevention but promotion, not only affording protection but also creating incentives), the principle of 'commutative justice' ... which consists of making a good (or bad) deed correspond to an equal and fitting reward (or punishment) in accordance with the principle of arithmetic equivalence, will no longer suffice (ibid.:102,103).

It is difficult to determine the correct correspondence between injury and compensation, as should be clear from the most cursory look at the history of punishment. Another challenge lies in establishing legal boundaries in cases where claims of injury or damage are made on the part of individuals concerning themselves or wider issues such as damage to the environment. The question of how to distribute burdens and rewards among society's members represents a kind of dividing line between two versions of liberalism: classical liberal and social-liberal liberalism. In considering what is to be distributed by the state and what criteria are to be used, there is Mill's answer that the state should repress harmful conduct. This response has the merit of being unambiguous and universally acceptable – except to those who believe that the state should also repress immoral conduct irrespective of harm done to others. Bobbio believes that this difference of opinion is the dividing line between advocates of the classical liberal laissez-faire state and those of the social-liberal Welfare State.

In his own approach to liberalism, Bobbio stresses the sequence of historical events:

The course of history led from an initial state of servitude, by way of a gradual process of liberalization, to the conquest by the subject in growing areas of liberty, but the doctrine proceeds in the opposite direction: only by taking as its starting point a hypothetical initial state of liberty, and conceiving man as naturally free, does it arrive at the construction of a political society in which sovereignty is limited. Thus it is that the doctrine ... inverts the course of historical events, treating as origin ..., as prius, that which is historically the result, which occurs posterius (Bobbio, 1990:7).
The influence of doubt – particularly the doubt of moral freedom – is a positive attribute in the sense that it fuels democratic exchange. Real alternatives emerge when one force aims to substitute or overtake another force, when one value or set of values challenges another value/set of values. Bosetti writes: "As for the doubts of the Left, and the fact that the Left's confidence has been shaken, the only certainty is that the Left now doubts itself, and a greater number of questions have arisen: (i) what is Left? (ii) does "a Left" still exist? and (iii) if it does exist, where is it going?" (Bosetti, 1993:83).

The uncertainty has also been reinforced by increasing doubt about the validity of the distinction between Left and Right. Those who deny the distinction are usually on one side or other but still insist that the line has become blurred. In particular, Bobbio recalls that until a few years ago,

it was those on the Right who denied the distinction, because the Right was in a state of crisis. ... the temptation to deny that a Right and a Left exist affects those who feel threatened by their nebulous position. Faced with the cry of victory by the man on the Left [who ... voiced] the defeat of the Right by the Left, the man of the Right defends himself by posing this provocative question: 'But do Left and Right still exist?' (Bobbio in Bosetti, 1993:83,84).

The misleading names of many modern liberal democratic regimes that suggest - erroneously - that liberalism and democracy are interdependent give one cause to re-think the conceptual identity of the Left, to ensure its distinctness from the Right. This translation of aims and values serves to keep the liberal state alive, for the R-L distinction guarantees pluralism, differing views and alliances. If one defines Left as being synonymous with the "social question", there is a democratic guarantee in the presence of a Right. Government spending for the disadvantaged, cohesion funds and the like, if contested by the Right on the basis of an ideological principle or aspect of culture not shared by the Left, is but part of a competitive or antagonistic process hailed by liberalism.

The existence of Left and Right camps can assist the individual in overcoming his apathy. Bobbio cites Kant and *The Idea of Universal History from a Cosmopolitan*
Point of View in confirmation of the view that man's vital energies are put to work in the competitive process and result in liberal thinking:

In the absence of unsociability, all human talents would remain confined to an embryonic stage ...; men, like the obedient sheep under the shepherd's guidance, would ascribe no value whatsoever to their life. ... Let thanks be given to nature for the stubbornness she engenders, the invidious ... spirit of emulation, the never sated greed for wealth - and for power too! For without her, all the excellent natural human dispositions would remain forever dormant ... (Bobbio, 1990:23).

Rather than eliminate capitalism, Bobbio desires that the benefits of capitalism are extended to all; "for the development of a truly democratic system, ... control is extended to embrace not only the centres of political and administrative power but of economic power as well, this being [a] criterion for a democracy to be more advanced than that of so-called bourgeois democracy, which a working-class democracy sets out to be" (Bobbio, 1988:45).

As a form of government, "the liberalist state, unlike the absolute and social states, has limited powers and the democratic state is characterized by majority power, rather than the power of a few, or just one individual" (Bobbio, 1990:1). Liberalism in this century has become a subject dear to those on the Left. Subsequent to the death of the Marxist dream, Bobbio hopes that this new and welcome view on liberalism will mark the end of a period of mutual distrust between the supporters of liberal and socialist political cultures.

Bobbio also built on the Weberian distinction between an ethics rooted in conviction and one emanating from a sense of responsibility. The politician, Bobbio affirms, must act on the basis of the results his action(s) will produce; pure intention or conviction does not sufficiently reflect the ethics of responsibility.

Max Weber gathered well ... the difference between he who acts on the basis of principle, that which precedes the action, as his rule ..., and he who acts keeping in mind the consequences, that which comes after the action - its ... result. [Weber] distinguished two ethics, the ethics of ... pure intention, and the ethics of responsibility. I have no doubt that the man of
faith must act according to the first, the politician on the basis of the second (Bobbio, 1993a:140).

As an economic theory, liberalism signifies a market economy. As a political theory, liberalism signifies the minimal state. Although they are interconnected, the two theories are independent and must be considered separately. The chief difference between economic and political liberalism is that political liberalism comprises the spiritual sphere. The theory concerning the limits of state power not only refers to intervention in economics but also extends to the spiritual sphere, that of ethics and religion. The liberal state is a lay state, one which "does not identify itself with a specific religious denomination" (Bobbio, 1987:104). In addition, the lay state adopts no specific philosophical worldview as the foundation of its political theory, as does Marxism-Leninism.

2.4.3 The status of law

The secular and liberal state cannot rely on the rule of men rather than on the rule of law; the rule of men emanates from the paternalistic or patriarchal authority, such as the family. For Bobbio, the force of law is egalitarian whereas the religious state is patriarchal. There is no justice in the religious state, since there is no legal justice there. "The family ... has always been taken as a model ... of the monocratic system where the highest power is concentrated in the hands of a sole individual and his subjects are in the legal sense of the word 'incompetent', either temporarily, as in the case of children ..., or permanently, as in the case of slaves" (Bobbio, 1987:148). In the family, the father is the ethical head of the grouping but he is not its head in legal terms since the law he applies is arbitrary and is not common to all families.
more ad hoc justice than legal justice. Equity, or justice applied in a concrete case, can be redefined as the justice of the rule of men instead of that of the rule of law (ibid.).

The same principle of paternalism can be applied to the non-secular state, where law deriving from a superior power is tantamount to despotism. It is no coincidence, in Bobbio's view, that the definitive critique of the paternalistic conception of power derives from Kant's theories of the juridical state. Kant argued that "a government might be founded on the principle of benevolence towards the people, like that of a father towards his children, although such 'paternal government' is the greatest conceivable despotism" (Bobbio, 1987:149).

For the legislator, it is important to consider the origin of the law, and to whom the merit of instituting laws is ascribed. Bobbio clearly prefers the rule of law to the rule of men. As soon as democracy fails to demonstrate rigorous respect for the rules of the democratic game, "it rapidly reverts into its opposite, into one of the many forms of autocratic government" (ibid.:156). The figure of the good legislator is vital one and "the myth of the great legislator also inspires governments in the wake of the French Revolution" (ibid.:150).

In elaborating an objection to what Catholics refer to as "universal culture", the example of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is useful for, Bobbio argues, the Universal Declaration represents an unprecedented historical event. For the first time in history, a system of fundamental principles for human behaviour was freely accepted by the majority of the people living on the planet through their governments.

Through this declaration, a system of values is universal ... not in principle, but de facto, in that the consensus over its validity ... to govern the destiny of the future community has been expressly declared (the values upheld by religions and churches, even Christianity, the most universal of the religions, has until now involved only part of humanity de facto, that is to say historically). Only after the Declaration can we obtain the historical certainty that humanity in its entirety shares some common values, and finally believe in the universality of these values in a way which is historically legitimate,
i.e. that by universal we mean not an objective reality, but subjectively accepted by the universe of humanity (Bobbio, 1996a:14,15).

This universal consensus in law, law which can be traced back to traditional religious values, has become the inspirational foundation of lasting order or perpetual peace. However, those principles had to shed their exclusivity, that is, their application to Christians only, to become accepted universally.

2.4.4 Ethical systems

Bobbio often reiterates that conveying aims and values helps to preserve the liberal state. For example, in defining the political Left one must at the same time define the Right, thus reinforcing democratic differences. In brief, permanent values are embedded in social conditions but are experienced or met with in specific circumstances. Carl Schmitt's distinction between friend and enemy, or between differing values formulated by specific groups, can also be used to measure political relations. Schmitt's conceptual distinction is based on the existence of political relations that take "various forms among independent political entities ... [yet are] not always bound by mutually accepted rules" (Schwab, 1987:194). Or as Bobbio puts it, "Two terms in an antithesis do not always have equal force; nor is it necessarily the case that one is always stronger than the other" (Bobbio, 1996c:13).

With the Enlightenment came the realization that the democratic republic as a community of men united solely by faith in God or the fatherland was an impossible political ideal. Potential adversaries came to be seen as equal in their struggle for truth. The responsibility of public institutions to guarantee the "vitality of religious sentiment as a source of values for the collectivity" was faced with an increasing recognition that "Christianity and, above all, Catholicism, no longer [corresponded] to the needs of humanity" (Tortarolo, op. cit.:65). Owing to the conflicts between religion and science and religion and society, there arose a necessity to transform religion. Marco Minghetti made the observation that "this
transformation should have been effected by the Church itself" (ibid.:65,66); however, the Church did not take up the challenge. The transformation was conducted by those outside it.

Bobbio has written extensively about what he considers to be prime human values. These writings illuminate the difference between Right and Left and the criteria that govern the distinction between the two. The cultural is the non-political, Bobbio claims, or one's genuine self and identity as expressed by the conscience. As the self develops within the community and as a member of various social groups, as one encounters different ideas, politics enters the individual's sphere of action. Politics enrich the individual and result in his increased awareness of collective behaviour, in how different social groups confront reality. But at the same time, politics challenges the cultural self or the moral self. The consideration of otherness and tolerance of awareness is a popular political and philosophical theme. Since "Right" and "Left" continue to be used to describe two distinct ideologies or worldviews, Bobbio suggests that the problem with these two poles is not their legitimacy, but "the criteria proposed for that legitimacy" (Bobbio, 1996c:38).

To begin an investigation into these criteria, one could examine different streams of thought and political activity. Spatial metaphors are one way of getting a grip on the ethical systems underlying the Right/Left distinction. Bobbio cites the example of Laponce at the University of Toronto, who distinguished "between the vertical spatial axis (higher/lower) and the horizontal one (Left/Right)" (ibid.:39). Laponce carried out an analysis of spatial metaphors in political language, based on the crucial durability of the vertical axis which he considers to be the most important one. The Left/Right valence of the horizontal axis originated with the French Revolution and was intended to replace the vertical axis. Laponce emphasizes that the horizontal has never overtaken the vertical. Bobbio, on the other hand, focuses on the separateness of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of politics, which "represent two different, independent relationships in the political universe" (ibid.).
In the perennial conflict between two opposing sides, both terms can have either a positive or negative meaning, although,

the vertical and horizontal dimensions of politics are separate, ... Normally both dimensions coexist, but either one can disappear in extreme situations: the first can disappear in a civil war, and the second in a despotic system in which there is a single power at the top and divisions are not permitted at the base. Laponce states only that the horizontal metaphor has never completely eliminated the vertical one. It should be added that it has never eliminated it for the simple reason that it could never eliminate it. The two metaphors have different descriptive functions, and the total sphere of political relations is only represented by both together (ibid.:39).

Bobbio does not accept Laponce's notion that the Left-Right distinction is particularly important in a democracy since "elections divide the competing groups into two opposing camps" (ibid.:40). Electoral systems, in Bobbio's words, do not wholly account for the existence of two opposing camps; the tension between Right and Left "is a much more universal principle than the electoral system which produces dualism in a democracy: it is the principle of majority rule, whereby every kind of collective decision necessarily involves a majority and a minority" (ibid.). Duality in politics is not limited to democracy since in politics there is an inherent duality. Bobbio says that a distinction should be made between opposites such as friend/enemy and other comparable dualities, where one term is always positive and the other always negative, and the Left/Right pair. Both terms – Left and Right – "can have either a positive or a negative connotation, according to the ideologies and movements they represent, and hence the persons and groups which appropriate them" (ibid.).

To identify the Left as the opposite of Right does not involve a negative value judgement "because a negative axiological judgement of an opposite depends exclusively on a positive axiological judgement of the thing opposed" (ibid.). Left/Right is not similar to good/bad or beautiful/ugly. Political terminology is not univocal, "because both Left and Right can represent the positive side or ... the negative side of the distinction" (ibid.:41). The negative or positive value-judgement in each case depends on how one passes judgement.
Ideological orientation accounts for much of the "content" any researcher gives to the terms Right and Left. The content is vital for those who insist that the distinction be kept in place, or indeed reinforced.

Laponce ... argues ... that, unlike in traditional and especially religious terminology, where Left represents the bad side, in political terminology the Left is always associated with highly positive attributes such as the future, creativity and justice. While the majority of non-political cultures are dominated by the Right wing, at least in the West, contemporary political culture is, according to Laponce, dominated by the Left wing ... The observation that the Right does not have any publications corresponding to magazines like New Left and Keep Left has been disproved by the growth in recent decades of a militant and ambitious nouvelle droite (ibid.:41).

Documents on ideological trends abound. But, Bobbio says, the overriding consideration in them is "the division between religion and politics, religion being considered the positive element in history and politics the negative one" (ibid.:42). This negative picture of politics reflects negatively on the Left, since "the dominance of the Left is supposed to be proof of the negative nature of politics" (ibid.). From this correlation, Bobbio suggests that Laponce provides a basis for an additional correlation concerning the positiveness of the Left and the negativeness of politics.

Laponce ... manipulates the different proposed distinctions which emerge from the various surveys, and uses the contrast between religion and politics to give particular emphasis to the fact that the distinction between Left and Right ultimately turns out to be a distinction between the sacred and the profane, in which other distinctions find their place: the distinction between hierarchical order and egalitarian order, and the distinction between a traditionalist outlook favourable to continuity and a progressive outlook favourable to the new and to a break with the past. [He] ... continually asserts that religion is Right-wing and atheism Left-wing (ibid.).

In this manner, the struggle between politics and religion is reduced to a struggle between good and evil, "in which the final triumph will belong to religion, in spite of any battles lost ..." (ibid.:42,43). Attribute an irreligious or atheistic worldview to
the Left is unsound, Bobbio affirms, because there are streams of the Right that are also irreligious or have a completely secular view of politics.

In Europe, there is a reactionary, Right-wing tradition which is religious ..., but there is also an irreligious and pagan Right, which uses religion to its own advantage as an instrumentum regni. All the nouvelle droite which has appeared in recent decades is irreligious, and does not draw on any of the religious sources of the traditional Right. If you then take into account the distinction between extremists and moderates ..., you have to consider a moderate Right which has a completely secular view of politics (ibid.:43).

One such example of religion being used to political advantage was that of the Fascist state aspiring towards the foundation of a secular religious faith in politics. "In modern society, secularization has not produced a definitive separation between the spheres of religion and politics" (Gentile, 1990:229). Since the development of mass political parties, the dividing line between the two spheres has often been confused. During the Fascist regime, the state underwent a process of sacralization: "the very fact of claiming that the state had its own morality meant that Fascism evoked the existence of its own divinity, which was the inspiration of Fascist morality, and effectively put itself forward as a new religion" (ibid.:230). Although the Church viewed Fascism as the most effective bulwark against the socialist movement, the Catholic Popular Party was sympathetic to the socialists and by 1922 the Vatican had abandoned the Popular Party altogether.

In 1925, Don Luigi Sturzo, leader of the Popular Party (Partito Popolare), warned that Fascist ideology was "profoundly pagan, and in contrast with Catholicism. We are dealing with state-worship and deification of the nation, because Fascism does not permit discussion or limitations: it wants to be worshipped for its own sake" (ibid.).

Bobbio states that Laponce erred in attributing irreligious egalitarian ideology to the Left, for egalitarianism has repeatedly been inspired by religious sentiment.

Precisely the consideration of egalitarian ideology ... compels us to recognize that egalitarianism inspired by religion has had an extensive role in revolutionary movements, from the English Levellers ... to liberation
theology. Conversely, there has been a tradition of inegalitarian thought, of which Nietzsche was the ultimate expression, which considers egalitarianism and its political products, democracy and socialism, as the harmful effects of Christian teaching (Bobbio, 1996c:43,44).

According to some, it is religion rather than politics that constitutes a negative element in history. This is the very opposite of Laponce's view, which is that politics constitutes a negative element, and the distinction between Left and Right is a distinction between the religious and the profane. Ultimately, one can consider the ethical concept of equality as both a religious and non-religious, or political, value.

Before moving on to a consideration of Hobbes, whose theory of natural law underpins much of Bobbio's work, reference is made to the type of moral philosophy differentiating many streams of liberal thought. The two principal types of moral theory are i) teleological - end or good-oriented theory, and ii) deontological theory which is duty/right-oriented. Although all liberals declare allegiance to protecting the freedom of expressing and acting upon one's thoughts, they diverge when it comes to secular versions of Christian doctrine. The values of motherhood and parenting, for example, are typical of Green political parties and utilitarian movements, where teleological, rights-based liberal theories are endorsed. However, it is difficult to decide on what is "good" and "desirable", given individual preferences. The emphasis in such theories is on the end, not on the means of achieving it. Deontological supporters of liberalism emphasize that any good must be subordinate to "core virtues" like justice, individual rights and autonomy. Moreover, if one accepts the utilitarian principle of humans seeking good ends, then no single end can be identified that will be shared by all. Moral obligation is open to subjective interpretation. Although "specific demands are created in response to specific needs" in a context where "new needs are created by changes in social conditions" (Bobbio, 1996a:xii), Bobbio agrees that rights "are a deontic entity [and] have a precise meaning only in normative language" (Bobbio, op. cit.:xiii).
2.4.4.1 Considering culture

Bobbio, as we have seen, is interested above all in human culture. In his view, the pattern of culture is a selection and configuration of interests and activities, and a particular valuation of them. Any plurality of cultures within a community can inhibit integration, which "is often made difficult precisely because of the different sources of doctrinal inspiration and the different aims which each wishes to obtain" (Bobbio, 1996a:66). Nevertheless, Bobbio finds it significant that the three main currents of modern political thought are able to find themselves in general agreement or convergence in adopting the non-organic and particular rights that protect their identity. The culture of the particular which co-exists with the subjective is a reaffirmation of liberalism as well as a basis for "the hoped-for unity of mankind" (ibid.). The ethos of all groups thrives in the established rights and conventions and the associated understanding of human society. Since there is room to pursue certain rights over others, this cultural basis for cohabitation is, Bobbio contends, preferable to religious or ideological value systems.

The culture of politics scorned by Bobbio follows the "dead track of ideologies, especially when the ideologies pompously take on theological guises and propriety" (Bobbio, 1996:12). Healthy democracy with the modern goals "of conquering a higher level of civility in customs ... and ideas, is only on the right course if it follows the track of interests" (ibid.). As a liberal and as a democrat, Bobbio rejects theology, but not only the theology of the church. For him, secular politics are not anti-religious, irreligious or atheist politics. Rather, the secularism he aims to realize "must be fed on critical spirit" (Bobbio in Tortarolo, 1998:103) to avoid becoming a "receptacle of all the religious grievances against the dominant religion that have accumulated in a country like Italy" (ibid.). In other words, his definition of secularism means that it must necessarily be devoid of any theological content, regardless of the inspiration from which it derives. What relationship can be seen between theology and politics in Italy? He writes:

"Italy is not the place of theological controversies; ... rather, it is the old and worn-out home of political sectarianism. The theological controversies
originate here, and [they] rise up, become gigantic and lose all measure on political terrain. Two political programmes, in their natural confrontation with each other, become two dogmatic theologies; two social ideologies, in their reciprocal opposition, become two theologies; two parties, in the discussion that arises between their adherents, rather, between [their] followers or the faithful, are transformed into two religious sects, of which one possesses the truth and the other is possessed by error. In Italy today we are also witnessing this spectacle: political struggle is turning into a war of religion (Bobbio, 1996:11).

Bobbio is not surprised by this theological result caused by ideology, which continues to divide people much more than do material interests. What is required is the clearing of the political terrain to leave it free from struggles based on absolute values:

... it is another way to give to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar, to affirm ... modern civilization's inexorable need, ... the secularity of the State, or ... to give anew a meaning to the autonomy of politics. Values belong to the conscience, or ... to metaphysics – both materialistic and spiritualistic – ... [they are] a personal question. Therefore when one starts with a prodigal hand to sow the absolute, the value [and] the idea on the terrain of social facts, as historicism does, one must expect to see the harvest of despotism, in the form of the theocratic State, or of the ethical State, which is the same (ibid.:13).

Morality and politics – as well as morality and private lives – continue to figure in the traditional questions raised by the members of complex societies where various moral schools meet and often clash. Scientific and economic development in particular, are the stuff of moral debate. The energy of the universe is constant, in a place where nature "is no longer the ... order created by God, but is simply the set of environmental, social, and historical conditions which individuals must take into account in order to regulate their social life" (Bobbio, 1993b:153).

Reason alone is sufficient to confront society's problems: this is the spirit of the Enlightenment. And it was French cultural leadership that made it possible to recognize that the political establishment was founded on class, nothing more. This emphasis on the natural superiority of humans to any institution/economic activity constitutes a challenge to legal positivism, or anti-natural law, also referred
to by Bobbio as the Hobbesian paradox, or "the problem of the relationship between natural law and civil law" (Bobbio, 1993b:115). Gramsci, too, appealed to the spirit of man's voluntarism: "[one] cannot say that the power of the state is absolute, that is, without constraints, if [one] recognizes the existence and legitimacy of the laws of nature" (ibid.:117).

2.4.4.2 Values and the transformation of values

Bobbio lists three ways of demonstrating values: "deduction from a constant objective fact, for example human nature; their consideration as self-evident truths; and finally the discovery that they are generally accepted within a given historical period (i.e., the test of consensus)" (Bobbio, 1996a:13). Bobbio himself seems inclined to the first. As we are not sure of the objectivity of human nature, however, it carries with it an inherent limitation:

The first method would offer us the greatest guarantee of their universal validity, if human nature really does exist, and supposing it does exist as a constant ... reality, if we were capable of understanding its essence. Judging by the history of natural law, human nature can be interpreted in the most varied of fashions, and the appeal to nature has been used to justify diametrically opposed value systems (ibid.).

Since there are differing views on the character of human nature, positing it as a starting place on which to build an ethical system is ultimately unsatisfactory. The second method, that of values as evident truths, such as the elimination of torture and violence, is equally weak, because self-evident values cannot withstand historical testing and have proved to be too changeable.

It probably appeared to be evident to the authors of the Declaration of 1789 that property was 'sacre et inviolable', but today all reference to property rights as human rights has completely disappeared from the most recent documents of the United Nations. Is there anyone today who does not consider it self-evident that detainees should not be tortured? Yet for many centuries torture was accepted and defended as a normal judicial procedure (ibid.:14).
This last observation by Bobbio is open to question, however, because civil wars on several continents have plagued this entire decade, and provide evidence that there are members of the human community who believe that detainees can legitimately be tortured. This evidence is not limited to European ethnic conflicts, but is a worldwide phenomenon.

The third method of justifying values is that of showing that they are supported by consensus, whereby a value has greater validity the more it is agreed to. The consensus argument replaces the test of objectivity which is considered impossible or at least extremely uncertain, with the test of intersubjectivity (ibid.).

Bobbio notes that there are three stages in the realization of legislation based on ideals, and he traces the evolution of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to make his point. Ideals are transformed into values, and ultimately into legislation. The ideals in stage one are found in works of philosophy and natural law. John Locke in particular discussed the inalienable natural rights that humans enjoy by virtue of being human. These can neither be renounced nor taken away by individual or state. The second stage marks the shift to practice:

The second stage in the history of human rights is ... the transition from theory to practice, from the mere perception of a right to its enactment. Through this transition, the assertion of human rights acquires concreteness but loses its universality. Rights are from then on protected as truly positive rights, but they are only valid within the state which recognizes them (ibid.:16).

The universality of human rights depends, however, on the third and final phase described by Bobbio, where the legislation in force protects not states, but human beings:

The 1948 Declaration commenced the third ... stage in which the assertion of human rights is both universal and positive: universal in the sense that the principles it contains no longer concern only the citizens of this or that state, but all human beings, and positive in the sense that it initiates a process whose end is that human rights should no longer only be proclaimed ... as ideals, but effectively protected even against the state
which violates them. On completion of this process, citizens' rights will have been transformed into human rights as a positive reality (ibid.).

This view implies a criticism of both Marxist doctrine and Catholicism. Neither can be said to be truly universal, in Bobbio's view, since they do not apply to all humans and all states.

Bobbio has devoted much effort to his study of the philosophy of law. He supports equality rather than inequality before the law. The aim of the legislator, either public or private, is, in his view, to influence human behaviour. The juridical system is a cultural product, such that normative activity is reflected in the relationship between the individual and the system. Carcaterra has identified Bobbio as a researcher of prescriptive language, who stressed that "One can influence behaviour with any type of proposition, also specifically through descriptive propositions; that which characterizes a prescriptive proposition is that it does not indirectly influence action, but influences it directly" (Carcaterra, 1989:157).

in law there is both a normative and a prescriptive basis for action and for conditioning human behaviour. The superiority of law to the moral goodness of humans, according to Bobbio, is evident in its largely finite interpretation and in its universal application.

In spite of criticisms against natural law, proclamations of human and citizens' rights have not only continued in the era of positivist jurisprudence, but have also continued to widen the scope of their demands to include the so-called social rights, and to break down abstract man into all his possible specifications, man and woman, child and the old person, the healthy and the sick (Bobbio, 1996a:112).

The declaration of human rights as an ethical foundation for modern society is accompanied by the need to protect those rights.

It is necessary to find the most effectual means to ensure that new obligations (the protection of a right depends on honouring an obligation) are 'for the most part' enforced. I am aware that saying 'for the most part' is vague, but in the universe in which one ... conducts moral discourse, this
expression is needed to make clear that an obligation, even if expressed in the most solemn declaration, ends up by ... disappearing if no one or only a few fulfill it (Bobbio, 1995b:138).

Enforcement of an ethical system can take place through persuasion, social pressure or force, which Bobbio says are represented, respectively, by the pedagogue or the priest, the social group as it reflects accepted customs, and the policeman. "Everyone knows through experience that the policeman is the most effective means of enforcement" (ibid.).

This explains why there is no real society which differs from the society of philosophers who discuss the legality of active euthanasia among themselves, for example, that does not establish, alongside the laws of obligation, a code of punishment, which in turn constitutes obligations that are not addressed towards members of the group, but to a specialized body of judges and executors (Bobbio, 1995b:138).

For Bobbio, civil society is the seed bed of articulated interests and arguments that feed the political life of society. Tolerance ensures the life of civil society and is reinforced through the establishment of conventions and rights. Faith in truth speciously increases the value of particular views in the political arena; therefore, tolerance and scepticism are necessary and beneficial to the life of society, whether civil or political.

2.4.5 The place of tolerance, truth and scepticism in political life

Neocorporativism refers to a particular ordering of democratic societies, one that is so familiar that we distinguish between statist or Fascist corporativism and social or democratic corporativism. Bobbio asserts that neocorporativism has nothing to do with the phenomenon of the disintegration of the social fabric in many rival groups, whose undisciplined demands make global society more difficult to govern. Corporativism is often associated erroneously with Fascist doctrine or linked to the fragmentation caused by interest groups and sectarian lobbies. Indeed, rather than disintegration of order, neocorporativism refers to a highly structured organization
in which there is a high concentration of interest groups, as is the case for example in unions. These organizations take important collective decisions which affect all of society through their representatives at the top working together with the organs of government (Bobbio, 1995b:58,59).

The study of society has become more difficult, generally, given the development of political battalions based on neocorporativism. In effect, Bobbio affirms, this neocorporative order makes for a "double State", since the representatives of organized interests in industrialized societies have moved to the political forefront. This neocorporativism he defines as (i) a doctrine that promotes collaboration between society's two largest antagonistic classes - the employing class and the employed. This replaces a state of permanent conflict in which each conflict is resolved separately through the modification of the rules of the game or the victory of one class over the other. The second definition of neocorporativism is (ii) a fundamental institutional instrument that "consists of the substitution of the immediate representation of the particular interests in conflict with ... political representation" (ibid.:59). An elected official, not bound by the mandate of his electors since the task at hand is to respond to general interests, takes on the role of democratic representative.

In Italy, the debate on neocorporativism got off to a slow start and Bobbio attributes this above all to a liberal principle. "Italian liberal democratic doctrine has consistently refused to recognize the legitimacy of the representation of interests other than those of politics" (ibid.). The Italian Constitution relegated this question of representation to an institute of secondary importance - the CNEL (Consiglio nazionale dell'economia e del lavoro) which has only consultative power. Secondly, in the post-war period, the nature of social conflict in Italy has differed significantly from that of other countries. Although the nineties have witnessed some change in this regard, the neocorporative system previously existed only in countries where there was a strong social-democratic party, strong enough to remain in government for relatively long periods. The Social-Democratic party was called the
party of "compromise" and meant the "temporary acceptance of the capitalist system corrected through redistributive policies" (ibid.:60).

Social compromise and political compromise were not equally accepted by the party that represented the working class in Italy.

The strongest party of the working class [was] not and [did] not want to be a social-democratic party and nothing was more extraneous to its 'philosophy' and that of the major trade unions, even those of non-Communist inspiration, than the ideal of social compromise. This is not to be confused with political compromise, which was an integral part of the Communist Party's strategy (ibid.).

The question of the governability of complex societies can be interpreted through the dichotomy civil society/state, where "a society becomes more ungovernable the greater the demands of civil society and the lack of a corresponding capacity of institutions to respond to them" (Bobbio, 1989b:25,26). Civil society can also be considered simply as the formation of demands directed at the political system.

In the most recent system-theories of society as a whole, civil society occupies the space reserved for the formation of demands ... aimed at the political system and to which the political system has the task of supplying answers (output): the contrast between civil society and state therefore is posed as the contrast between the quantity and quality of demands and the capacity of institutions to give rapid and adequate answers (ibid.:25).

Civil society, Bobbio affirms, also includes all that remains after limiting the sphere of the state. Civil society is where economic, social, ideological and religious conflicts originate, and state institutions have the task of solving them. The well-being of civic order, however, is more important than the nature of the state, Bobbio maintains.

The agents of these conflicts and therefore of civil society ... are social classes ...; as well as class organizations there are interest groups, associations ..., ethnic emancipation movements and so on. Parties have one foot in civil society and the other in institutions; so much so that it has been proposed to enrich the dichotomous conceptual scheme by inserting the concept of political society between the two concepts of civil society and
state in order to encompass the phenomenon of parties which in reality do not entirely belong [to either] (ibid.).

Civil society includes public opinion – such as the views disseminated via mass media – which in turn influences social movements; as Bobbio says, "public opinion and social movements develop together and influence each other" (ibid.:26). In totalitarian societies, there is no public opinion, because only official opinion is voiced.

Institutions represent legitimate power in the Weberian sense ..., power whose decisions are accepted and realized in so far as they emanate from an authority recognized as having the right to make binding decisions for the ... collectivity. Civil society is the place where, especially in periods of institutional crisis, de facto powers are formed that aim at obtaining their own legitimacy even at the expense of legitimate power; where ... the processes of delegitimation and relegitimation take place. This forms the basis of the frequent assertion that the solution of a grave crisis threatening the survival of a political system must be sought first and foremost in civil society where it is possible to find new sources of legitimation and therefore new sources of consensus (ibid.).

Although it would seem that civil society performs a dynamic function in affirming new sources of legitimation and consensus, it can also act negatively as "the complex of apparatuses that exercise coercive power within an organized social system" (ibid.:22). Yet along with the notion of the state as coercive "is the group of ideas that accompanies the birth of the bourgeois world: the affirmation of natural rights belonging to the individual and to social groups independently of the state and which limit and restrain political power" (ibid.).

In civil society, different social groups articulate different ends. The process of secularization within both state and society reached its highest point in the 20th century. The idea of tolerance was derived and developed from the sphere of religious controversy. The great defenders of tolerance, Bobbio notes, fought all the forms of intolerance that had bloodied Europe for centuries following the rupture of religious universalism realized by the reformed churches and heretical sects. From the domain of religious controversy, the idea of tolerance gradually
moved on to include the domain of political controversy. In truth, Bobbio affirms, the idea was used to oppose forms of the modern religion: ideology. Bobbio writes: "The recognition of religious freedom brought about non-confessional states; the recognition of political liberty brought about democratic states, both of which are the highest expression of secular spirit that characterized the birth of modern Europe, the secular spirit understood as that attitude of the spirit that entrusts the fate of regnum hominis more to critical reason than to impulses of faith, entrusting the profession of it to free individual conscience" (Bobbio, 1993a:207).

Bobbio respects those who believe in a God or gods, those who believe in forces that extend beyond the reach of mortals. Having said this, he is not a man of faith; rather, he sees the believer within the following context of faith: "Faith, when it is not a gift, becomes a habit; when it is neither a gift nor a habit, it derives from a strong will [volonta] to believe" (Bobbio, 1994c:187). Bobbio suspects, however, that la volontà starts where reason ends, or in other words that human will at times overcomes reason.

At the same time, Bobbio questions faith in reason and the temptation to substitute the God of reason for the God of believers. Human beings grapple with the darkness of their origins and that of their future path thanks to the "small light or lamp" of reason: reason does not constitute a great shining light. This is demonstrated by the fact that humans continue in their eternal quest to understand the universe and the evil within it - injustice, hunger, economic, social and psychological depression. Both religion and science are tools in helping us interpret the universe and provide convincing answers, as opposed to illusory replies of consolation. Bobbio defines science as the body of knowledge acquired thanks to human intelligence.

Contrary to the little light of reason, faith illuminates; however, its oft overdone illumination results in blinding. Where do the perverse aspects of religion originate if not from this blindness? -- Intolerance, coercion to believe, the persecution of non-believers, the spirit of the crusades? I would not be taking up this worn argument ... If this same argument were not used continually ... to blame the process of secularization for all the perversions
of this century, as if the most sanguinary age before the two world wars were not that of the wars of religion (ibid.:188).

Some have invited Bobbio not to be so pessimistic. However, Bobbio judges optimism to have the same drawbacks as pessimism - a global vision based on the fideistic. He accepts neither worldview because the result of adopting one or the other obfuscates his own need to try to understand before judging. "The important thing, starting with radical evil, is that [we] agree that only its antithesis, only [our] attempt to overcome it, constitutes the creation of moral life; that moral life comprises the uniqueness and the novelty of the human world" (ibid.:189).

The call to God, Bobbio claims, does not serve so much to establish prescribed norms, but rather to induce believers to follow them. The true reason for seeking justification in a morality anchored in the absolute, or in a religious vision, is not to provide an absolute basis on which to base morality. Rather, an appeal to supreme authority is a practical matter, an attempt to give greater force to one's obligation to respect the rules. This tendency is riddled with fault:

One addresses God as a judge (an infallible one and thus more to be feared than a human judge) rather than as a legislator. The golden rule of 'Not doing to others that which you would not wish done unto you' is found in any rational morality, even that which seems farthest from religious morality, utilitarian morality (ibid.).

The earliest perception of ethics contrasts with the modern notion of ethics as responsibility vis-à-vis those of utility. Bobbio writes: "In the history of philosophy, we read of the ancients who placed the ethic of virtue opposite the ethic of happiness" (ibid.). Whether or not there are many strands of religious morality is not the question Bobbio addresses. On the other hand, there is no single secular morality, though there may be a secular principle: "The only principle that can be considered truly secular is that of tolerance; that is, the principle that from observing the multiplicity of moral universes, one draws the consequence of the necessity for pacific cohabitation amongst them (ibid.:190).
In saying that secular thought is both an expression and an effect of the modern epoch, Bobbio asks the reader to reflect on Which God, whose God, and how one's interpretation of God can "lead one astray". When he thinks of Heidegger's remark in an interview that "only ein Gott can save us", he wonders why the reference is limited: Why ein Gott? Which one? "When has a God ever saved the world? For the believer, Christ came to save man from sin and from earthly death, not from the world, which was not his kingdom ..." (ibid.:193). On the contrary, historical example demonstrates man's doom or salvation as the fruit of his own action. As examples, Bobbio cites the plague and the genocides that took place at the time of the early civilization of North and South America and that of Nazi Germany. He asks "Who saved man from the plague; who condemned him to exterminate his fellow man?" (ibid.).

Why should a God save the world? Why? In the universe of infinite worlds, who are we? What attributes do we possess? We are intelligent enough to understand evil, but at the same time so stupid that we ourselves cannot find the remedy. Why should he who is not responsible for our misfortunes save us? (ibid.).

2.5 Bobbio and Italian Communism

Bobbio has expressed his sympathy for former Communists beset by problems deriving from the political culture of the former PCI. All the turns imposed by Stalin and the Comintern caused Italian Communists, at times, to isolate themselves from the rest of the opposition to Mussolini. The Italian Left has various roots, namely: lay and Catholic; liberal-socialist; and environmental ones. Deciding on the ethics and the content of the Left's programme of social philosophy is challenging. Although basic concerns like human welfare dominate the agenda, newer concerns continue to fill the Left's political agenda. Institutional change and social norms derive from that consensus produced by public opinion, where new sources of legitimation are formed.
Bobbio admits that although he has never been a Communist, "he has dedicated the majority of his political writings to discussions with Communists on fundamental themes like freedom and democracy" (Bobbio, 1993a:213). He considered Communists as his interlocutors, "at least Italian Communists, not as enemies to defeat but interlocutors of dialogue on the whys and the wherefores of the Left" (ibid.). Even after the events of 1989, he feels a strong need to reflect on these circumstances, particularly as the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact coincided with an increase in accusations against intellectuals "who had misunderstood or, worse, betrayed" (ibid.). This dispute amongst intellectuals derives from what Bobbio refers to as the "newly converted": "those who, having been Marxists and are now no longer, were just as pigheadedly pro-Marxist before as they are pigheadedly anti-Marxist now" (Bobbio, 1988:163).

This section comprises three elements: i) Bobbio's political relations with Communism during and after Fascism; ii) Marxism's lack of a view of culture; and iii) non-Soviet Communism and its impact on Bobbio, including his experience of 1968 and his visit to China. This last aspect is also considered in the light of how Marxism used culture as a political tool rather than as a supreme value for the development of human consciousness. Bobbio and democrats of the Left prize culture for its autonomy over politics and its role in the development of art, literature and philosophy in general.

2.5.1 Bobbio's political relations with Communism during and after Fascism

Bobbio's position on Marx includes a view of the "cultural dignity of Communism, in opposition to that of Nazism" (il Corriere della Sera, 27/5/98:35). He asks the question: "Who would ever dare to compare Marx's Capital or the Manifesto of '48 with Mein Kampf?" (ibid.). In Violi's introduction to Né con Marx né contro Marx (1997a), he describes Bobbio as neither Marxist nor anti-Marxist, but an intellectual who considered Marx to be a classic. Bobbio has read and re-read his works, above all the historical and philosophical writings, as he has also read Plato and
Aristotle, Hobbes and Rousseau (Bobbio, 1997a:xxiii). Viroli informs us that for Bobbio a classic is achieved by an author when he "overcomes with his work the sudden tempests of history". For a work to be elevated to the rank of a classic, Bobbio believes that an author must have three fundamental qualities: i) he must interpret the epoch in which he lives, so that later one cannot ignore his work in discovering the "spirit of the time"; ii) he must always be contemporary in the sense that each generation feels the need to re-read and reinterpret his work; iii) he must elaborate general categories of historical comprehension which one can apply to a reality different from that from which they were derived.

In Marxist doctrine, Bobbio says, there is a problem of the lack of a theory of the socialist state or of socialist democracy which offers an alternative to the theory, or rather theories, of the bourgeois state, of bourgeois democracy. The West veered "between a social democracy where the emphasis [was] more on the political process of participatory democracy, and democratic socialism where the emphasis was rather more on the public control of economic activities" (Atherton, 1994:142). This situation is further complicated by there "no longer being one Marxism, but many mutually hostile Marxisms, often displaying a profound ideological or political ... animus towards each other and grouped ... into 'schools'" (Bobbio, 1988:47,48).

Socialism is a movement which not only aspires to eliminate economic exploitation but also to achieve the emancipation of humanity from all the historical forms of servitude inflicted on it by fellow human beings and, as far as possible, by nature as well. It therefore cannot help appropriating ... those institutions which are based on the principle of autonomy rather than heteronomy. I can see no other way of interpreting the 'freedom' of which ... Marxists talk when they contrast the realm of freedom with the realm of necessity, other than as autonomy, i.e., obedience ... to the law which all have laid down for themselves. In the ideal society, the stateless society, it is unthinkable that there could be no laws (Gramsci even calls it a 'regulated' society): they will be autonomous laws instead of heteronomous laws, that is all (ibid.:97).

In keeping with this ambivalence, Bobbio's anti-Fascist associates were divided over the question of Marxism. As Anderson explains, Rosselli sought "to purge socialism of its Marxist heritage and Soviet incarnation, and to recover for it the
traditions of liberal democracy he believed were fundamental conquests of modern civilization" whilst Gobetti had hailed the Soviet revolution as a liberating revolution (Anderson, 1988:15). By 1937 Calogero and Capitini had created Liberal-socialismo, which was a position somewhere between that of Rosselli and Gobetti. Capitini differed significantly in his views towards Marxism, since he was more religious in outlook and therefore "more sympathetic to the Soviet experience, aimed at a future social order that would be both 'post-Christian' and 'post-Communist', combining maximum legal and cultural liberty with maximum economic socialization" (ibid.). Finally, Calogero was closer to Rosselli, as he rejected Russia as a 'totalitarian' state and he did not support general socialization of the means of production.

The heirs of Gobetti and Rosselli formed two separate movements that flowed into the PdA in 1942. Calogero advocated a mixed economy to result in reconciliation between freedom and justice, and this became part of the PdA's formal programme.

But it was contested ... by another current that described its goal ... as liberal Communism. Its principal theorists48 ... were Gobetti's most direct descendants. From within GL in the 30s, [they] had rejected the idea of a two-sector economy, and insisted on the need for a revolutionary socialization of property relations, while at the same time calling for a decentralized federative state ... to safeguard liberty against the dangers of ... despotism once capitalism was overthrown. For these thinkers, a Communist revolution was ... probable in post-war Italy, and the task was to think through the ... democratic revolution to come afterwards, that would historically 'right' it (ibid.:15,16).

Capitini, on the contrary, envisaged a post-Communist social order, and closely reflected Bobbio's stance vis-à-vis Marxism. But, in practical terms, Calogero also had Bobbio's support. "Personally and morally closer to Capitini, [Bobbio's] practical preferences were those of Calogero, although in his case they were combined with a lucid sense of the likely strength of the PCI after Liberation that would lead him ... to a much deeper engagement with Marxist culture" (ibid.:16). One of the errors committed by Marxism was that of underestimating democratic
method, for Marx was intensely concerned with "who" was to rule but dedicated little concentration to "how" one was to rule. Marxism, Bobbio argues, has always committed the error of underestimating democracy.

For Marx and Lenin, this second problematic - what Bobbio calls the problem of the subjects, rather than the institutions, of power - obscured the first ... to the point of generating ... confusion between dictatorship understood as any domination by one ... class of a society over another, and dictatorship understood as the exercise of political force exempt from any law - in Lenin's ... definition ... - as a social order in a generic sense, and as a political regime in a narrower sense (ibid.:20,21).

Bobbio observes that "what was new in Marxism was its transformation of this classical notion of dictatorship - as a government at once exceptional and ephemeral - ... into the universal and unalterable substance of all governments prior to the advent of Communism, ... of a classless society (Bobbio in Anderson, 1988:20,21).

The relationship between Bobbio and the PCI followed a course and dialogue that are hard to define in a few words. Following the landslide victory of the DC in 1948, the socialists had renewed their pact of unity with the Communists, but this unity was really a form of subordination. The peace movement in particular is cited by Ginsborg to illustrate the unhappy cohabitation between Communists and socialists. While both campaigned actively for peace and a stop to the Korean War, "unlike the British peace movement of the early 1960s, the Italian one, ... dominated by the PCI, was unilateralist only in the sense of declaring that the innocent victim on an international scale was the USSR and that the constant aggressor was the United States" (Ginsborg, 1990:194). Bobbio decried these ambivalent peacemakers and their sterile mediation efforts, since from the start the PCI had given the edge to the USSR. His scepticism, preference for moderation of judgement and sense of the complexity of argument, are here clear: Bobbio recommends " 'a continual, slow, difficult apprenticeship', 'so slow that it is still not completed' " (Anderson, 1988:12).
The thinkers who have influenced Bobbio's writings to the greatest extent were those who expressed loyalty to the principles of politics understood as a moral commitment. Although Bobbio does not hesitate to criticize Marx, he demonstrates a readiness to adopt the central theme of political morality as evoked by Marx in *On the Jewish Question* (1843): "The relation of the political state to civil society is just as spiritual as the relations of heaven to earth" (Internet site c:4). The compelling strength of Communism was its vigorous faith, compelling as any in the history of religion.

Gobetti in particular developed this concept of spirituality in his political vocation, which was based both on the politics of responsibility, concentrated on the end result of an action or process, and also on the ethics of conviction, concentrated on keeping one's principles from flagging during the process. Gobetti stressed his quasi disregard for the ends towards which his political means aimed because he accepted them as yardsticks of his actions. He believed that class struggle through praxis and the conflict among distinct social classes would render abstract values a form of concrete action. These different classes would fight for current interests and future ideals. The plurality of classes and of interests envisaged by Gobetti implies a rejection of Marx's philosophy of history.

Bobbio refers to Raymond Aron's expression, "if religion according to Marx is the opium of the people, then Communism was the opium of intellectuals" (Bobbio, 1993a:213). Given intellectuals' over-hasty flight from Marx in the 1990s, in an attempt to set some distance between themselves and the failure of the Communist dream, their earlier pro-Marxism is interesting.

It cannot be denied that numerous men of culture and science, authoritative in their fields, did embrace the cause of Communism ..., and they defended it against attacks ... with arguments not as men of faith but of reason. Why? Should Communism's perversion not have been clear from the start, which, according to its original critics as well as those of the latest hour ..., was inherent in the very doctrine from which Communism was gleaned? Was there any need for new historical evidence after years ... of material and moral horrors? And what of the fact that even after this irrefutable proof the ideal of a Communist society has still not faded completely? Should not
those who ... were never Communists, yet did not oppose Communism with the same radical rejection of Fascism, ask themselves the same question? In these last years ..., I had to try and answer this second question, to make clear ... the reasons of error, if an error had been made ... (ibid.:213,214).

The members of the PdA were well aware of the distance that separated their vision of democratic revolution from the class revolution sought by fellow partisans of Communist inspiration, which Bobbio defines as "a dictatorship under the aegis of the Communist Party" (ibid.:214). Still, they were convinced of the necessity for including the Communists as allies in the future constitutional republic, "after the disgraceful defeat of our army and our pre-Fascist ruling class" (ibid.). Some PdA members envisaged a programme of liberal-Communism.

The ideology of liberal-Communism arose out of the conviction that the great historical conflict was a battle between Fascism and Communism, thus the fall of Fascism ... would inevitably lead to the institution of Communist regimes. If libertarian demands were to be satisfied, the chief problem would not be the creation of utopian plans for a new society in which liberal and socialist ideals would merge harmoniously but rather the discovery of realistic expedients to prevent Communism from degenerating into totalitarianism (Bobbio, 1995e:153).

At issue was the recognition that it was imperative to adopt a practical policy to prevent Communism from becoming a form of totalitarianism. Communism itself was thus not to be feared, only its totalitarian version. "Within the sphere of the PdA, this vision had its perhaps most authentic expression in Realtà del Partito d'Azione (Turin: Einaudi, 1945), the work of one of Gobetti's followers, ... Monti" (ibid.). Augusto Monti stressed the contradictory elements that dominated in post-war Italy - a desire for liberty and the certainty of Communism.

It will come ... as the necessary product of two factors that have been active in the history of Italy for half a century: the Marxism of the late nineteenth century [and] the neo-liberalism of the early twentieth century. The Marxists say 'Communism,' and they are right; the neo-liberals say 'liberty,' and they are not wrong. The one is inevitable; the other is inevitable. In the dual adaptation to this dual inevitability - of the liberals to Communism, of the Communists to liberty - lies the secret of tomorrow's rebirth (Monti in Bobbio, 1995e:153,154).
One of the difficulties of working with the Communists, in Bobbio's view, was their conception of freedom as it would affect all members of society. Allegiance to Communist ideals and the Party were to exert an influence on, and to result in a move away from, traditional conceptions of freedom. The idea was that Communism expressed a great morality that was not to be lost but needed to be reformed. This idea, however, turned out to be an illusion. The inspiration came from far off, from Gobetti, although the time and the circumstances had changed. Even Gobetti, who had welcomed the October Revolution, changed his mind after a few years about the possibility of a real alliance with the Communists. The illusion of Communism's great morality is now definitively dead. Its death, Bobbio claims, was not caused by the Italian Communist Party since it had done its part as a democratic party in Italy, starting with its contribution to the elaboration of the Constitution. The death of the illusion is wholly attributable to "real Communism, that of the leading-party, which had revealed itself to be irredeemable" (Bobbio, 1993a:215).

With regard to the potential unity of Communists and PdA members, Bobbio insists that during the last days of Fascism the discussion of liberty was the central question. Liberty for the PdA came before the conquest of power.

We had no doubts about the 'demonic force' of Soviet power. In an article entitled Noi e i comunisti ..., Tristano Codignola stated clearly, as concerned a possible united front between Communists and azionisti, that the issue of freedom came before the conquest of power and not afterwards, and he maintained that it was impossible to reach freedom through dictatorship. But we believed in the regeneration of the Communists through the tough experience of the struggle for freedom from Fascist dictatorship, who would not have been able to govern alone. Would they fight one dictatorship to establish another? (ibid.:215).

Although all round justification was sought to attenuate the evils of Soviet Communism, such as it having been necessary to overthrow an infamous regime in 1917 and its having to face the challenge of Fascism and Nazism, there could be no justification for its adverse effects. The Cold War did constitute another "grave mortal challenge to the success of the Communist revolution" (ibid.), but led
many Communists to turn a blind eye to the side effects of Communism: "in their fury to find justification, those who continued to believe in the freedom of humanity through Communism finished up by justifying both the violent usurping of power in Czechoslovakia and the brutal repression of the Hungarian revolt" (ibid.).

The means used to implement Communism and the consequences that resulted from the use of such means were not considered fully by adherents of Communism. There was an over-concentration on the goal of Communism, rather than a weighing-up of the means used to achieve that end. It was expected that legality would be surpassed in waging revolution: "Marx ... taught that the proletariat cannot simply conquer State power in the sense that the old apparatus passes into new hands, but must smash ... this apparatus and replace it by a new one" (Colletti, 1974:106). To maintain belief in the goodness of the cause despite the evil methods used, Bobbio maintains, one appealed to the nobility of the end: the creation of a society never seen before in which all forms of exploitation of humans by humans would finally cease. If the maxim "the end justifies the means" were formulated at all times "in reference to the fatherland, how about when the salvation of the entire human race is at stake?" (Bobbio, 1993a:216). Ultimately, all arguments that the worthy end envisioned made recourse to blameworthy means more inevitable were exhausted. Then, Bobbio maintains, a simple willingness to believe took over.

Outside historical context, Bobbio warns, no judgement of Communism, be it pro-Communism or anti-Communism, is possible. It would also be ethically incorrect to form such judgements, given the context in which they were formed: Hitler’s regime of terror. Using the notion that a superior race had been summoned to dominate the world, Hitler’s regime launched a total war, from which came the necessity of answering violence with violence. Some, from the very beginning, had the dogmatic certainty of the justice of the cause of the Communist revolution and of its diffusion worldwide, and they did not stop even in the face of the tragic evidence of the facts. They sought to either justify Communist repression and violence or to remove all evidence of atrocities, so as to prevent the final aim being
called into question. Yet there were also those who always had an opposite certainty. They consequently acted by combatting Communism with the same intransigence with which others had fought Fascism; there are those who through deep laceration go from one certainty to the opposite certainty. Finally, there are those who, although having no doubt as to the unacceptability of historical Communism, have continued to ask themselves about the reasons for the failure of a revolution that had kindled hopes and animated men of elevated moral conscience. Such people, Bobbio adds, contrast with the intellectual mediocrity and moral lowliness of much triumphant anti-Communism (Bobbio, 1993a:216).

After the demise of the PdA, Bobbio continued teaching and writing, mostly warning the Soviet-inspired Italian Communist Party of the need for balance and putting forth his criticism of "the polarization of Italian political and intellectual life during the High Cold War" (Anderson, 1988:9). Bobbio's main interlocutor was the PCI, but in later years he shifted his focus. One can claim that Bobbio is first and foremost a liberal rather than a socialist, for he maintains that "those called upon to take decisions must be offered real alternatives and be in a position to choose these alternatives" (Bobbio, 1994c:297). In the immediate post-war period, says Anderson, he worked to "dissuade [the PCI] from unconditional allegiance to a Soviet state that he numbered ... among totalitarian regimes" (Anderson, 1988:9). Recognizing the limits of the political climate of the time, Bobbio opened a debate among intellectuals to express criticism of "cultural politics" and to endorse a "politics of culture", based on observance and faith in discussion rather than definitive synthesis and hasty choice. As Bellamy describes it, he attempted to "deflate both the anti-Communism of cold war liberals, and the anti-liberalism of fellow-travelling left-wing intellectuals" (Bellamy, 1987:142). Both Anderson and Bellamy applaud Bobbio's civility and equanimity given the stark polarization of world politics after Yalta. He mediated between the two sides and stressed that the liberals were afflicted by self-contradiction in denying freedom of speech to the opposition. The rejection by the Left of the ideals of liberalism – on the basis of their being bourgeois – meant, he argued, that both political camps had to overcome their intransigence.
Rather than rushing into antagonistic and mutually exclusive camps ... intellectuals of both sides should seek areas of ... discussion within their common cultural inheritance. "The defenders of the liberal-bourgeois civilisation should reflect to what extent the new communist society is the inheritor of their conception of ... history, and refuse to be drawn into the polemic against a revived barbarism, the defenders of the new communist society must reflect ... on how far they should welcome, in making good their claim to build a new civilisation, the values contained within liberalism' (Bellamy, 1987:143).

In the early 1970s, the PCI continued to avoid "the issue of the compatibility of Communism with so-called liberal freedoms" (ibid.:152). Bobbio continued to demand responses from the PCI as to "which institutional arrangements could replace those of representative democracy and still preserve a pluralistic and free society" (ibid.). He criticized the "unforgivable" scholastic repetition of the doctrines of Lenin and Marx which, given the lessons of history, no longer reflected an appropriate direction for the Left. According to Bellamy, Bobbio's later articles "formed part of a socialist attempt to undercut the PCI's electoral advances during the 1970s" (ibid.). Other intellectuals joined Bobbio in his criticism of the "scarce development of political theory in Marxism" (ibid.). This debate led the new leader of the PCI, Enrico Berlinguer, to change the political agenda by declaring capitalism and class division the real evils to be overcome.

2.5.2 Marxism's lack of a view of culture

Bobbio's view of culture as the foundation of human experience and individual freedom entails an institutional framework to guarantee that culture, even if Communism were to come to power. He "equated culture with the pursuit of all those activities - art, science, leisure, human relationships - which render our lives worthwhile; ... [he was aware] that its defence entailed a definite institutional and legal framework guaranteeing the individual's freedom from external interference" (ibid.:144). Bobbio has led a life-long battle to preserve culture from being subservient to politics. Above all, he endeavoured to defend the autonomy of
culture. This contrasts with Togliatti's mission to relegate culture to the role of maidservant vis-à-vis politics (Garin, 1996:299 and Mancarella, 1995:38). This conflict on the role of culture between Bobbio and Togliatti has been referred to as "a dialogue of the deaf" (la Repubblica, 26/6/97:11), for both stood firm in their opinions. Togliatti defended the primacy of politics rather than the intellectual. For Togliatti, culture primarily served an ideological purpose.

Bobbio today stresses that the contrast between culture and politics does not involve denying politics certain rights and duties. Still, it must be clear that politics is not everything, and that philosophy takes precedence over politics. He summarizes his view thus: "There are spheres that render man noble and there are values that must inspire man to ensure that politics do not degenerate in the struggle of all against all" (ibid.). Culture has the task of illustrating the exigencies of moral life, regardless of the influence of political force. "Rather than the politician who obeys the reason of State, the man of culture is the devoted interpreter of moral conscience" (ibid.:10).

After the death of Stalin in 1953 and the advent of additional breathing space on the Left, Bobbio began to assert that the building of an appropriate legal framework for cultural freedom was conditional on the rejection of "Lenin's identification of the state with dictatorship, due to its origins as a means of oppression" (Bellamy, 1987:145). The Fascist regime in Italy constituted a dictatorship, and the nature of class power during Fascism was not comparable with the more amplified dimension of class power in liberal-democratic governments. Lenin's view swept away the distinction between liberal-democratic governments and dictatorships, Bobbio asserts in Dictatorship and Democracy (1954). Lenin claimed that dictatorship would inevitably precede the transition to Communist society and that the dictatorship of the proletariat was preferable to capitalist bourgeois governments, since it marked a further stage on the road to socialism. Bobbio, however, wished to identify the principal liberal concern. The relationship between liberals and Communists did not hinge on the origins of state power but on the question of guarantees to prevent the abuse of power. Bobbio's
views met with the adverse reaction of many Italian communists, including PCI leader Togliatti and the Marxist philosopher Galvano della Volpe. For Bobbio, the liberal critique was not based on the class origins of state power but on the need to promote liberal rather than dictatorial government: the need to prevent dictatorship is one of his perennial goals. Both the bourgeois and proletarian states could be either dictatorial or liberal. The constitutional guarantees that originated with the bourgeoisie would benefit all, since the independent administration of justice is as important for workers as for any other class. Bellamy writes that "The complete subordination of law to politics by Soviet jurists, on the grounds that all authority emanated from the workers, failed to answer the liberal objection" (Bellamy, 1987:145,146). Liberals stressed, in particular, that the source of power came solely from the people in civil society and that the problem of how that power was exercised was the overriding one.

Bobbio's thesis was contested by della Volpe who denied some of the weaknesses within Marxist theory. In his criticism of Bobbio, della Volpe endeavoured to demonstrate, in theoretical terms, the superiority of the Soviet system vis-à-vis the western one.

The purpose and basis of authority could not be distinguished from the methods used to control it, since the means changed according to the ends they served. ... Marx had accused Hegel of inverting subject and predicate, making the real subject of history - the empirical existing world - a manifestation of the Idea. ... [Marx], whatever the topic, [applied] the same procedure to demystify the reification of abstract concepts into real entities. Bobbio's purportedly universal rights derived ... from exactly this error (ibid.:146).

In viewing bourgeois society as dominated by competitive individualism, della Volpe stressed that the liberal state existed to protect the private interests of individuals. "The separation of powers and the need for rights, therefore, stemmed from the simultaneous estrangement of people from each other and from the community as a common bond, [resulting from] the division of labour and the stress on individual acquisitiveness and private property attendant upon the introduction of market relations in capitalism" (ibid.). Della Volpe dismissed the
entire juridical framework of such a state as "a hypostatization of the economic and social conditions of bourgeois life" (ibid.). If society were based on production inspired by social motives, there would be a unity of interest and none of the distinctions of individualism.

Bobbio warned the Communists to be vigilant against a "too ardent progressivism" that would result in "sacrificing the conquests of an existing liberal democracy to the installation of a future proletarian dictatorship in the name of a perfected ulterior democracy" (Anderson, 1988:10). In his reply to Togliatti, who had put forward counter-arguments, Bobbio reminded him that the members of the PdA would have put themselves at the service of the bosses if they had not sought a profound engagement with Marxism after the Liberation. Indeed, only a few PdA members, before throwing themselves into that political experience, without marrying the cause of Communism, preserved "the most salutary fruits of the European intellectual tradition, the value of enquiry, the ferment of doubt, a willingness to dialogue, a spirit of criticism, moderation of judgement, philological scruple, a sense of the complexity of things" (ibid.). Here, Bobbio illustrates the intellectual tool-kit, and those who left it behind or had never possessed it betrayed their intellectual class.

By 1954, the socialists had broken with the Communists and formed a coalition government with the ruling Christian Democrats. "For six years, Italy was governed by the formula of the so-called Centre-Left; ... Bobbio [described] this experience as ... 'the happiest moment of Italian political development' in the post-war period" (ibid.). The coming years featured tumultuous times. The year 1968-69 was an arduous one, scarred as it was by student revolt and political ferment. That historical moment was to make a lasting impact on Bobbio:

In 1968, Bobbio for the first time entered the recently merged Unitary Socialist Party ... A massive popular upheaval broke out in the universities and factories ... The vote of the newly unified PSU ... fell precipitously. The Italian middle classes ... shifted rightwards and the Centre-Left rapidly expired. All Bobbio's subsequent references to 1968-69 are tinged with ... bitterness. ... The student assemblies of the time seemed to have shocked
him a great deal, leaving disagreeable memories which can be read between the lines of the polemic which was going, in a subsequent phase of Italian politics, to make him a central figure of national debates for the first time (ibid.:10,11).

2.5.3 Reacting to history

After having met the immediate objective of defeating Fascism with all the other anti-Fascist forces, the strategy of the PCI was to "work within the new democracy for a major but gradual transformation of the socio-economic fabric of society" (Partridge, 1998:87). Bobbio adopted another strategy: that of going back to conduct an analysis of the earliest critiques of Marxism. He sought to cleanse Marxism of its contentious parts to reveal that, as a doctrine, not all of Marx merited dismissal. In the immediate post-war period and during the Cold War, the opponents of Communism viewed Communism as a threat, and judged it negatively tout court.

Treading the path of his intellectual predecessors, Bobbio, in formulating a socialist project, looked more closely at Marxism. He admits succumbing to the fascination of Marx's works, "especially in the years of Italy's liberation and reconstruction in the aftermath of Fascism" (Bobbio, 1988:162) when he translated Marx's Economic and Philosophic Writings of 1844. He also completed the first unabridged translation of Hobbes' De Cive at this time. What attracted Bobbio to both thinkers "was that they showed a realistic ... approach ... to the cruelty of history, the harshness of the objective conditions human beings have to face ... to survive ..." (ibid.:163).

For Bobbio, "a socialist party .. is quite within its rights to be neither Marxist nor anti-Marxist, but above all ... it has a duty to be socialist" (ibid.:177).

This means giving the working class movement - and all those who ... believe that things have not yet reached the point where we should renounce the struggle for a more free and just society - guidelines for the future. ... Since the Socialist Party in Italy [was] a 'lay' party, should it not
make more of this feature as something which distinguish[ed] it from the Communist Party? And what does it mean to be 'laical' if not first ... to be prepared to refuse ... to swear by revealed truths or the words of the master? (ibid.).

Bobbio warns that in the fury to forget events one must not "lose sight of what it had represented for all those who had fought for the rebirth of civil life after the defeat of Fascism to [witness] the appearance of a communist regime in an immense country like China" (Bobbio, 1993a:217). At that time, one might have thought that Communism had a solid future in the history of the world. How could it have been so, Bobbio asks? It was only after what happened in Tien An Men square in Beijing, a few months before the fall of the Berlin Wall, that he thought of settling accounts with historical Communism once and for all. "But it is only now that the research has been conducted on the reasons why the attempt to realize in history the utopia of a society free from misery and oppression ended up as the opposite of that [goal], in a system of despotic power" (Bobbio, 1993a:217).

This passage appears to be about the choice of systems before the result is known. In Autobiografia (1997), Bobbio maintains that in considering the ethical dimension of contemporary societies, we cannot compare moral progress with the accelerated and irreversible field of science and technology. He observes that humans, confronted with the world of nature and fellow humans, sought to make life easier to live. The invention of instruments to exercise dominion over nature was successful and was completed rapidly. Such invention has had a more perturbing effect than that of the institution of rules for the control of the human world.

For Bobbio, moral progress and scientific progress - as systems - develop at different speeds. In terms of irreversibility, "human history has always been represented as a sequence of progress and decadence, of civilization and barbarity, of revolution and restoration" (Bobbio, 1997:260). While industrial revolution continues in a constant flux, Bobbio notes that institutional change is intermittent. Accordingly, the best political choices are only revealed to us
intermittently. The lessons of history, however, assist us in our path, despite the fact that the direction of history outside science and technology is not easy to discern. Now, Bobbio affirms, the choice seems easier, for there is no longer any motive for asking "What if the experiment had succeeded?" We know now that the experiment failed. "The difference rests in the sense one wishes to give that catastrophic conclusion: either the inevitable result of the perverse project to exterminate a class, the bourgeoisie, as Ernst Nolte has said, or an equally inevitable failure of a grandiose design to transform the course of history, in which millions of men had believed or hoped for – the just defeat of a monstrous crime or the upturned utopia" (Bobbio, 1993a:223). Of the two possible conclusions, Bobbio believes the latter to be the most tragic.

The end of Soviet Communism is not a sufficient basis on which to consider history. History is broader than any institution and any ideology, however much those institutions and ideologies remain simply historical values.

The most common answer is that utopia must remain in the sky of ideas, since man is damned *ab origine*, and cannot save himself by himself, and human nature being what it is, the idea of total redemption, of new man, is against nature. Human history is an uninterrupted series of trials and errors, ..., without a final goal, and if this redemption must be, it is not of this world (ibid.:217).

Although Bobbio never visited the Soviet Union, in 1956 he went to China with the first Italian cultural delegation to visit that country. "The delegation comprised Communists, ... non-Communists and even some anti-Communists; ... Calamandrei was head of the delegation ..." (Bobbio, 1993a:218). Below, Bobbio describes the historical moment at the time he visited China.

The civil war had ended in 1949. In the same year, Mao was elected President of the Republic and Zhou En Lai Minister of External Affairs. ... Alliance with the Soviet Union was very close, based on a treaty of friendship of February 1950. The immense country ... was being industrialized with the crucial assistance of Soviet allies. It was the New China, pacified and headed towards transformation into a socialist republic of the people. ... We visited all that was visitable: factories and museums, cultural associations and schools, agricultural communities and government
During that trip, Bobbio recalls that the Italian group exercised its critical spirit. Every day they resigned themselves to the brief ritual speeches, which were always the same, that preceded the visits, in which each functionary repeated a little lesson that he had memorized. Bobbio declares that in spite of the reservations with which some of his travelling companions had undertaken the trip, Chinese society awakened an enormous attraction in the majority of Italians, Communists and non-Communists alike. This was a society in deep transformation, one which was trying to bury its recent past of misery and corruption, and which extolled the great Chinese cultural tradition. "No one then thought that it would fail nor, I believe, hoped it would" (ibid.:219).

During the course of that trip, there were gatherings, such as that of Italian and Chinese professors of philosophy, during which the visitors could ask questions. Bobbio recalls that one question concerned "the way in which the Chinese Government understood the relationship between politics and culture, and the extent to which a free press existed" (ibid.:221). There were cases of censorship and moments of uncomfortable debate; one particular instance concerned the writer Hu Feng, who at that time had been arrested for political conspiracy. "The ample and circumstantial answers given to us did not eliminate our doubts: naturally the persecution [of Feng had been] due to his having participated in a political conspiracy and not owing to his writings" (ibid.).

At this juncture, Bobbio reasserts the autonomy of culture, and describes how Calamandrei tried to reinforce that autonomy through a discussion of poetry. The conversation exemplifies the role of culture as a Communist political tool in China, a view which differs from that held by members of the PdA who do not embrace a hegemonic view of culture. Calamandrei explained the primacy of culture over politics to a young Chinese interpreter who defended the official Chinese government view that Feng should have been condemned because he predicated that poets did not necessarily have to take an interest in political struggles. On the
contrary, Calamandrei argued that one can write beautiful poetry even in reference to the moon, and that indeed a great Italian poet had done so. There are problems in the world, he said, that concern not only the relations between oppressed and oppressors but humans: the mystery of life, the reason for pain, love and death (ibid.).

Bobbio invited the Chinese interpreter who defended the primacy of cultural transmission in the Communist cause in the above-mentioned example to make an effort to acknowledge the difference in all worldviews, in the name of tolerance. He stressed an important difference between liberals and Marxists, which was also the basis of his discussion with Italian Communists. The liberal has a relativistic conception of truth and maintains that contrasting opinions cannot be resolved except through comprehension and reciprocal tolerance. The Marxist, on the other hand, maintains that there are universal laws of history of which he alone is the interpreter, considers his own truth absolute, and acts accordingly. At that time, Bobbio left the question of who was right open, for he "had the conviction that in a society saturated with very powerfully charged values, ... the choice between the two horns of the dilemma was not that easy" (ibid.:222).

Marx criticizes the definition of liberty set out in the Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1791 [paraphrased here]: "Liberty consists in being able to do everything which does not harm others". For Marx, this definition is not based on "the association of man with man, but on the separation of man from man" (Internet site c:10). This right of separation, according to Marx, makes the restricted individual withdraw into himself. Similarly, man's right to private property without regard to others "makes every man see in other men not the realization of his own freedom, but the barrier to it" (ibid.:11). Marx's position here is compatible with Bobbio's.

Bobbio focused much of his work on overcoming the inconsistencies of Marxism. Adler writes that while liberalism showed an "inability to adapt itself to an age of mass politics, to universalize itself beyond the narrow interests of the bourgeoisie and [failed] to oppose Fascism" (Adler, 1989:131), Marxism was afflicted by

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another type of crisis. "The crisis of Marxism was the crisis of the Second International: the crisis of a positivist, determinist, fatalist doctrine which had failed all significant political tests [for] it failed to prevent World War I, it failed to pull off a revolution despite the presence of 'objective conditions' in the post-war period, and it failed to contain Fascism" (ibid.).

Bobbio called upon socialists to abandon the idea of realizing a completely different social system and vision from that of liberal democracy. The correctness and utility of the latter's procedural principles are a fundamental requirement of the modern post-Marxist state; socialist goals, he believes, can be woven successfully into the institutions of pluralist democracy. Representative democracy can infiltrate new spaces in a post-Marxian period. Constitutional mechanisms guarantee liberty, that is, a sphere of negative liberty of action where the individual is not compelled to act against his wishes. Negative liberty is here distinguished from true liberty and individual rights. For Bobbio, Marxist criticism was unable to comprehend the essential feature of the proclamation of rights. Those rights expressed the demand to restrict the excessive power of the state, a demand which contained a universal value, even if at the time it was most advantageous to the bourgeoisie.

One only has to read the first of the articles which concern personal liberty: 'No one can be accused, arrested or detained, except in those cases defined by the law, etc.' (this is the article which upholds civil liberties, the principle of ... 'no punishment without a law'). One should also reflect on what has occurred in those countries which exhibit the ... consequences of contempt for that principle, and once its universality is challenged, both bourgeois and proletarian are affected without distinction (Bobbio, 1996a:110).

It is clear that Bobbio applauds the defence of all human beings, who stand to benefit in equal measure through law. He stresses that once a right has been infringed, that infringement can continue at all levels of society. "A strong dose of liberal-socialism" (Bobbio, 1995e:196) can today shape a more open Left, without being "forgetful of the sacred texts nor slave to them" (ibid.).
How much does Bobbio's liberalism result from a response to the course of historical events and how much is general? He separates theory from practice, since although many scholars, philosophers, jurists and politicians have useful discussions about various political problems, the subsequent task of "transforming noble but vague aspirations and just but weak demands into legally established rights" (Bobbio, 1996a:47) is difficult to achieve. For Bobbio, the politics of culture is an ethical thrust around which specific debates about the state are centred. It is grounded in the recognition that fundamental rights are necessary for the achievement of final values. The rights that preserve those values cannot all be accomplished universally at the same time, so that liberalism is necessarily an ongoing project. Personal preferences, political choices and different ideological orientations change over time on the basis of changing historical circumstances, but democratic procedures permit the revision of established agreements and thus are suited to complex western societies. But that feature of democracy is not the most salient one, Bobbio argues. The abuse of power is his main concern, and "democracy is superior because it remains the strongest antidote to the abuse of power" (Keane in Bobbio, 1989b:xxv).

The intellectual is entrusted with the task of using his "intelligence for clarification and leaving nothing undone in order to take on the challenge to reason which originates from uncontrolled passions and the mortal conflict of interests" (Bobbio, 1996a:116). It must be said, however, that the experience of Fascism caused Bobbio to seek a plurality of intellectual views, to compare them with authoritarian Fascism, and to devise a politics of preference based on anti-Fascism and the liberal pursuit of knowledge. Above all, it is doubt that characterizes Bobbio's liberalism, doubt rooted in an awareness of the difficulty of "understanding who we are and where we are going" (ibid.:115).

In his account of the Resistance to Fascism, Bobbio calls attention to the role of the intellectual in political life. To his mind, the intellectual best serves as an example of moderation and impartiality rather than as an agitator who pursues a particular political aim. In Italy the highest form of intellectual commitment emerged in the
aftermath to Fascism, Bobbio believes, since the opportunity to influence the organization of the new Italian State created great enthusiasm among intellectuals. Bobbio uses the condemnation of the vicious misrule of Fascism in a positive sense, to help check the rapacity of the rich, to prevent discrimination and to guard against the allure of revived nationalism and totalitarian government.

2.6 Enriching the ideal validity of Hobbes

In this section, I take a look at the differing views of Bobbio and Hobbes as concerns the role of the intellectual within the context of the State, and examine the particular contribution each makes to the doctrine of liberalism. I argue that Bobbio’s position is a markedly preferable one, for Hobbes’ conservative approach lacks the cultural preconditions necessary for genuine liberal government, and the full realization of individual potential in all spheres of development. Hobbes’ state fosters a monoculture in which individuals are prevented from developing their potential owing to the paternal role of the state. The state controls the content of the educational material citizens are able to consult, and prohibits them from meeting with others and debating in public. Although Oakeshott defines Hobbes’ principal work, *Leviathan* (1651), as the greatest, “perhaps sole masterpiece of political philosophy written in English” and deems that the history of Western civilization can provide only “a few works of similar scope and achievement to set beside it” (Oakeshott, 1946:viii), a literal interpretation of Hobbes’ doctrine of the state would culminate in dictatorship.

One half of *Leviathan* is devoted to religion owing to the fact that between 1638 and 1650 religious conflict became the main obstacle to civil peace. Although today religion has been replaced by a plethora of new influences on the formation of public opinion, Hobbes’ text is still highly influential. The study of Hobbes is useful to the proponents of both Right and Left, since the questions of individual liberty, the function of the State and dealing with dissent and sedition remain as challenging for the whole of society today as they were when the Church or
churches were the main influence on public opinion. Radicalism of the Right and of the Left leads to the police state and to its most damaging consequence, the suppression of free discourse, which entails a halt in human progress. The end of the bipolar world epitomized by the Cold War requires a fresh look at the local, national and international institutional framework on which society rests. This is particularly the case at a time when the themes of "borders" and "common European political culture" increasingly occupy the political agenda. As Halle writes,

The mounting threat of social disorder posed by accelerating change is identified with the intellectuals who promote it. Consequently, when people become sufficiently alarmed at the threat, they are impelled by their Hobbesian fears to welcome opposed movements that promise to maintain order by the ... imposition of discipline. Such movements wear the aspect of conservatism because they represent the aim of returning to an idealized past in which the operations of society were simpler, traditional virtues were unquestioned, and any ... subversive elements were kept in their place (Halle, 1972:109).

Hobbes defined the origin of political obligation as submission — subjecting one's own will to the will of another (Goldsmith, 1966:158). In Hobbes' view, sovereignty derives from the unity of a multitude that expresses a single will. The community thus exists only by virtue of the sovereign who it wills to rule. Consequently, no individual can challenge the sovereign's authority (ibid.:160). Hobbes demonstrates the necessity of the state in the modern world, as well as the need for secular principles. He speaks against institutions like churches since they undermine the unity of the state by preaching an absolute truth. Religion, Hobbes maintains, must be controlled by the state; with that affirmation he established the secular view that political power ought to be superior to every other human sphere.

In the state of nature, the individual is his own defender and moralist, Hobbes believes. The individual agrees to leave that state, to live in peace among the community, by ceding to the sovereign the most prominent defensive role. While opting to have the sovereign defend him, however, the individual also endows the sovereign with the right to control his expression of opinion. In Hobbes' state, the
individual is therefore guided by the sovereign, rather than by his own conscience, in a system where the state/authority regulates his conduct in matters affecting him as an individual, as well as in his relations with the state and his peers. Trevor-Roper describes the situation thus: "the axiom, fear; the method, logic; the conclusion, despotism" (Trevor-Roper, 1957:234).

In Hobbes' state, the moral obligations of neither the subject nor the sovereign require any particular study or attention; Hobbes provides prudent rules to follow rather than ethical imperatives. The word of God and moral philosophy take second place to the law, that is, to the agreement through which the sovereign exercises his authority over those who have agreed to leave the state of nature.

Hobbes' main contention is that an effective state power is the only power that can prevent each individual from exclusively pursuing his or her own interest, thus causing a state of war. Since only peace can foster the development and flourishing of industry, trade, knowledge, arts and letters, peace is necessary and can be ensured only through the sovereign establishing a lasting valid covenant. In Hobbes' view, "the foundations for every form of government are democratic, since society itself springs from the covenant between individuals that subjects them to a common authority" (Reik, 1977:99). That view of the democratic origins of the state remains open to question; many argue that Hobbes' theory expresses a definite lack of democracy.

Bobbio writes that the modern political theory that has evolved from the time of Machiavelli "is opposed both to the primacy of spiritual power which distinguishes the medieval age of the great controversies between State and Church and which the Roman Church and other churches have never given up, and the primacy of economic power whose discovery coincides with the birth of the bourgeois world and the beginning of theorizing on the capitalist mode of production" (Bobbio, 1989b:79). The primacy of the political is marked by its independence from – or even superiority to – moral judgement, as "there exists a raison d'état separate from the reasoning of individuals [which] means that the state [or the politician], is
free to pursue aims without having to take into account the moral precepts which bind any individual in his or her relations with others" (ibid.). Where political action is subordinated to dominant spiritual laws, spiritual values become primary. Bobbio instead insists on a secular politics where "the doctrine of necessary immorality or amorality of political action [must] aim at its own purposes, the salus rei publicae, without feeling itself bound ... by obstacles of another nature" (ibid.:79,80).

Just after the liberation of Italy, Bobbio taught two courses on the history of natural law in modern times at the University of Padua. He asked his students to read Hobbes and consider whether he had been a precursor of the totalitarian state. That exercise was particularly necessary, Bobbio believed, since Italian intellectuals had not given enough attention to Hobbes' theory of the state.

Hobbes had not been included in our curriculum of philosophical studies, since idealism ... had set him aside. Croce did not even mention him in his short ... history of political philosophy. ... The main work on Hobbes [in Italian], written by ... Mondolfo, was published long ago, in 1903 (Bobbio, 1993b:ix).

Bobbio is grateful to Hobbes for bringing the aspect of individual will to the forefront of discussion on the state's origins, but he reaches beyond Hobbes in pursuing the subsequent development of society, where only some aspects of Hobbes' theory are required to forge a "progressive politics" within liberalism. Modern society, Bobbio states, differs from the pre-modern social order and the anti-modern totalitarian State in that it recognizes the individual's autonomy. In the private sphere, people are sovereign and individuals associate freely with others on the basis of their own judgement, rather than in response to the teaching of a particular church, tradition or political party. As a member of an association, family or community, the individual neither maintains order nor serves the State.

Hobbes himself notes that the words that form the pact with the sovereign are arbitrary. Their meaning is important only insofar as those arbitrary words imply the individual's will to agree to the sovereign will. Since every act of the sovereign's will is based on the subject's accord, or is previously authorized, the sovereign can do
no injustice to a subject, for he cannot represent the subject's will and constitute at
the same time a cause of injury to the subject. Goldsmith summarizes it thus: "The
sovereign is the exclusively authorized agent of the society [and] there can be but
one sovereign at any time in any society" (Goldsmith, 1966:178). Since for Hobbes
the authority of all law derives from the authority of the sovereign, this signifies "an
attack on the common-law position, and on the supporters of Parliament"
(ibid.:231).

Bobbio, by contrast, favours legal institutions in which power emanates from the
bottom and is not routed top-down. He fosters a culture in which language develops
through the discussion and the function of the political Right and Left.

Bobbio describes his own approach as eclectic. He recommends gradual progress
without any radical jumps, using analysis and historical example to shape ideas.
Reality is richer than abstract typology: typology needs to be revised continually,
taking new data and new interpretations into account. The historian must also realize
that to understand, describe or lend order to reality, abstract concepts are required,
the significance of which can be tested by intellectuals who have experienced such
analysis. "An anthropology, that is ... an inquiry conducted by man with the object of
elucidating his position in the cosmos, implies given ethical codes or is itself the
source of an ethic, if by ethic is meant a system of values on the basis of which
valuations are made and rules of action propounded" (Bobbio, 1948:26). The
intellectual, with his models and work to compare forms of government on the basis
of the ideas of classic and contemporary thinkers, can improve on the correct
interpretation of history, Bobbio contends, for appropriate methods of investigation
are just as important as the events under study.

Bobbio, unlike Hobbes, stresses above all the importance of liberalism -- even over
democracy -- in the modern state. He writes: "Europeans are heirs of a historical
tradition in which state power is supposed to be limited in favour of non-state
spheres, such as religious communities, households, centres of learning and
research, and markets" (Bobbio, 1989b:xvi). Favouring limited state intervention
which would allow religious communities to flourish indicates that Bobbio is not hostile to religion. Rather, he considers it a component of private rather than public life. In *La sinistra nell'era del karaoke*, he criticized state involvement in the three television channels operated by *Radiotelevisione Italiana* (RAI), which compete almost exclusively with the commercial channels run by the Italian premier and media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi. Bobbio would like to have as many groups as possible represented on Italian television, to guarantee variety and democratic culture. He admits that he was careless in once having commented that "Television is *naturaliter* of the Right" (Bobbio, 1994b:13), since it is not television that is to be judged or caught up in debate, but its contents, the nature of the information and entertainment conveyed.

Berlusconi typifies the despotic sovereign, for he does not embrace the politics of culture. With his vast publishing and media empire, he has to some extent succeeded in blurring the discrete entity of the state with his own personality and political coalition, "to teach that the officials of the state work for him, not for Italy" (Lloyd, 2001:26). Berlusconi's paternal state constitutes a threat to democracy and the politics of culture that matured during the Italian Left's experience of Fascism, for culture, which Bobbio advises must precede the political, is suffocated in a political system based on financial interests. Lloyd reconfirms that Italian condition, advising the reader that Berlusconi "subsidised all the other parties in his coalition, and topped up the expenses and salaries of their MPs to the point where they are as much his employees as his colleagues" (ibid.).

In the post-Marxist political reality, both the religious state and the bourgeois mercantile state represent two extreme cases far from Bobbio's ideal conception of the liberal state, which is secular rather than religious and abstentionist in the economic sphere. He eschews the religious state that busies itself with the religious behaviour of its subjects and thus controls their conduct, opinions and writings and forbids any demonstration of dissent. Indeed, the confessional state persecutes heretics, whereas Bobbio hails dissidents who act within the law, as they exercise their essential democratic and liberal function.
There is a clear division between Hobbes and Bobbio that can be grasped through their opposing views of the role of intellectuals in society. For Hobbes, on the one hand, "it is annexed to the sovereignty to be judge of what opinions and doctrines are averse, and what conducing to peace; and consequently, on what occasions, how far, and what men are to be trusted withal in speaking to multitudes of people; and who shall examine the doctrines of all books before they be published" (Leviathan, Internet site s:3). For Bobbio, on the other hand, all individuals, including the sovereign or those who form the sovereign assembly, are prone to doubt, and doubt is an intrinsically positive attribute in all individuals. For, Bobbio argues, the man of doubt is the "man of dialogue", whose adversaries have a positive function.

The intellectual must necessarily be an empiricist, as Bobbio himself is described by Gustavo Zagrebelsky: "an empiricist who knows that his existence has always been lived under the aegis of possible error, that humility is required in order to recognize errors, so that they can be corrected" (Zagrebelsky, 1996:21). Bobbio, Zagrebelsky continues, is an intellectual who is never satisfied, who has always been curious about novelty, and who thinks that he has never achieved anything genuinely "definitive", not even in those fields of research where he has been acclaimed as a maestro. Bobbio is an example of the intellectual who, by his own admission, is often obliged to live with insufficiency, to be an observer of facts rather than an engineer of great systems, one who is more inclined to carry out analysis than synthesis.

No amount of force, however efficient, is sufficient to overcome dissent on the part of an unwilling body of citizens. From here spring difficulties in legitimacy and justice vis-à-vis political power of any nature. Social groups need to be administered on a basis which goes beyond sheer force: that is the problem. Bobbio gives two different answers to this problem, according to whether one is asking "what power is or what it ought to be?" (Bobbio, 1989b:81). He writes, "it is one thing to assert that political power cannot be just strength alone in the sense
that it is not possible, another that it cannot be strength alone in the sense that it is not right" (ibid:81). Here Bobbio refers to St Augustine's controversial comment on the essential need for justice: "Without justice what in reality would kingdoms be but bands of robbers?" (Bobbio, ibid:82). The thesis "might is right" is clearly wrong, in Bobbio's view. Bodin defines the state as droit, the law, and that is Bobbio's view. Hobbes, on the other hand, envisaged the security of citizens -- the supreme end of the state -- as conditional on someone, either "an actual person or an assembly 'legitimately [retaining] the ultimate power in the state'" (Bobbio, 1989b:82). This ethical or legal justification attributed to power would suggest that Bobbio's theory is rooted in underlying morality, counterposed with church ethics. Bobbio claims that obedience is based on one of the two formulas recognized by Gaetano Mosca -- the authority of God or the power of the people.

The most significant shift in all political thought since the French Revolution, according to Bobbio, is the idea of change itself, change from one form of government to another. "Generally considered an evil (the logical conclusion of a political doctrine which for centuries esteemed and exalted stability and considered civil war the worst of evils), this passage came to acquire a positive value for the revolutionary movements which saw in change the beginning of a new era" (Bobbio, 1989b:57). This new era faces serious challenges which encroach upon democracy: the large scale of modern life coupled with the trend of civil society becoming a mass society, and the increasing bureaucratization of the state which slows the democratic process. Bobbio implies that only a progressive outlook can permit institutions to adapt. For this, creativity and intellectual freedom are crucial tools for keeping "massification" to a minimum.

In 'Perché perde la sinistra' (1994), Diamanti claims that in Italy the Right has crystallized into the Right of the profit-making producers of wealth, pitted against an intellectual Left. Right and Left have acquired a sudden and even more important division in the Italian party system. The concepts were not completely irrelevant in the past, but figured mostly in debate and in the culture of political values rather than in electoral orientation and the party system. In post-war Italy, political division was
not a consequence of the division between Right and Left, "but of the confrontation between the Left, namely the Partito comunista italiano (PCI), and the grande centro, impersonated by the Democrazia cristiana (DC) and many of its satellites [particularly the Partito socialista]" (Diamanti, 1994:150,151). The extreme Right, owing to its association with Fascism, remained a residual entity until it was re-invented with the failure of real socialism after the end of the Cold War.

Hobbes’ principal work, *Leviathan*, reveals a limited empiricism that is directly attributable to his experience of the English Civil War. Similarly, we can attribute Bobbio’s empiricism to his experience of Nazi-Fascism. Yet Bobbio’s role in diffusing the works of Gobetti and Rosselli, his repeated expression of their cultural validity, particularly as concerns Gobetti’s three journals and Rosselli’s *Quaderni di Giustizia e Libertà*, in addition to his key role in reviewing the works published by Einaudi, are proof of Bobbio’s belief that the publisher is a vehicle for ideas. Feltrinelli52 captured the same intellectual commitment to novelty and the importance of publishing following the initial publication of Pasternak’s *Doctor Zhivago* in Italy (by his publishing house):

> Living novels are the ones that capture changes in the world’s intellectual, aesthetic or moral awareness, a new sensitivity, new problems, or that propose a model for these new levels of awareness, or that explode the superstition about the unchanging identity of human nature, or that propose new paradoxes – in the here and now, in this sort of purgatory of history (Feltrinelli, 2001:293).

Other “living novels” in the tradition of Gobetti, Rosselli and Bobbio, among others, will continue to be written and shared; indeed, those who continue in reinforcing the anti-Fascist and liberal socialist tradition can be identified, *inter alia*, as Piero Polito, Nadia Urbinati and Maurizio Viroli. Although Feltrinelli admits that culture struck him as something gigantic and unworthy of being continually brought into play, Bobbio insists on the primacy of culture. Culture, for Bobbio, is required for moderate debate, research, the dissemination of points of view through listening to one’s opponents, and for respecting legislation on human rights and law. Culture is form as well as content.
The autonomy of the intellectual precedes the political, Bobbio argues; culture must not primarily serve an intellectual purpose. Bobbio condemns Marxism's lack of a genuine view of culture, arguing that in Marxism politics triumph fatally over culture, and culture is relegated to a secondary function. Politics can draw from culture; it even requires culture to preserve it from extremism. Culture enriches the quality of all levels of human life, but the politician's decision-making stands to draw its greatest benefit.

In endorsing Marx's view of the "spiritual" relation of the political state to civil society, as his forebear Gobetti did before him, Bobbio emphasizes the politics of responsibility and the ethics of conviction as part of the individual's necessary role in democracy, where keeping one's principles from flagging was both a right and a moral duty. Indeed, only through conflict and class struggle would abstract values be expressed as a form of concrete action.

Hobbes places the representatives of the Church on a par with intellectuals. To his mind, both constitute a threat to peace and to the integrity of the state. To thwart the influence of preachers and intellectuals, Hobbes waged "violent diatribes against the universities for imbuing future preachers and members of Parliament with the false doctrines of classical republicanism" (Goldsmith, 1966:239).

Another infirmity of a Commonwealth is ... the great number of corporations, which are as it were many lesser Commonwealths in the bowels of a greater, like worms in the entrails of a natural man. To may be added, liberty of disputing against absolute power by pretenders to political prudence; which, though bred for the most part in the lees of the people, yet animated by false doctrines, are perpetually meddling with the fundamental laws, to the molestation of the Commonwealth, like the little worms which physicians call ascarides. (Internet site q).

In Hobbes' view, the sovereign in every commonwealth is the absolute representative of all his subjects; hence, no other representative or assembly is permissible unless the sovereign power allows it. Regular "private bodies", which unite to form a one-person representative without any public authority, Hobbes
describes as unlawful. These groups he refers to as corporations, where thieves share the same unlawful status as intellectuals. These unlawful private bodies are "the corporations of beggars, thieves, and gypsies, the better to order their trade of begging and stealing; and the corporations of men, that by authority from any foreign person, unite themselves in another's dominion, for the easier propagation of doctrines, and for making a party, against the power of the commonwealth" (ibid.:154). Leagues, or the mere concourse of people, who unite from a similarity of will and inclination, are lawful or unlawful according to the design of each individual who participates in any league.

Factions and conspiracies can develop among the subjects of the same commonwealth and result in the undermining of peace and justice and the weakness of the State: "All uniting of strength by private men, is, if for evil intent, unjust; if for intent unknown, dangerous to the public, and unjustly concealed" (ibid.). While those with a private interest can encourage debate and seek to acquire friends, even have their cause debated in the assembly, those with political responsibility, who have been designated by the sovereign to serve the State, must not resort to any lobbying tactics. To do so would constitute conspiracy against the sovereign: "If the sovereign power be in a great assembly, and a number of men ... of the assembly, without authority, consult apart, to contrive the guidance of the rest; this is a faction, or conspiracy unlawful, as being a fraudulent seducing of the assembly for their particular interests" (ibid.).

A concourse of people can be lawful or unlawful, Hobbes argues, according to the occasion for which people assemble, and how many persons gather together for any purpose. Although he believes it would be lawful for a thousand men to sign a petition, it would be unlawful if the same number were to present it; the group would become a tumultuous defection and unlawful assembly.

Where he calleth an assembly, whereof men can give no just account, a sedition, and such as they could not answer for. And this is all I shall say concerning ... assemblies of people, which may be compared ... to the similar parts of man's body; such as be lawful, to the muscles; such as are
unlawful, to wens, biles, and apostems, engendered by the unnatural conflux of evil humours (ibid.:156).

Hobbes believes that, among living creatures, only humans are endowed with the "privilege of absurdity". Philosophers, in particular, are the most subject to such absurdity, for a clear reason. "There is not one of them that begins his ratiocination from the definitions, or explications of the names they are to use; which is a method that hath been used only in geometry; whose conclusions have thereby been made indisputable" (Oakeshott, 1946:27). The causes that lie behind the absurdity of philosophers are described by Hobbes as i) lack of method; ii) use of absurd assertions and words that have no meaning, like "transubstantiate" or "eternal-now"; iii) over-use of metaphors, figurative speech and personification; iv) giving the name of "accidents" to names and speeches, as in the following phrases: "the nature of a thing is its definition" and "a man's will is his command". For Hobbes, metaphors and ambiguous words cause man's reasoning to result in wandering among innumerable absurdities; which have contention and sedition as their end (Internet site r:4).

The study of Hobbes vis-a-vis intellectual development or direction allows one to weigh up the consequences of intellectuals who promote change. Both Hobbes and Bobbio are concerned with the ends of the State, but their claims compete. While Bobbio endorses the work of the social reformer and law maker - *il combattente* - who adapts the rules by which the citizen must abide, Hobbes fears subversive elements. For Hobbes, subversive rhetoric may result in alliances which detract from the strength of the sovereign, thus shaking the foundations of the State. Hobbes tells us that moral virtues are relevant to ethical theory only insofar as they promote peace and the integrity of the State. Virtues have no moral significance aside from ensuring peace. The laws of the legislator must be held for good because they put an end to the anarchy of private judgements. The law is good because it preserves peace, not because it is the best one that can be devised.
The highest expression of human ability is the capacity to create the artifice of the state. This view is at the core of Bobbio's vision of liberalism and civil society. He defines Hobbes' doctrine of the modern State as the most coherent of all theories of the State: humans created the State "to escape the uncertainty of the state of nature ... to dominate nature and use it to meet [their] own ends" (Bobbio, 1996:73). While Bobbio chooses largely to praise Hobbes for his discussion of the role of the individual will in agreeing to the covenant of the collective will, for directing all theorists of the State to understand its origins, and for giving today's world a model on which to build an international covenant of peace, he does implicitly criticize Hobbes. However, that criticism does not overshadow Bobbio's generally positive opinion of Hobbes' contribution to political philosophy.

Bobbio sees Hobbes as an authoritarian who favoured blind submission to one authority and not as a liberal. After all, Hobbes views an excess of authority as a lesser evil than an excess of freedom. Nevertheless, Bobbio emphasizes the liberal character of Hobbes' state, which is formed on the basis of free association.

Hobbes' state was not at all monstrous ... It was merely a great machine ... in an age dominated by the mechanistic conception of the universe. ... before the state there is no people, ... but only a multitude. The Hobbesian state is founded on a reciprocal covenant among isolated and scattered individuals, and is therefore much more similar to an association than to a community (Bobbio, 1993b:69).

Bobbio acknowledges the "newness" of Hobbes, particularly with regard to his method. Hobbes' discourse is no longer based on the principle of authority but exclusively on rational argument. There are four Hobbesian ideas that contributed to Bobbio's political thought: individualism, contractualism, the idea of peace achieved through the constitution of a common power and "a certain pessimism vis-à-vis human nature and history" (Bobbio, 1996b:117).

Bobbio has more than due regard for Hobbes' theory of the state of nature that motivates men to seek a way out of conflict through a covenant with the state. But Bobbio's politics of culture requires an empiricism that takes account of all the
epochs that emerged after Hobbes' lifetime as well as the forthcoming history that has yet to be experienced. Bobbio does not share Hobbes' view that metaphorical speech and rhetoric lead to incautious language and excesses, or that the oratory of democratic assemblies produces confusion. He attaches significant importance to metaphors, such as the "labyrinth", "justice", "mosche cocchieri".

Hobbes is no defender of democracy. Indeed, he associates democracy with the rhetoric of a few orators, "whereas monarchy is associated with univocity" (Reik, 1977:52). Bobbio affirms the right to ask questions concerning all matters of vital importance to democracy, and he makes that very clear in an article published in response to a letter of Berlusconi's concerning the organizational structure of Forza Italia. The research of the political philosopher is not dangerous to the integrity of the State, he believes, but serves to disseminate knowledge and spark debate. Enzo Marzo echoes the view that a private, rather than public, "organization of intellectuals" which brings the weapons of research and culture to the political arena is important (Il Corriere della Sera, 29/10/94:29). Close and even conflicting relations between the public sphere of government and the intellectual one of economic and historical analysis serve to educate citizens, to bolster the State and to prevent the dominance of ideological projects and particular interests. At the same time, cultural debate ensures that the constitution and laws of the nation do not remain purely abstract juridical affirmations.

The need for a thriving community of intellectuals and private organizations to prevent authoritarian rule is both acknowledged and encouraged in the Italian Constitution (Article 9), for the Italian Republic was founded to promote cultural development and scientific and technical research. "The memory of Fascist dictatorship had made the constituent assembly of 1947 anxious to curb executive authority" (Mack Smith, 1997:435) and the empowerment of intellectuals was embedded in the constitution to exercise that function. Deepening one's knowledge is a constitutional obligation and results in a culture that can succeed in overcoming violence and intolerance.
Bobbio, unlike Hobbes', emphasizes the individual's right to ask questions and demands that all political power be held accountable. Powerful organizations, historical institutions and traditional forces are not true enemies, but have a particular "mental attitude" – dogmatism – that ensnares and invalidates good works. In the article *Fanatici e Conformisti*, (Bobbio, aa:1), Bobbio defines the dogmatic individual as one who "accepts a few so-called fundamental truths", in order to put his conscience at ease and not because he seeks clarity. Such "fundamental truths" are guarded jealously by the dogmatic individual – the conformist – who is no longer willing to question them. Fanatics and conformists go hand in hand, Bobbio argues, and require each other to flourish.

Bobbio invites us to greet dogmatic spirit with critical spirit, a critical spirit derived from the bifurcated path of experience and reasoning which has characterized the highest forms of human civilization. "Against the exaltation of fanatics, the critical spirit teaches modesty and moderation, calm reflection and the sense of restraint; against the acquiescence of servile individuals it incites doubt, breaks the crust of prejudice, provokes crisis and shakes souls" (ibid.). By contrast, Hobbes clearly believes that only the sovereign is "to be the judge of what opinions and doctrines are averse, and what conducing to peace; and ... on what occasions, how far, and what men are to be trusted withal, in speaking to multitudes of people; and who shall examine the doctrines of all books before they be published" (Oakeshott, 1946:116). Good governing of opinions results in the good governing of men's actions, for all actions derive from opinions, Hobbes argues. Therefore, the opinions of men must be controlled by the sovereign. The sovereign is the true judge of what is necessary for both peace and the defence of the sovereign's subjects, and the sovereign decides all questions of controversy among the people.

Hobbes substituted divine right with the social contract; he "made the people, rather than God, the original source of the absolute power that the king exercised" (Halle, 1972:22). Hobbes regarded the people as "many", and he did not make them sovereign. In his state the sovereign has the sole right of judicature, of
deciding all controversies concerning the law or any fact; without that power, there is "no protection of one subject against the injuries of another" (Internet site s:3).

Bobbio stresses the difference between organic and non-organic intellectuals, associating the former with the Communist tradition and the latter with the socialist tradition. He hails those intellectuals who can be called "non-organic", for Bobbio believes intellectuals are non-organic by nature (Bobbio, bb:1). An intellectual "thoroughbred" who believes in the function of ideas, who maintains that the battle of ideals are not just paper battles, Bobbio affirms, always challenges the institutions of power, or remains diffident toward them.

Bobbio looks upon Hobbes' theory of the State as plausible. Yet he finds Hobbes' theory to be insufficient, for the social contract does not adequately protect the community in cases where leadership becomes despotic. Bobbio reasserts the view of his forebear, Carlo Rosselli, who warned against anti-liberal and anti-political States that allow neither political parties nor political struggle, and where opponents are designated as "anti-state", enemies of the State. For Rosselli, the Fascist State was "the Leviathan of Hobbes", a State that challenged reason and humanity (Pugliese, 1999:178). Bobbio echoes Rosselli's call to all free men, in affirming that the Fascist State, and all states that manifest Fascist characteristics, must be countered through unity in a common obligation to truth, justice and liberty.

In his consideration of order and disorder, Hobbes compared the world of his time with that of ancient Greece. It is notable that he was the first English translator of Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War. The importance of that war can be linked to modern conflicts; indeed, all wars. According to Watkins, Hobbes' political theory provides "a solution to the political problems which the Puritan revolution posed for him" (Watkins, 1965:14).

Defeat in war, civil unrest, religious intolerance, the negative influence of market prerogatives: all these forms of disorder can lead to an anti-intellectual reaction,
directed particularly against those who subject old beliefs and customs to critical analysis and the test of reason. For example, the commercial democracy of Athens and its maritime power were destroyed by the agricultural aristocracy and continental military might of the other members of the Peloponnesian Confederacy. Following this Athenian defeat in the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BC), "the citizens of Athens, thinking they could thereby return to the lost past, put critical intelligence and free discourse to death in the person of Socrates" (Halle, 1972:109).

Yet the attachment to traditional values is not the only factor at play in anti-intellectualism. Traditional values, values that have endured over the centuries, must give way to changing or new values in any society in transition. Often, it is not the superiority of one value over another, but the mental and behavioural challenge required by individuals in the effort to adapt to pluralism that poses the greatest hurdle in a changing society. This applies particularly to the effort to achieve liberal democracy.

Hobbes praised the attainment of cultural excellence and self-reliance through knowledge, although not for the same reasons as Bobbio. "Ignorance of the signification of words ... disposeth men to take on trust, not only the truth they know not, but also the errors; and [what] is more, the nonsense of them they trust: for neither error nor nonsense can, without a perfect understanding of words, be detected" (Internet site q:42). For Hobbes, cultural excellence lost its positive value when those who possessed it tried to counter the body politic or questioned the authority of the State. For Bobbio, modern societies are complex ones, where relatively autonomous "particular spheres", represented by parties, trade unions and other groups, perform an essential role: that of constituting a guarantee against absolute power. That guarantee is the criterion of distinction between free government and despotic government. The best way to organize a non-despotic government, Bobbio argues, is to ensure that the political system allows various groups "to express themselves politically, to participate either directly or indirectly in the creation of collective will" (Bobbio, cc:1).
Hobbes' conception of systems involves groups of men joined in one interest or one business. Such groups can be "regular" or "irregular". Regular systems are those where one man, or assembly of men, represents the entire number of men; all other groups Hobbes considered to be irregular.

Irregular systems, are those which, having no representative, consist only in concourse of people; which if not forbidden by the commonwealth, nor made on evil design, such as are conflux of people to markets, or shows, or any other harmless end, are lawful. But when the intention is evil, or (if the number be considerable), unknown, they are unlawful (Oakeshott, 1946:146).

Hobbes does not see the "people" as a corporate person with a "general will", with its own form of sovereignty. As Halle writes, "Hobbes was categorical in attaching the value of reality only to what manifests itself physically, and therefore in denying it to conceptual abstractions like that of the corporate person with the 'general will'" (Halle, 1972:21). Men are made "one person" only when they are represented by one person; it is the unity of the representor, not the unity of the represented, that makes the person one.

For Bobbio, the central theme of Hobbes' political thought is the unity of the state. In Leviathan, Hobbes makes "the contrast between the state as machine and the state as person" (Bobbio, 1993b:vii). Hobbes is seen by Bobbio to be the "great and unparalleled builder of the first theory of the modern state" (ibid.:viii). Bobbio praises Hobbes for his intellectual approach, since Hobbes envisaged a state that took shape through the reciprocal consent of individuals who were originally free. That version of the State "is a pure construct of the intellect" (ibid.:3). The construction of the state represents political progress since the state of nature is a non-political, even anti-political condition. "The state of nature and civil society are opposed to one another, since civil society arises in antithesis to the state of nature, in order to correct ... the shortcomings of the latter" (ibid.). There is today no single definition of what civil society is, but it would certainly not be exhausted by governmental institutions. The state of nature permits humans to live in a
condition of freedom and equality, but it is humans themselves who eventually agree to conventions, since they desire to leave the state of nature. While Hobbes concentrates on the individual's role in agreeing to the contract, Bobbio concentrates on the equally important yet differing roles of "public" and "private". Civil society and the private sphere influence policy debates as well as all the elements that constitute civil society, including trade unions, non-governmental organizations, religious groups and political parties (rather than party members in government). The private sphere is essential to the effective function of democratic forces in society.

Bobbio recommends that the power of Hobbes' state be limited, and that closed systems be prevented, through the "grafting on of alien doctrines" to Hobbes' theory. Such grafting must take place, he argues, for, where any society is founded on a single doctrine, it is closed and static. Conflict promotes perfection and plurality ensures that a system will be open and progressive, according to Bobbio.

Bobbio writes that the unity of the State

is the fruit of a process which is at the same time one of liberation and unification of liberation from the authority of the Church ... Since it is spiritual, this authority proclaims itself superior to any civil power. It is also a process of unification of the lesser institutions, associations ... and towns, which were a constant source of anarchy in medieval society. As a consequence of these two processes, the formation of the modern state coincides with the acknowledgement that political power ought to be superior to every other human dominion. Such absolute supremacy is called sovereignty [which] means independence, in relation to the process of liberation. And it means superiority of the state's power over any other source of power existing in a given territory, in relation to the process of unification (Bobbio, 1993b:74,75).

Bobbio identifies two opposite approaches to "the problem of the origin and foundation of political power" (Bobbio, 1993b:7). One is the Aristotelian model based on the family, and the natural law conceptual model. "Between natural law theory and legal positivism, [Bobbio puts] Hobbes on the side of the latter"
he sees Hobbes as the precursor neither of the totalitarian state nor of the liberal one. Describing the natural law conceptual model, Bobbio writes:

The rational justification of the origin of the state and its mission in this world ... [represents] a decisive moment in the process of the secularization of politics; the state ceases to be ... a remedy for sin, and becomes the strongest and most reliable disciplinary authority of the passions. ... human beings have only one way out of the natural anarchy that is a consequence of their nature; and they have only one way to establish peace, which is prescribed by the first law of nature. This way is the institution ... of a shared power, that is, the state (Bobbio, 1993b:xii).

The alternative Aristotelian model is useful for political philosophers, Bobbio argues, since those theorists who came before natural law theorists “received and handed down a conceptual model which was entirely different from ... the conceptual model of natural law theorists” (ibid.:5). Aristotle explained that the state or the city started with the family, for the satisfaction of daily needs, and then grew through the intermediate phase of the village, “for the satisfaction of something more than daily recurrent needs” (Aristotle in Bobbio 1993b:5). The final phase was based on the association of many villages (the city or polis), deemed by Aristotle to be perfect since that state existed for the sake of a good life.

Looking at the realistic doctrines of the state, Bobbio places Marx on the same plane as Aristotle, as he believes they share a common historicist approach in answering the question of how the state first came into being. Marx did not in the main concern himself with the question of the origin of the state and indeed he criticized individualist and contractualist theories as an artificial reconstruction of historical reality. That approach differs significantly from Hobbes’ rationalist doctrine of the state, which highlights the anti-social state of nature and the social state of coexistence, which is the basis of civil society. Aristotle and Marx after him highlight “the continuity between primitive forms of human society prior to the ... state, such as the family ... or clan” (Bobbio, 1988:182).

Hobbes sees the state as an artificial organism which comes about in opposition to the state of nature, while Aristotle sees the state as a natural entity which evolves
as a direct extension of the family. Each model takes a different view of the person. "The premise of the first is that human beings are naturally antisocial; that of the second, that they are 'political animals'" (ibid.:183).

For Bobbio, Hobbes' conception of the state is superior to that of Aristotle's since Hobbes' theory is based on the legitimation of political society through consent rather than necessity. The family is a unit of identity and belonging that is created by virtue of birth; the individual is not required to agree to any form of contract in order to "qualify and participate" as a family member. Hobbes begins with a generic state of nature whereas Aristotle begins with a specific and historically determined kind of human society: the family. More importantly, Aristotle views the state as the natural outcome and continuity of previous states (from that of families to the civil state), rather than the antithesis of the previous associations while Hobbes describes original society as opposed to the state, since all individuals in the state of nature are free and equal.

2.7 The challenges of the mega-State

International order is still grounded in a system of unstable equilibrium. Yet it is no longer grounded in the "reciprocal fear", which, according to Hobbes, characterizes the state of nature, where peace is nothing more than a truce between two wars. Reciprocal fear, particularly after the fall of the bipolar world that characterized the period of the Cold War, has been replaced by a multitude of fears, the most of important of which depends on any particular speaker or worldview. Hobbes' state of nature, Bobbio suggests, corresponds to the global state of nature that currently characterizes the relations among nations. Bobbio notes that "there is a clear analogy between the multitude of individuals who must become a populus, and the multitude of states which must become the populus of sovereign powers, in order to give life to a truly global commonwealth" (ibid.:xiii).

Bobbio recommends that the constitutional structure of each individual state be "copied" on an international multilateral level, to form the basis of an international
constitution. A contract of union at an international level would correspond to the constitution at a domestic level, whereby the members of the international community "must obtain the authority to unite by consent, ... through an act of authorization by the members of ... every political community" (ibid.). Bobbio's idea of a multilateral contract is ambitious, however, since some countries wield more power and influence than others. There is also the question of how to check an excess of power. The United Nations and transnational non-governmental organizations alone cannot contain a hyperpower.

Bobbio calls attention to another fundamental problem Hobbes brings to light, that of war and peace. Peace can only be realized by leaving the state of nature. The progress implicit in the human course from the state of nature, or the state of constant and universal war "in which human beings live without positive laws to force them to reciprocal respect" (ibid.: 197), to civil society "in which there exists a common power which forces [men], against their will, to comply with the laws necessary to ensure peaceful cohabitation" (ibid.) is the overcoming of inevitable war among men. "In order to attain the supreme good, which is peace, we must ... leave the state of nature" (ibid.: 46).

However, a study of the historical is not an adequate basis on which to pursue a politics of culture. Peace and non-violence are essential themes, as well as general aims, that intellectuals must necessarily prioritize. Hobbes’ original conception of the state, followed in more recent times by the increasing importance of the political party, has given way to "civil themes" (Bobbio in il Corriere della Sera, 25/02/97:29). Evolving societies require "new politics": each individual is his own "private secretary" or observer of events, and the anthropological self communicates unilaterally, bilaterally, multilaterally to "construct an ideal figure" (il Corriere della Sera, 19/7/96:29). Ethics are thus cultivated in the realm of the personal where a myriad of cultures communicate beyond the realm of the non-anthropological state, an entity with no existence or role as the state/moral person and/or the state/divinity. Many politicians and cultural representatives in Italy, particularly during the Anni di Piombo (1970s), were betrayed either because
they had too much *senso dello Stato*, or because they had none at all. The State exists because humans created it; it has no independent spirit, no "law of development or ideal validity [of its own] superior to the validity of single individuals" (Bobbio, 1993b:72,73).

It was Hobbes' belief that demonstrative sciences like natural philosophy and mathematics could be studied alongside non-demonstrative sciences of the human type; "Hobbes holds that the type of knowledge most similar to geometry is politics" (ibid.:35). Bobbio draws attention to the "characteristic features of Renaissance thought, ... notably in Hobbes ..., where ... the relationship between nature and artifice [changes significantly] from that of the ancients" (ibid.:36). The main change was that artifice, machines, or a created state - also a machine - were no longer imitations of nature but were equal to it. "This change is a sign that things made by human beings ... are now seen in a new light and valued more highly" (ibid.). The modifications humans make to nature, based on their knowledge of it, serve to increase its power and even to perfect it; in other words, humans do not imitate nature but recreate nature. Where shortcomings in nature exist, human ingenuity or *artificium* compensate for them. The State was created by humans to give greater assurances of peace.

While for Hobbes only the state has total legal supremacy, Bobbio builds on that original premise by emphasizing the strength of law in forming a sound basis for society. Law can be interpreted in a largely finite manner, and can be applied on a universal level. Positive law was eventually expressed through individual rights, Bobbio argues, and the particular social rights of various groups that continue to grow in number. From Hobbes’ tradition of natural, and then positive law, intellectuals delineated, and continue to delineate, the ends to be achieved (ideologues) and how to achieve those ends (experts). Positive law, in other words, was enhanced by intellectual representatives of a power that served to correct or improve the two other powers of human society: economic and political ones.
In liberal societies, "where tolerance of dissent has traditionally been accounted a virtue, it has become intensified ... by the increase in the number of people who participate in political and cultural activity" (Halle, 1972:112). Liberal societies have been constructed to accommodate diversity rather than impose uniformity and conformist thought, yet they still depend upon a minimum of cohesion among the individuals who animate culture and politics. National societies, political and cultural associations, academic communities, high numbers of international scholars in every field of inquiry, combined with newly developed and widely exportable mass media may result in the predominance of mediocrity vis-à-vis intellectual and cultural activities. Hobbes' state limits the number of guarantees and opportunities for individuals and for those groups who comprise civil society. Bobbio believes that advocates of liberalism can gain from studying past theories and from grafting on appropriate features, and he recommends Hobbes to those who strive to understand liberalism. However, philosophy is best described as struggle [è lotta] (Bobbio, dd:1), and this is the main feature that distinguishes Bobbio from Hobbes.
Eighty-six percent of people in the 13 applicant countries of the European Union see English as the most useful second language, German is favoured by 58 percent, followed by French at 17 percent and Italian trails behind (Black, 2002:6). I thought it therefore important to write a monograph on the status of intellectuals that derived from an Italian source, so as to make a contribution towards the genuine pluralism of European intellectual thought. Norberto Bobbio provides a twentieth-century view of the role of intellectuals which builds on Hobbes' contractarianism yet contrasts with the outlook of "post-modern" intellectuals like Bauman and Rorty.

In this section, I discuss the status of intellectuals in modern and post-modern society. There were two different reformist intellectual movements of the 20th century – positivism and Marxism, both of which were attacked by traditional and non-secular intellectual schools. Marxism reflects a form of positivism shaped by defensive liberalism, whereas the other positivism can be defined as form of aggressive liberalism. Both Marxist and liberalist expressions of positivism reflect a faith in science, but they were built on different histories of humanity. Differing intellectual approaches reflect different attitudes to philosophical truth. Bobbio places much importance on the philosophical goal of seeking truth – which he believes to be accessible to the philosopher in guiding politics. Some contemporary philosophers, like Rorty, do not argue for commitment to any truth while others, like Bauman, are concerned with the changing role of intellectuals vis-à-vis the highly developed modern state. Bobbio stands opposite those positions, in that he emphasizes commitment to certain truths as a prerequisite to political activism.

In the following pages, I look at the philosophy of Rorty and Bauman, to see how their thinking differs from that of Bobbio. Rorty does not believe that philosophy has a historical essence or mission, nor, in his view, is it able to help tackle real problems. Bobbio, on the other hand, is committed to "lessons learned" and the need to draw on intellectual biography in dealing with the issues of democracy,
human rights and social justice. For Bobbio, it is not sufficient to have solely the stylistic capability or skill that Rorty praises, to be simply vivacious or novel in getting a message across; these qualities are not enough to make being an intellectual socially valuable. By contrast, to take philosophy seriously, Rorty argues, is "philosophically naïve, positing a reality and a truth that do not exist [which is] politically dangerous, since essentialism encourages fundamentalism and fanaticism of the kind displayed by Shiites, Marxists, and Nazis" (Adler, 1994:81).

Traditional intellectuals, progressive intellectuals and post-modern intellectuals: these make up the current conception of the intellectual's role. Bobbio defines the jurist Piero Calamandrei as a "traditional" intellectual, and he would no doubt include himself partially in that group. During the post-war reconstruction of Italy, traditional intellectuals called for "a return to reason" rather than the adoption of the scientific reasoning offered by Marxism. Belonging to one group or the other was, Bobbio maintains, a choice between civilizations. He defines traditional intellectuals as mosche cocchieri, thinkers who are indeed leaders but whose impact is necessarily limited, since they are "coachmen the size of flies" or "captains on a phantom vessel". Those traditionalists are bearers of a neo-Enlightenment culture, repentant historicists who have embraced reform, Bobbio argues. They sought an anti-nationalist and socially progressive European democracy on the Anglo-Saxon model, and this collided with orthodox Communists who believed in the ethical and political value of orthodoxy. Differing views of culture and its uses emerge when comparing the traditionalist view with the Marxist one, for Marxists considered culture not as a privilege but as a service (Bobbio, 1995e:167). Bobbio compares the role of Marxists to that of simple sailors in the boiler room of a ship. Unlike the captain on the bridge who runs the ship, the arrival of the simple sailors in port is guaranteed by a process beyond their control. Similarly, Marxists have recourse to the historical process.
3.1 Richard Rorty’s non-philosophy and Bobbio’s perennial anti-Fascism

The primary concern of intellectuals is the diffusion of culture-based knowledge, and this remains at the forefront of all political discussion. But there are conflicting definitions of culture and varying outlooks on its place vis-à-vis politics. Following the events of 1989 and the collapse of the bipolar world, some argue that economics moved to the centre of world events, particularly as in the arms race both the United States and the former Soviet Union had required exorbitant and unsustainable levels of funding to improve their military expertise and defence. Others, such as Daniel Bell, argue that there has been a shift from economics to culture in defining the divisions that persist in society.

Rorty, one of Bobbio’s American contemporaries, attempts to draw consequences from a pragmatist theory of truth; a theory that “says that truth is not the sort of thing one should expect to have a philosophically interesting theory about” (Rorty, 1991:xiii). Applied to the moral realm, this means that certain acts are praiseworthy in certain circumstances but it is unlikely that there is something general and useful to be said about whether any particular action is good in of itself at any given time. Rorty believes that we are now experiencing post-philosophical culture, where no presiding discipline synthesizes or orders the results of other spheres of activity.

Bobbio’s radically different thought invites the reader to undertake a detailed analysis of Fascism, to document the consequences deriving from Fascism, and then to review the work of the forces of anti-Fascism. On the basis of this research, we can conclude that Fascism was evil and that anti-Fascism, including its Communist component, was intrinsically good, and can therefore be of significant use to us in evaluating historical processes and in building our political future. Bobbio’s philosophy of secular anti-Fascism contrasts significantly with Rorty’s view that philosophy can be defined as the free exercise of argumentative skill using novel language and creativity. Rorty’s cultural Left is not Bobbio’s cultural
Left, and their prescriptions for self-renovation and political programmes indicate the marked difference between them.

Bobbio made an important contribution to political culture in the 1950s when, as an adversary of the Italian Communist Party, he undertook a dialogue on politics and culture with its major exponents, published as *Politica e cultura* (Einaudi, 1955). That dialogue centred around three main themes: democracy and liberty, the role of intellectuals and the primacy of culture over politics. Bobbio welcomed the dialogue with the more extreme Left because of the decisive role the Communists played in the defeat of Fascism as well as their participation later on in the committees of national liberation (CLNs). Communists were key elements in these committees, which were the first organs of political power to emerge as Fascism retreated.

I think it is fair to say that Bobbio writes about culture with a particular urgency since Italy, under Fascism, witnessed the beating, imprisonment, exile and even assassination of intellectuals whose view of culture was not in line with Fascism. Bobbio's forebears, Ginzburg and Rosselli, were assassinated for their beliefs. They were targeted for their anti-Fascism and, in the case of Ginzburg, for the credo that the primary duty of the anti-Fascist intellectual was to cultivate humanistic studies in order to reinforce the link between the past – which was at that time (from the mid-1920s) about to be buried – and the moment of Italy's rebirth after Fascism. Bobbio invites us to take special note of Ginzburg's emphasis on historical reflection and research within the context of humanistic study. Such work can help us acquire cultural knowledge and appreciate pluralistic visions. Fascism constituted a form of decadence and it required an effort on the part of anti-Fascist intellectuals to find appropriate remedies without repeating the errors of the past (Bobbio, 1984:183). Ginzburg embodied an ideal held by a generation of historians who Gobetti predicted would consolidate a stand against Fascism. Bobbio endorses the cultural approach of Ginzburg who, believing the political catastrophe of Fascism to be imminent, delved into the study of the Risorgimento, just as Gobetti had done before his death in 1926.
Rorty, in an essay entitled *Philosophy in America Today*, tells us that philosophy has "proceeded from speculation to science". Philosophy was once exclusively defined "in terms of a set of identifiable, enduring problems, which were dealt with in awkward and unsophisticated ways in earlier periods, and are now being dealt with in a precision and rigor hitherto unknown" (Rorty, 1991:212). The discipline of philosophy was primarily "a set of research programs, an autonomous sector of culture" but Rorty claims that "there is no more consensus about the problems and methods of philosophy in America today than there was in Germany in 1920" (ibid.:213 and 216). Indeed, there is no agreed-upon list of central problems that ought to be tackled by philosophy. He suggests that the strongest feature of contemporary philosophy is stylistic argument rather than the content of philosophical debate. He believes that analytic philosophy "has been forced, by its own internal anti-positivist dialectic, to move away from an image of itself as a science which achieves results toward an image in which it is simply the free ... exercise of argumentative skill" (ibid.:223). Rorty believes that unlike natural scientists, philosophers, historians and those who study literature cannot know in advance what problems they need to tackle, nor do they need "criteria of identity" which would tell them whether the problems they do treat are identical to those studied in the past. In other words, humanistic culture does not try to reduce the new to the old, or to insist upon a canonical list of problems or methods (ibid.:218). Rorty does not emphasize "scientific" analysis; he simply requires a disciplinary matrix which maintains a reasonable balance between "standards" and openness. In Habermasian terms, Rorty says, the most important task of philosophy is to ensure that conversation be continuous and undistorted.

Rorty recommends that we should not worry about whether what we are doing is "really philosophy". "We should let a hundred flowers bloom, admire them while they last, and leave botanizing to the intellectual historians of the next century" (ibid.:219). The ability to test different solutions is a philosophical ability that constitutes an intellectual virtue, he insists. Rorty describes the able philosopher as one who can spot flaws in any argument, and who can construct as good an
argument as can be constructed for any view, even if that view is wrong-headed. That view is quite a contentious one. For many, the ideal of philosophical ability is far more than "seeing the entire universe of possible assertions in all their inferential relationships to one another, and thus to be able to construct, or criticize, any argument" (ibid.). Rorty does not at all emphasize historical memory, nor the pedagogical importance of philosophy or the intellectual commitment to disseminate culture.

Since Rorty does not think that seeking truth is the goal of philosophy – or at least does not think truth is accessible to the philosopher – he cannot argue for commitment to any truth. Bobbio, on the other hand, emphasizes the necessity for commitment to certain truths as the essential basis on which to undertake political activism.

For Rorty, it is less and less important for analytic philosophy to have an answer to the question "What counts as a 'specifically philosophical' problem?" (ibid.). Language games are the tools now used to hone argument skills, Rorty argues, and not the study of common philosophical problems. It is essential that the philosopher, in order to be able to tell a new story, suggests a new language game, "in the hope of creating a new form of intellectual life" (ibid.:220). The art of conversation and those skilled in defending an argument are a precious cultural resource of the nation, Rorty continues. Unspecialized intellectuals are exceptionally good at putting together arguments and pulling them apart and "the nation would do well to have analytic philosophers advise on public projects, [for they can] kibitz at least as well as any other professional group" (ibid.:221).

A wider view of Rorty’s philosophy can be derived from the analysis of how the American Left developed in the post-war period. It took on a different role as it gradually abandoned the "Old Left". In Achieving our Country (1998), Rorty distinguishes between the Leftist thought that characterized the reformist American Left during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century and that of the New Left, which began to evolve around 1968. The main difference between the two, Rorty
maintains, is that the earlier American Left benefited mostly white males; as he says, "the situation of African-Americans was deplored, but not changed, by this predominantly white Left" (Rorty, 1998:75). Nor did the American reformist Left genuinely benefit women, or homosexuals and other minority groups, so that Rorty calls it callous towards the needs of oppressed groups. Its callousness was not entirely negative, however, since the reformist Left "hoped that the mistreatment of the weak by the strong in general, and racial discrimination in particular, would prove to be a by-product of economic injustice" (ibid.:76). The humiliation of women and black Americans and other minority groups was seen "as just one more example of the selfishness which pervaded an unreformed capitalist economy" (ibid).

The belief that ending selfishness would eliminate sadism and the practice of humiliation towards others slowly came to be seen as misguided. In the sixties, Rorty believes, the American Left realized that its economic determinism had been too simplistic; sadism was recognized as having roots deeper than those of economic insecurity. "The pleasure to be had from creating a class of putative inferiors and then humiliating individual members of that class was seen as Freud saw it – as something which would be relished even if everybody were rich" (ibid.). Mark Edmundson reveals a similar view in discussing the cultural history of the United States during the 1960s. The great masses who had previously been excluded, who had led subordinate, secondary lives suddenly demanded recognition as full citizens. No longer was the pursuit of happiness and the right to liberty the domain of the "box-shouldered, male, heterosexual norm" (Edmundson, 1999:64). The United States at the turn of the century continues to reel under those demands, which have led to an age of chaos.

Rorty believes that the sea-change in the American Left occurred when Marx was partially substituted by Freud as a source of political theory, so that sadism rather than selfishness or economic disparity became the Left's main target. That change marked the creation of a cultural academic Left that emphasized a politics of difference or identity – a politics of stigma rather than money. "This cultural Left
thinks more about ... deep and hidden psychosexual motivations than about shallow and evident greed" (Rorty, 1998:77). Consequently, intellectuals of the American cultural Left began to lose interest in trade unions and, "simultaneously, the leftist ferment which had been centered, before the Sixties, in the social science departments of ... the universities moved into the literature departments" (ibid.). At the same juncture, the study of philosophy replaced political economy as “an essential preparation for participation in leftist initiatives" (ibid.). The new cultural Left severed its ties with what remained of the pre-60s reformist Left – the Old Left – although Rorty does emphasize that one significant remnant remains: “That saving remnant consists of labour lawyers and organizers, congressional staffers hoping to rescue the welfare state from the Republicans, journalists, social workers, and the people who work for foundations" (ibid.). Such professionals were concerned about the effect of the policies of the Reagan administration, its budgetary constraints and efforts to carry out the reversion of welfare programmes to state and local governments. The residual and reformist Left is characterized by thinking "more about laws that need to be passed than about a culture that needs to be changed" (ibid.:78).

Although the cultural Left approves of the activities of surviving reformists, reformism is nonetheless felt to be inadequate. The cultural or academic Left is convinced that "the system, and not just the laws, must be changed" (ibid.). The cultural Left is concerned with the primary task of naming the system, “because the ... vocabulary of liberal politics is infected with dubious presuppositions which need to be exposed" (ibid.). The precise aim of the cultural Left is to teach us how to recognize otherness, through the teaching of academic disciplines like women's history, minority and migrant studies. Rorty writes: "The principal motive behind the new directions taken in scholarship in the United States since the Sixties has been the urge to do something for people who have been humiliated – to help victims of socially acceptable forms of sadism by making such sadism no longer acceptable" (ibid.:80).
The post-60s cultural Left in the United States does not concern itself with the study of alternatives to a market economy, "or about how to combine political freedom with centralized decisionmaking" (ibid.:79). This creates a vacuum in thinking on the Left, since the previous concern of how much a welfare state can afford to spend has been abandoned. The cultural Left prefers to talk about matters other than money, the consequences of poverty, and unbridled free trade, Rorty maintains; indeed, "when the Right proclaims that socialism has failed, and that capitalism is the only alternative, the cultural Left has little to say in reply" (ibid.).

The traditional concerns of Left-wing movements worldwide have been the eradication of poverty and the achievement of a society of equal opportunity. The cultural Left in the United States has shifted its mandate to set about eradicating a particular mind-set rather than a set of economic arrangements. That mind-set it sees as the bastion of selfishness and sadism, typically called "Cold War ideology" or technocratic rationality, Rorty advises, "a mind-set nurtured by the patriarchal and capitalist institutions of the industrial West, and its bad effects are most clearly visible in the United States" (ibid.).

The politics of identity pursued by the American cultural Left is based on a distinction between interest groups and identity groups. Although individuals may move between interest groups, or in and out of one interest group, say, the employed or unemployed, it is the individual's identity that constitutes his/her genuine otherness; "the sadism of your neighbours may not let you move out of an identity group" (ibid.:147). To experience the sense of "other", "you must bear an ineradicable stigma, one which makes you a victim of socially accepted sadism rather than merely of economic selfishness" (ibid.:80).

The Old Left sought to uplift people who were humiliated by poverty, whereas the initiatives of the New Left are aimed at those humiliated for reasons other than economic status. As Rorty sees it, the victim possessing an ineradicable stigma, resulting in "socially accepted sadism" is placed above those who suffer
consequences deriving from “merely economic selfishness”. The New Left, by endeavouring to shift the level of concern to the politics of identity rather than the politics of social economy, can be said to condone injustice, even in its defence of “the justice of identity”. Economics takes a back seat to social stigma of minority identity; thus the Left is robbed of much positive content.

We can accept Rorty’s assertion that the new academic programmes that emerged as a result of the New Left’s work constitute centres of genuinely original scholarship. But the “extraordinary success” Rorty claims the cultural Left has achieved is perhaps exaggerated. It is true that the change has taken place: casual infliction of humiliation is now less socially acceptable than it was during the first two thirds of the last century, particularly among college graduates. As Rorty says “The tone in which educated men talk about women, and educated whites about blacks, is very different from what it was before the Sixties” (ibid.:81). Yet it can surely be argued that the college graduates who benefited from learning about political correctness were, at the outset, more predisposed to overcome prejudice than the common citizen. Are college students in any society not more likely to question tradition and the dictates of authority?

Bobbio sees the role of the intellectual as the secular philosopher who upholds the primacy of justice rather than solidarity. He understands the principle of justice as both moral rightness and fairness along with the administration and procedure of the law. Our best resource in pursuing justice, Bobbio argues, lies in the study of the Italian example. We need to understand the period beginning with the crisis of Fascism up to the early years of the post-war period and particularly how it was experienced in Turin. Fascism engendered the most complex forces of opposition and resulted in the formation of a group of anti-Fascist intellectuals who set out a prescriptive agenda for transforming politics, post-Fascism. The condition of Fascism compelled exponents of Italian culture to take up a struggle and face problems that otherwise would not have been tackled with such urgency.
The mind-set Rorty describes, that way of thinking often referred to as "Cold War ideology" or "technocratic rationality", was never accepted by Bobbio and his fellow anti-Fascist intellectuals. Although a terrible price was exacted by the implementation of Communism in Eastern Europe, culturally speaking, the Berlin Wall never existed for Bobbio and the group of intellectuals who in 1950 founded the Società Europea di Cultura. To say, as Rorty does, that the Cold War mind-set was nurtured by the patriarchal and capitalist institutions of the industrial West is to ignore the multi-faceted and pluralist streams of the pre-1960s Left. The Communist Left was not the only Left, Bobbio argues, and, therefore, there was no need to replace Marx. Rather, Marx needed to be reformed.

The Italian example of the Partito d’Azione (PdA) provides an alternative way of treating Marxism. In 1942 the PdA consisted of two distinct groups. The first group was composed of Italian exiles living in France from the time of early Fascist persecution, but who took on greater importance from 1930 when Carlo Rosselli founded Giustizia e Libertà in Paris. The other group adhered to the liberal socialist movement consolidated by Calogero and Capitini in 1937. Calogero and Capitini took up a position somewhere between that of Rosselli and Gobetti. Both groups interpreted the war of liberation not as a class war but as the harbinger of a democratic revolution. PdA members fought alongside the Communists in the Resistance and recognized the great ideals that Communism inspired. However, their alliance was weakened by different perceptions of liberty: the PdA insisted that liberty came before the conquest of power.

For some PdA members, Marxism was to be surpassed: Calogero and Rosselli rejected Russia as totalitarian and did not support a general socialization of economics. For them, a mixed economy would best achieve a reconciliation between freedom and justice. Capitini can be linked with Gobetti, his predecessor in pursuing a form of liberal Communism; they both influenced Bobbio’s formulation of the politics of culture. Capitini, more religious in approach, was also more sympathetic to the Soviet experience, and he was adamant that the individual was the initial and primary source of history. History, for Capitini,
preceded even the Church in importance. In cultural terms, he looked forward to the establishment of a society that would be both post-Christian and post-Communist, where maximum legal and cultural liberty would be complemented by maximum economic socialization. Around 1940, the grouping of the PdA to which Capitini belonged believed that a Communist revolution was probable in Italy and that the task at hand was clear: to think through the democratic revolution to come afterwards, which would historically "right it".

Given Communism's trademark goal of uplifting the masses, Bobbio accepts Communism's superiority as an "ism" and identifies it as a humanist ideology – an interest in the welfare of the people, based on individuals' ingenuity rather than on religion. He believed Communists to be his interlocutors, not his enemies, in discussing the whys and wherefores of the Left.

Rorty, referring to the United States, maintains that "there has been little change for the better in our country's laws since the Sixties, but the change in the way we treat one another has been enormous" (Rorty, 1998:81). This change he attributes to teachers who have brought students to understand the humiliation inflicted on their fellow citizens by previous generations. Teachers have accomplished this through the use of texts by authors from diverse cultural and minority identities. That trend has also been complemented by universities helping to improve the relations between men and women, "by favouring women in academic hiring ... and by encouraging writing about the subjugation of women" (ibid.). According to Rorty, "the American academy has done as much to overcome sadism during the last thirty years as it did to overcome selfishness in the previous seventy" (ibid.:82). This view is somewhat contentious. In terms of equality, political correctness does not have the same importance as historically acquired rights. Furthermore, it is unclear the extent to which the universities' teaching and hiring practices have actually affected society as a whole, particularly with regard to concrete changes in legislation for equal rights.
Bobbio proposes liberal politics and liberal values against a "permanent" backdrop of Left and Right. The widening gap between the third and fourth worlds – the developing world – presents the dichotomy in its starkest form. For Bobbio, a third way based on submerging the Left/Right distinction can never actually be put into practice. The intellectual must take cognizance of the fact that a discussion of Left and Right does not constitute a moral tract but an investigation of criteria on which the dichotomy is based. It is only when that distinction has been reasserted, Bobbio maintains, that we can make an individual choice to belong to either the Left or the Right, and that choice is primarily a moral one.

The intellectual, Bobbio maintains, must tell all who will listen that humanity does have choices. In particular, it is necessary to reject the argument that the Left has been defeated definitely or is obsolete, since that would mean that there was no real choice for the electorate. The task of the intellectual in insisting on the possibility of choice dispels the view that the fundamental political approach is static. Governance is not simply a matter of leadership by different groups of technocrats who, given the demise of Communism, differ only in terms of efficiency and honesty. Bobbio believes that the deconstruction of the Left/Right distinction would lead to alienation from the political system and would undermine democracy and human rights.

Bobbio is less concerned by global markets than Rorty is; he emphasizes instead the moral thrust of the PdA's goals which he believes to be as valid in today's world as it was in the 1940s. That entails an acceptance of the dialectical method and a mobile political position, both of which Bobbio sees as crucial to the role of the intellectual as a sower of doubt rather than an advocate of certainties. The task of renovating Italian political life is primary and he advises us that this goal is now within easier reach, for the proletariat has been dispersed. The revolution of the proletariat no longer occupies political forces which previously concentrated their efforts on expressing virulent anti-Communism. Given the effects of international development and the transfer of industrial production to more economically
advantageous areas of the globe, we must, however, take stock of the fact that labour parties and trade unions are having to reinvent themselves. This is a time of political opportunity for the Left but also a time of post-industrial challenge; today's great economic forces are international in range, and they must be matched with political processes of comparable reach and power.

Many members of the PdA were intellectuals, professors of history and philosophy like Bobbio himself whose direct political experience had been brief. Their ideals were not successfully translated into action after the liberation, owing to the onset of the Cold War and the ensuing partition of Europe. There were also internal forces at work in the Italy of the immediate post-war period that prevented the implementation of the PdA's programme, such as those centred around the Church and forces of economic, social and politico-bureaucratic conservatism. Historical analysis must necessarily form one of the intellectual's tools.

Rorty warns us of the challenges of global economic development, and advises that the "measures which might cope with this new problem have hardly even been sketched" (Rorty, 1998:85). Moreover, the social benefits and wage levels enjoyed by workers in developed nations "no longer bear any relation to the newly fluid global labour market" (ibid.). The minority of those who constitute the international, cosmopolitan super-rich will designate intellectuals to carry out a new task: "[their job ...] will be to make sure that the decisions made by the Inner Party are carried out smoothly and efficiently" (ibid.:87). Intellectuals will be called upon to distract the populace by pursuing a cultural agenda, while the super-rich continue to promote their own exclusive economic agenda. Rorty foresees a bleak future for intellectuals, and fears their manipulation by the super-rich, who will endeavour to ensure the relative prosperity and happiness of their class alone.

[The super-rich ...] need people who can pretend to be the political class of each of the individual nation-states. For the sake of keeping the proles quiet, the super-rich will have to keep up the pretense that national politics might someday make a difference. Since economic decisions are their prerogative, they will encourage politicians ... to specialize in cultural issues.
The aim will be to keep the minds of the proles elsewhere – to keep the bottom 75 percent of Americans and the bottom 95 percent of the world's population busy with ethnic and religious hostilities, and with debates about sexual mores. If the proles can be distracted from their own despair by media-created pseudo-events, including the occasional brief ... war, the super-rich will have little to fear (ibid.:87,88).

Rorty argues that globalization is producing a world economy in which any attempt to prevent the immiseration of workers may result only in depriving them of employment.

In terms of human progress, perhaps Rorty places undue emphasis on economic matters. Bobbio, on the other hand, portrays the intellectual as an interpreter of moral conscience. The economic immiseration of workers should not distract us from acknowledging that there are spheres that render humans noble, and among them are values that inspire us to prevent politics degenerating into a war of each against all.

In acknowledging Communism as a constitutive and necessary component of anti-Fascism – a bulwark against Nazi-Fascism – Bobbio takes us back in history. This step backwards derives from his conviction that certain revisionists must be condemned, since they equate those who fought to prevent Auschwitz with those who fought to maintain and expand Auschwitz on a worldwide scale. Bobbio reminds us of our obligation to recognize that Nazism, as a "theory" based on the superiority of one race, was evil in itself. At the same time, in fulfilling his role as an intellectual, he believes that politics is not "everything", that philosophy takes precedence over politics. Rather than the politician who obeys reasons of state, the intellectual, as one who upholds the autonomy of culture, is an interpreter of moral conscience.

Rorty sees post-1960s intellectuals on the American Left as bearers of a cultural remedy for American sadism and, to a lesser extent, selfishness. The ability of Leftist intellectuals to reduce sadism gives them a good deal to be proud of, Rorty believes; conversely, the conservative critics of that Left have much to be
ashamed of and do not really deserve the name of "intellectuals". American conservatives have ridiculed intellectuals on the Left for their part in effecting the politicization of universities, thereby betraying their role as intellectuals. There is no question of betrayal, Rorty counters, for intellectuals are meant to be aware of and address issues of social justice by rendering universities centres of social protest. In the past, such protests aimed to resist Communism and apartheid laws.

As discussed above, the economic question or the thrust to eliminate selfishness was pushed to the background of the Left's agenda for post-1960s intellectuals including Rorty. Herein lies the dark side of the success story of the cultural Left, Rorty acknowledges: "During the same period in which socially accepted sadism has steadily diminished, economic inequality and economic insecurity have steadily increased." (Rorty, 1998:83). Rorty explains this by suggesting that the American Left could not handle more than one initiative at a time, that it had to choose between concentrating on stigma in order to ignore questions of money, or vice versa.

Today, however, Rorty recognizes that the problems which can be cured by governmental action have more to do with selfishness than sadism or forms of minority discrimination. From the 1970s, he argues, American middle-class idealism entered a weak phase, deriving from the fact that under President Carter and later under Clinton, the Democratic Party distanced itself from the unions and redistribution policies. That position signalled a move to the centre of the political ground, "moving into a sterile vacuum" (Rorty, 1998:86). The formerly noisy left wing of the Democratic Party then lost its message of economic momentum upon which the unions and many intellectuals of the Left had relied. "It is as if the distribution of income and wealth had become too scary a topic for any American politician ... ever to mention" (ibid.:87).

For Rorty, the cultural Left requires urgent reform and must transform itself into a genuine political Left. Rather than political reform, which should be the Left's main focus, the American Left's decision to embrace culture resulted in "dreams ... of
inexplicable, magical transformations" (ibid.:102). In particular, Rorty believes that the Left was mistaken in its reliance on the myth of "the people" as a valid force with which to challenge capitalism. The cultural Left will have a hard time transforming itself into a political Left similar to the Sixties Left, Rorty argues, for it still dreams of being rescued by an angelic power called "the people". "The people" represent a redemptive preternatural force whose demonic counterpart is named "power". Indeed, Rorty believes, the cultural Left inherited the slogan "Power to the people" from the Sixties Left, whose members forgot to ask how the transference of power was supposed to work, and the question has still not yet been asked (ibid.).

Rorty cautions intellectuals against using "too much theory". Sociopolitical theory conducted at a high level of abstraction is simply exasperating. To his mind, such abstraction is typical of the Left, more so than of the Right.

The contemporary academic Left seems to think that the higher your level of abstraction, the more subversive of the established order you can be. The more sweeping and novel your conceptual apparatus, the more radical your critique (ibid.:92,93).

Rorty refers to the current discussion of "individualism versus communitarianism" as a typical example of the "sterile debate" that characterizes the cultural Left. Engaging in national politics and dealing effectively with the consequences of globalization are tasks that lie beyond the reach of the cultural Left, unless it transforms itself "by opening relations with the residue of the old reformist Left, and in particular with the labor unions" (ibid.:91). It would have to emphasize money and the curbing of selfishness, even at the cost of talking less about stigma, he believes. He makes two suggestions as to how the transition might be effected:

The first is that the Left should put a moratorium on theory. It should try to kick its philosophy habit. The second is that the Left should try to mobilize what remains of our pride in being Americans (ibid.:91,92).

Bobbio, by contrast, is adamant that theory must accompany the intellectual through the labyrinth of philosophical research. He began his study of the history of
ideas by reading the works of Carlo Cattaneo during the German occupation of Turin, in an effort to counter the spiritualistic philosophy that dominated the Italy of that day. Cattaneo was an enlightened reformist whose ideas constituted "the antithesis of spiritualistic philosophy; his ideas can definitely be considered the ones that formed the philosophical basis of the PdA's programme" (Bobbio, 1997:86). In 1997, Bobbio reaffirmed the theoretical validity of Cattaneo's definition of the State as a "great transaction", which stood opposite to the Fascist doctrine of the ethical State. During the Fascist regime, other liberal and anti-Fascist intellectuals like Luigi Einaudi, Mario Fubini and Luigi Salvatorelli also undertook the study of Cattaneo.

In 1944-45, Bobbio published a series of essays called the La città del sole, named after Tommaso Campanella, which gives an indication of the place of honour Bobbio ascribes to that Renaissance thinker. Earlier, in 1941, Bobbio edited the Italian and Latin text of Campanella's La città del sole. In addition to the Italian classics, Bobbio has always acknowledged the theoretical contribution of non-Italian intellectuals. "When the barriers of cultural nationalism had been broken down, Italian intellectuals were forced into a rapid course of study to bring them up to date" (Bobbio, 1995e:174).

Bobbio recalls that after the liberation of Italy, he took up the study of the procedural conception of democracy inspired by Hans Kelsen. Bobbio's first theoretical text on democracy, Stato e democrazia (1945) was published the same year that, thanks to the British Council, he travelled to England. The purpose of that trip was to permit a group composed mainly of Italian jurists to attend a course in civic education, particularly those who had been educated during the Fascist dictatorship. As the Italy of that time was preparing to make a choice between the institution of the monarchy and the republic, Bobbio acknowledges the lack of democratic culture among the youth educated during Fascism.

Bobbio would consider Rorty's call to mobilize pride in being American insufficient as a model for the Left. Human rights, alongside the other great problems of our
time, like war and poverty – excess power that results in genocide, for example, and the excess of impotence that results in hunger – must form the primary and international agenda of the Left. The Left's aim should be, in the following order: the positivization, generalization and then subsequent internationalization of human rights. To consolidate democracy and peace, Bobbio argues, there must be a basic foundation of human rights on which to build those ends. Moreover, Bobbio maintains that fundamental rights are necessary for the achievement of final values and therefore constitute an appeal to those final values. As concerns constituted powers, there are only two types of human rights: either they restrict the ability of those powers to do harm or encourage their ability to do good.

Rorty advises us differently: "For purposes of thinking about how to achieve our country, we do not need to worry about the correspondence theory of truth, the grounds of normativity, the impossibility of justice, or the infinite distance which separates us from the other" (ibid.:97). We ought, he advises, to just get on with trying to solve human problems. The normativity that Rorty would not worry about forms the basis of Bobbio's cultural tool-kit. He believes that man's attempts to transform the world, to make it less hostile, rely just as much on rules of behaviour as they do upon techniques for producing instruments and laws. Such tools or instruments form the world of "culture" as opposed to the world of "nature".

Human rights created as universal natural rights begin in the abstract, which is an essential phase, and then develop into specific national positive rights. Their full implementation as universal positive rights occurs only when they become concrete. That final phase of implementation is, in Bobbio's view, no longer a philosophical problem but a legal/political one. Rights, once proclaimed, require the successive creation of conditions for wider and more rigorous implementation of those rights.

Bobbio reminds us that up to the present, fundamental values have emerged from the proclamation of human rights, although final values develop into sources of
conflict. Human rights arise to contrast one person's or one group's increasing power over another, and they can also be construed as the consequence of technological progress, which increases the ability to dominate both nature and other humans.

Bobbio sees the Left's agenda as part of a continuum. Still, we must acknowledge a new reality and the fact that the Left is undergoing a period of transition. In this transitional period, he believes, there is unprecedented curiosity about Right-wing culture, just as in the past there was much debate about the "hegemony" of Left-wing intellectuals, and about the reasons behind that purported hegemony. We must recognize, however, that some of the assumptions on which the Left based its strength and plans for the transformation of society have not materialized. That challenge, Bobbio believes, is perhaps less threatening than the need to adapt the Left to new current world problems which the the traditional Left did not have to face.

Although the Left is not what it used to be, Bobbio reminds us that as long as there are people motivated by distress over the iniquities of contemporary societies, the ideals which have characterized Left-wing movements for over a century will be kept alive.

Culture is a supreme value for the development of human consciousness, Bobbio believes, and he prizes culture for its autonomy over politics and its role in the development of art, literature and philosophy. Its defence, he argues, requires an institutional and legal framework that guarantees individual freedom, such that the individual is free from external interference. Bobbio's politics of culture must necessarily reject Lenin's view of the State. Lenin identified the State with dictatorship, due to its origins as a means of oppression. For Bobbio, the State's legal framework acts as a guarantee in preserving the autonomy of culture.

Yet the State's institutional and legal framework alone is not sufficient to preserve it; culture must be protected from subservience to politics. Lenin swept away the
distinction between liberal democratic government and dictatorship and argued that a dictatorship of the proletariat would be preferable to any form of capitalist bourgeois government. In the Soviet Union and in other Communist regimes, culture was used to further political ends. The lesson learned through that loss of cultural autonomy is an eternally valid one. When culture and politics merge into one, both liberalism and pluralism suffer. For Bobbio, this last point is of supreme importance, for the individualistic and organic conceptions of society are irreconcilable. Whatever our cultural baggage, only the individualistic conception of society is true for understanding and explaining the nature of democracy (Bobbio, 1996a:90). This view contrasts starkly with Rorty's theory that truth is simply the name of a property which all true statements share, like "It rained yesterday" or "Love is better than hate" (Rorty, 1991:xiii).

The dictatorship constituted by the Fascist regime also resulted in the elimination of pluralism and the fostering of monoculture, Bobbio argues. He insists that the nature of class power under Fascism is not comparable to the more amplified dimension of class power in liberal democratic governments. Even the relationship between liberals and Communists hinges on guarantees to prevent the abuse of state power, and does not depend on the origins of that power.

Rorty cautions those who fall prey to the cultural Left. To step into the intellectual world which some of these leftists inhabit is to move out of a world in which the citizens of a democracy can join forces to resist sadism and selfishness. He calls following that route a lapse into a "Gothic world" in which democratic politics has become a farce. "It is a world in which all the daylit cheerfulness of Whitmanesque hypersecularism has been lost, and in which 'liberalism' and 'humanism' are synonyms for naiveté – for an inability to grasp the full horror of our situation" (ibid.:95,96).

Bobbio's pursuit of culture as a good and pluralist end in itself contrasts with Rorty's invitation to "give philosophy and religion a pass", to set them aside. Bobbio is committed to philosophy and tells us that the politics of culture requires
spiritual goods as well as material goods, for a good life involves more than material goods. The liberty to practice or not to practice religion is an indispensable condition of the spiritual good that consists in living in accordance with one's conscience.

Bobbio's conception of the politics of culture expresses culture's autonomy from politics and, in a certain sense, its purity compared to politics. This purity derives from culture perceived as the knowledge-based totality of socially transmitted phenomena. Rorty does not share that view of culture, where "philosophers are forever claiming to have discovered methods which are .. purer than those of nonphilosophers" (Rorty, 1991:19). Politics, on the other hand, easily becomes corrupt, perhaps resulting in the weakening of the State's authority. We can safely say that culture is not subject to corruption in the same way that politics is, although culture can take on many other negative qualities.

Bobbio implores us to take stock of all cultures before we iron out the essential elements of the "best culture" that we, as individuals, finally choose to adopt. That best culture must not remain static, however; new elements can be grafted on to our original cultural base to improve it. A pluralist approach is needed to assist us in gathering all the cultural raw material required to effect comparisons and to make choices. Bobbio insists, as Gobetti and Rosselli did before him, that it is necessary to draw on national and international sources of culture.

Philosophy is the realm of culture, Bobbio affirms, not the realm of politics, although politics needs the tool of culture to develop in a way that benefits humanity. Culture is a moral guide that assists one to decide judiciously on all questions. But rigorous research and personal familiarity with available data are needed to make informed decisions. We can follow Gobetti's example in drawing out the meaning of events, in exploring the role of the intellectual; he himself lived in a time when it was crucial to interpret the international significance of the Russian Revolution in political, historical and humanist terms. In Paradosso dello spirito russo (Einaudi, 1976), Gobetti tackles the subject through four separate
sections: the conflict of ideas, Russian literature, with particular emphasis on Gogol, various other examples of Russian literature "con spunti d'interpretazione" (ibid.:vi) and, finally, historical writings on the Russian Revolution. In the introduction to Gobetti's book, Vittorio Strada calls our attention to the fact that Gobetti brings us to see the resemblance shared by the Russian writers. We need the intellectual to find "the source of thought"; in this particular example, Gobetti identifies a political interest – the question of the Russian intelligentsia and the Bolshevik revolution – which unites the work of Andreiev, Dostoyevsky, Pushkin and Lermontov, among others. Strada notes that the sphere of Gobetti's research is marked by the "major zone" of his entire political thought and the "minor zone" of Russian literary study. The question of the revolution and the intelligentsia was taken up in Russia and elsewhere, particularly through a group of political emigrés.

Bobbio emulates Gobetti in reaffirming the role of political philosophy as an effective tool with which to interpret the course of political life. Philosophers are needed to organize consensus and to bolster the "political industry" by acting as an extension of particular power bases. Every political action, whether executed in line with a global design or just as a small step in realizing the overall aims of a political party or movement, needs to clarify its aims – its values, ideals and worldviews, and needs the scientific and technical knowledge to achieve those ends. Any political goal, to succeed, must therefore have its basis in culture, in the ideas that precede politics. Achieving a better, cleaner environment, for example, can only be "activated" through culture, which allows us to express our beliefs and values.

Bobbio agrees with his fellow Turinese Gianni Vattimo that the debate on the nature of institutions and the future of democracy could safely be left to the philosopher-scholar. After all, it would be nonsensical and unrealistic to postulate that a society could exist in which all adults have the right to directly or indirectly influence the way political decisions are made. Despite the fact that cable television, the internet and other forms of technology have made it easier for
intellectuals to reach the public, we must take stock of the fact that not every
citizen is equipped to inform public opinion and take action. The general public
neither reads or listens to every media broadcast nor concerns itself with the
completeness of its information. This situation constitutes a problem for democracy
since, increasingly, public decisions require specialist knowledge. For instance,
Vattimo asks if there is a referendum concerning the question of nuclear-power
stations, are those called to vote sufficiently knowledgeable in physics to be able to
make an informed decision? (Vattimo, 2001). Democracy and political liberty will
never be achieved through universally-diffused scientific competence, but through
the possibility of each individual being able to choose which “experts” are to lead
him. The way we select those experts is “based on a complex affinity that, without
exaggerating, we can call existential” (ibid.).

There remains in question the risk of accepting a democracy in which the charisma
of leaders, often a construct of mass media, replaces rational debate. We must
also realize, however, that even in less mediatic societies, “the rational purity of
political debate is profoundly conditioned by belonging, friendship and ‘trust’”
(ibid.).

It is useful to consider Bobbio’s view of the republic as the opposite of a moral
idea. In politics, he is a realist and advises that “one can speak of politics only by
casting a cold eye on history” (Bobbio and Viroli, 2001: 8). Politics, whether
monarchical or republican, constitutes a struggle for power. Bobbio warns us that
to speak only of ideals is just plain rhetoric. “I understand politics as a struggle for
power but to speak of politics that has as its aim a republic based on the virtue of
citizens, I ask what this citizens’ virtue is” (ibid.). We have no example of a State
that functions as a result of citizens’ virtue rather than by force, Bobbio argues.
The “recurrent definition” of the State is that of holder of the monopoly of legitimate
force. That force is necessary “as the majority of citizens is not virtuous but erring
(viziosa)” (ibid.). This is Bobbio’s Hobbesian conception of politics. He invites the
reader to abandon Montesquieu’s conception of the State as a moral model,
given that, in his view, all States, including republics, exist to curb the acts of sinful citizens rather than to promote economic gain. Again, there is no State that is built on the virtue of citizens; each State functions on the basis of “a written or an unwritten constitution that establishes the rules for citizens’ conduct, with the premise that, generally, citizens are not virtuous” (ibid.:9).

Viroli has asked Bobbio why, as a political theorist, he has never tackled the themes of republicanism and the republic, particularly since Cattaneo, an advocate of republicanism, figures in Bobbio’s intellectual biography (ibid.: 6). Bobbio’s reply is that he never saw Cattaneo through his view of the republic but through his view of federalism which advocates a republic based on a federation of smaller republics. The concept of the republic constitutes a minimal part of the categories that make up Cattaneo’s conceptual system. Bobbio acknowledges Cattaneo’s contribution as “the federalist of the Risorgimento”; Cattaneo enlarged the notion of federalism to include Europe, not just the republic. Yet Cattaneo’s federalism was not historical or geographical, but ideological. He argued that the unitary State, as such, cannot be other than authoritarian; it ultimately becomes despotic since unity suffocates autonomies, free initiative and liberty (la Stampa, 12/10/97:24).

Secular anti-Fascism – Bobbio speaks of secular anti-Fascism to distinguish it from Communist and Catholic anti-Fascism – was naturaliter federalist. Federalism, both external and internal, made up an integral part of the PdA’s programme, and Bobbio joined the party from the moment it was first created (ibid.). The association of the intellectuals of the PdA with federalism demonstrates the link between culture and politics, where political action expresses an initial cultural idea.

Whatever form of government is adopted by the leader or leaders of a polity, Bobbio affirms, there is no ideal form of the State and the State can never function as a moral model. The ideal State does not exist; it exists only in literature, both ancient and modern.

The politics of culture espoused by Bobbio’s maestri rests on civil virtue, virtue “activated” as a result of the individual’s willingness to be vigilant, to commit
himself to the public good, to strive to resist injustice. The State curbs the acts of
the arrogant, the overly-ambitious and the erring, but citizens are also required “to
keep their hands on liberty, as Cattaneo wrote citing Machiavelli” (ibid.:9).

In 2001 Bobbio reiterated the advice he provided in the immediate post-war period
in the pages of Giustizia e Libertà, the PdA daily: “Democracy requires good laws
and good habits” (ibid.:10). Such good habits or customs are the genuine virtues to
which we ought to aspire, while at the same time encouraging the diffusion of
ideas and points of view and the free play of the intellect. Good laws and openness
allow culture to counter politics, a path recommended by Croce. Elsewhere,
Bobbio writes “The inner dialectical force of Croce’s ... thought moved ... between
the two poles of an affirmation of political activity as economic activity or vital force
(and as such, autonomous of morality, since it had its own reasons and its own
laws) and liberty, identified as the moral force that ... directed politics and that
good governance must always take into account” (Bobbio, 1995e:133). What
Croce called “liberty”, Bobbio would call pluralism: ultimately, it means the liberty of
culture.

The cultural debate, from Bobbio’s viewpoint, must necessarily include a critical
look at Marxism. The friend/enemy polarization of history and politics is precisely
one of the main things he holds against Marxism. Nevertheless, Bobbio is keen to
prove the cultural dignity of Communism in opposition to that of Nazism. Indeed,
he asks the reader to imagine whether anyone would ever dare to compare Marx’s
Das Kapital or The Manifesto of 1848 with Mein Kampf. He considers Marx to be a
classic. He has read Marx’s works several times, particularly the historical and
philosophical oeuvres, just as he has re-read Plato and Aristotle, Hobbes and
Rousseau. Bobbio is committed to theoretical research, while Rorty questions its
value.

The classic author makes a contribution to the politics of culture by overcoming the
tempests of history through the successful interpretation of an epoch, so much so
that one cannot ignore that work in discovering the spirit of that author’s lifetime. In
Bobbio’s definition of a classic, the author must always be contemporary and each generation feels the need to re-read the work, perhaps giving it a new interpretation. Finally, a classic author must have elaborated general categories of historical comprehension, without which we cannot interpret a reality different from the one from which they were derived and to which they were applied. The possibility of interpreting new realities using those general categories of historical comprehension allows us to make a contribution to the development of human consciousness. This ability corresponds to Gobetti’s call for interpretation of culture as a form of historical consciousness. The Centro Studi Piero Gobetti, founded in 1961, remains faithful to this cultural aim by organizing seminars on ethics and politics.

Although Bobbio criticizes Marx’s emphasis on subjects rather than the institutions of power - his concern with “who” was to rule rather than “how” one was to rule - Bobbio is ready to adopt the central theme of political morality as evoked by Marx.

We saw that Rorty is convinced that there is no agreed-upon list of central problems that philosophy ought to tackle, but Bobbio has a specific goal to pursue. He speaks out against inequality and all forms of Fascism. He warns that the existence of inequality inhibits freedom, as Vittorio Foa sustains: “it appeared quite clear to us young anti-Fascists that you cannot be free unless you get rid of the fundamental social, cultural and moral features of inequality” (Bobbio, 1996c:97). Bobbio sees historical development in terms of emerging rights, for all rights have been historically acquired, although their content can vary over time. He writes:

Rights, which were declared absolute at the end of the eighteenth century, such as the *sacre et inviolable* right of ownership, have now been subjected to radical restrictions in contemporary declarations, while prominence is now given to rights, such as social rights, which in the seventeenth century did not even get a mention. It is not difficult to foresee that new demands will emerge which at the moment we can only catch a glimpse of, such as the right … to respect the lives of animals and not just humans. Thus rights are not fundamental by their nature. That which appears to be fundamental in a given historical era or civilization, is not fundamental in other eras or civilizations (Bobbio, 1996a:6).
As we saw, Rorty suggests that the strongest feature of contemporary philosophy is stylistic argument rather than the content of philosophical debate. Although Bobbio himself admits that he has a certain difficulty in wading through his own writings; in identifying a common thread that ties them together, he pursues doggedly his intellectual mission of carrying out research, publishing books, organizing seminars and providing support to centres of knowledge. The Società Europea di Cultura was formed in 1950 with the conviction that there was a need to preserve the spiritual unity of Europe from the politics of the two rival blocs (Bobbio, 1993a:202). For Bobbio, that task was the specific mandate of intellectuals. He is referring to the political task of intellectuals, a task which is theirs alone and which, since the founding of the Società, was called the politics of culture.

The unity of Europe remains an important question, although the politics of culture may now be redefined since the two blocs that menaced the unity of Europe are no longer a political reality. The political order and institutions that took shape during the Resistance to Fascism were designed on the basis of a societal analysis that today can be called into question. International development, scientific capability and the enhanced power of the media constitute dynamic, rapidly evolving forces of change that “push” the intellectual to act, yet require a level of much greater expertise. Amidst this intense period of change, Bobbio reminds us that the terms Right and Left are still valid cultural and political tools.

Following five years of World War, the German occupation of Italy and the end of civil strife, Bobbio’s research took a new direction. His research, during the years of Fascism, consisted of coerced and politically ascetic philosophy but the end of the war brought about what he refers to as “a natural encounter with the great problems that required solution: democracy and peace” (ibid.). The themes of democracy and peace are the magnets that attract his attention as a theorist, and constitute the main thrust of his work. As we saw in Chapter II, Bobbio’s democracy is a liberal constitutionalist one that comprises social as well as civil and political rights.
Democracy, he believes, is the only feasible and legitimate form of rule for modern societies.

As a philosopher, Bobbio aims to wed the liberal concern with individual freedom and human rights based on the rule of the law, to the socialist concern with social justice and equality. His democratic theory includes a criticism of participatory theorists, particularly adherents of the extreme Left and the extreme Right. Such theorists, in Bobbio’s view, concentrate on who holds power in society rather than on the more important question of how power is exercised. The intellectual must be vigilant in monitoring the moral and practical implementation of power.

The best intellectual, Bobbio argues, promotes a specific policy, that of illustrating that democratic decision-making should be extended over a vast range of centres of power, including intellectual ones. Central government alone does not foster democratic progress. Intellectuals should enrich cultural pluralism by replacing the debate over “who can vote” with a different and more pressing battle concerning “what you can vote for”. In Western democracies, citizens have acquired the right to vote in mainstream political elections but remain outside spheres of influence in many other areas of human activity.

Lintner, author of ‘Does European Integration Narrow Regional Disparities or Does it Increase Them?’, points to the academic consensus that the increased freedom of the market, part of the European integration project, has resulted in greater regional disparities (Lintner, 1997:3). By contrast, Bobbio’s primary emphasis is not market influences; he is less concerned with economic liberalism than he is with the general question of measuring and improving social welfare. Bobbio is a member of a unique group of “bourgeois heroes” who followed in Gobetti’s tracks; as we have seen, Gobetti was the first Turinese bourgeois to take up the banner of the workers’ movement, to improve the Italian nation. Gobetti was the harbinger and first adherent of resistance. Gobetti’s example as an intellectual brought Bobbio out of his doppiezza or double life. He acted as a Fascist among Fascists and as an anti-Fascist among anti-Fascists, what he refers to as his political self and his cultural
self. Bobbio's cultural and anti-Fascist self was superior to the Fascist one and eventually won out. In 'Bobbio e l'Inquisizione', Lerner underlines the importance of analyzing fully Bobbio's contribution to anti-Fascism and democratic theory deriving from Gobettianismo. Neo-Fascist advocates, he points out, use Bobbio's earlier political self-history to "banalize rights and wrongs, and to neutralize historical judgement of the Italian trauma of the 20th century" (Lerner, 1999). In the nineties, Bobbio discussed his "link to Fascism", and his earlier "political self" with the neo-Fascist journalist Pietrangelo Buttafuoco. Bobbio told Buttafuoco that in 1927 at the age of 18 he joined the Gruppi Universitari Fascisti (GUF) and took three trips abroad with the GUF (ibid.). That interview, lauded by some as an example of intellectual rigour as Bobbio attempted to come to grips with his past, led others to condemn Bobbio for having become anti-Fascist so late (in the 1930s).

Bobbio is full of self-criticism and praises the intellectual example of Leone Ginzburg and Vittorio Foa, who forgave him for his early lack of interest in political affairs. Bobbio "does not forgive himself for that lack when others had already chosen active political resistance" (ibid.).

Bobbio's status as an intellectual and the cultural importance of the Turinese intellectuals between the two wars, some seventy years ago, must be examined within the context of each intellectual's individual choice of waging anti-Fascism. Bobbio's intellectual approach is "Gobettismo", an ethical and heuristic conception of politics resting on the conviction that political action is regulated by the ethics of goodwill and pure intention, not results or successes (Bobbio, mm:1). That conception implies a net distinction between the politics of intellectuals and the politics of politicians. Ethical politics differ from practical politics in that they are not subject to compromise. The politics of intellectuals is inspired by principles rather than by the interests of particular groups. The most important features of the politics of culture – the politics of intellectuals – are coherence, intransigence, and the firm ability to defend the ideals in which the intellectual believes. These count and not the certainty of achieving an end, not success, Bobbio argues. Important rather, are the effort, the tension among ideals, total commitment and the willingness to make
sacrifices. The intellectual must obey the voice of his conscience, the appeal of that "hidden god" (ibid.), who is the intellectual himself. The politics of politicians follow another set of imperatives.

Although the politician-intellectual acts out of deep moral inspiration and strong pedagogical vocation, he cannot take advantage of all available means to reach his end. Some means are to be ruled out from his utilitarian calculations. "The end justifies the means" belongs to the credo of the politician's politics, rather than the intellectual's politics. The intellectual looks far beyond the day-to-day concerns of the politician who does not know where his labour may lead him. The politics of the intellectual have "remote ends", and one of his virtues is intransigence, for he cannot accept the compromises of the politician.

Politics needs the influence of culture to be ethical. By its very nature, politics is quick to adapt to new conditions and embrace trasformismo in Machiavellian fashion. Intellectuals, however, believe trasformism to be a scandal that results in a betrayal of their role. Intellectuals must keep a certain distance from political parties in order to maintain the autonomy necessary to execute their primary task: criticism. In describing Gobetti, and in endorsing Gobetti's intellectual approach, Bobbio uses Weber's distinction between the intellectual as prophet and the intellectual as priest. The prophetic conception of politics contrasts with that of the intellectual as priest: the prophet announces the message or strategy to be followed and the priest transmits it.

Gobetti was diffident towards all political parties and he sought to demonstrate the necessity for a new, more enlightened political class, a class different from that which had unsatisfactorily governed the Italy of his time. Gobetti's example, Bobbio urges, is one to follow. He believes that even today Gobetti's view that ideas are suffocated by organizations and the confines of party discipline should be heard and found relevant. Party discipline should be jettisoned in favour of voicing deep-rooted convictions, so that intellectuals can truly declare themselves not as organs of an organism, but as non-organic thinkers. Intellectuals who aspire to be non-organic
can wage the liberal revolution that Gobetti envisaged and that Bobbio sets out as an agenda to follow. Bobbio also recommends that each intellectual seek a forebear, a maestro who can guide him in his research, for without that inspiration, it is hard going.

The relationship between morals and politics and morals and private life causes several contrasts to emerge, Bobbio argues, although moral rules were established to enable "a good coexistence". That good coexistence is one "where mutually inflicted suffering between humans due to their behaviour has been reduced, and where some essential principles, such as liberty, justice, peace, and basic welfare, are protected" (Bobbio, 2000:72). In the study of history it can be observed that in the political sphere, actions that are considered wrong in a moral sense are executed repeatedly and actions that are considered to be morally right are neglected.

The function of intellectuals remains an important issue within the context of opposing theories of "modern" and "postmodern" cultural strategies. By undertaking the study of intellectuals as a class, one can appraise the historical tendency of recent centuries as well as the salient discontinuities of history in the contemporary sense. Bauman emphasizes the opposition between modernity and postmodernity, claiming that postmodernity has brought human life beyond the structure of domination of one set of values over another and the unquestioned acceptance of this hierarchy. Indeed, he believes we have reached a stage marked by "a coexistence or armistice between values, ... which makes the questions of objective standards impracticable and hence theoretically futile" (Bauman, 1992:24). The present time of postmodernity compares starkly with the previous age of modernity where intellectuals controlled "the universal criteria of truth, judgement and taste" (ibid.). For James Martin, "the formation of the modern state recast the practice of regulating ... social order around the attainment of supracommunal uniformity" (Martin, 1998:68).

The status of the intellectual is debated by intellectuals themselves but it is also the theme of a wider debate concerning the intellectual's responsibilities and what the
intellectual can contribute to modern society. Bobbio's main emphasis concerns the importance of intellectuals as promoters of a politics of culture. The cultivation of culture serves to preserve the ideas of the thinkers of the Enlightenment. Despite the general lack of unity that characterizes their very varied ideas, Bobbio attributes the first condemnation of torture and the death penalty, and the affirmation of human rights to the thinkers of the Enlightenment (Bobbio, 1995b:120). Their contributions to the history of political theory and action brought about the constitution of a State based on the rights and freedoms of those governed, rather than of governors. Individuals, taken separately or as part of a group, become seen as the legitimate holders of sovereignty.

Industrialization and economic progress, coupled with the formation of trade unions and socialist parties, caused the relationship between citizens and their leaders to change. Martin, in his article 'Between ethics and politics: Gramsci's theory of intellectuals', puts it thus: "Traditional elites and professions ... found themselves increasingly marginalized throughout Europe by 'mass' constituencies voicing demands for social reform and political participation" (Martin, 1998:69). European social thought underwent a period of change owing to new social dynamics and economic development, and the contemplative intellectual was thrust into a political reality that wrenched thought from a generally progressive view of history. The experience of war caused society to question the meaning of progress and to look to intellectuals for an explanation of that changing era.

Bobbio has sought to demonstrate what can specifically be derived from political philosophy and how the latter can enrich political life. The "new" type of intellectual, the sociologist, had, in the years preceding 1968, differed from the traditional intellectual in that he was obliged to "establish a relationship with policymakers ..., with the people in all sectors who held the power and made the decisions" (Bobbio, 1995e:188). This marked a milestone in the changing role of the intellectual, "between the intellectual as ideologue and the intellectual as expert" (ibid.). Bobbio writes that "Here, the history of ideas becomes entwined with the history of the development of the social sciences: economics, political science, and sociology"
The resulting academic debates among philosophers of various schools "gave way to discussions between experts on how to interpret the profound changes taking place in Italian society" (ibid.). The role of political philosophy is an effective tool in interpreting the course of political life.

Philosophers with a solid university culture are needed in order to organize consensus. Bobbio writes: "Just as industrial culture emerges when more ... individuals gain access to the necessary means to enjoy the fruits of cultural life, so the political industry emerges with the extension of the power base" (Bobbio, 1988:72,73). Political debate on the nature, institutions and future of democracy can safely be left to the philosopher-scholar, he argues, "for it would be nonsensical and ... unrealistic ... to postulate that a society could exist in which all adults have the right to influence directly or indirectly the way political decisions are made" (ibid.). All societies require the use of techniques for the organization of consensus and not every citizen is equipped to inform public opinion and take action; "for politics is not just feeling or opinion, but action" (ibid.:73).

Every political action, which is or claims to be the result of rationality, "needs general ideas on aims to be pursued, which I [Bobbio] call 'principles', but they could also be called 'values', 'ideals', 'worldviews', as well as the scientific and technical knowledge required to achieve the established ends" (Bobbio, 1993a:159). Bobbio defines ideologues as those who provide guiding principles, while experts are those who provide the "knowledge-means". He borrows from Weber the distinction between rational actions based on value and rational actions based on purpose: "Ideologues elaborate principles on the basis of an action being called rational as much as it conforms to certain values proposed as ends to achieve; experts suggest the most appropriate knowledge to achieve an end" (ibid.). The degree to which the action can be considered rational is a measure of its conformity to achieving the aim at hand.

The distinction between ideologues and experts can be further refined by noting that classic discussion on the best form of government is a typical discussion of ideological character; a discussion on the pros and cons of undertaking a particular
purpose, on the other hand, such as the construction of a nuclear power station, is a
typical discussion undertaken by experts (ibid.). However, it might be argued against
Bobbio here that rational actions executed according to value(s) or according to the
purpose at hand do not neatly conform to our social reality. Social reality is more
complicated than the categories that Bobbio suggests using to "mentally dominate"
it. To elaborate his principles, the ideologue needs the aid of technical knowledge
just as much as the expert needs to have an idea of the general aims pursued to
give sense to his analyses. However, whether an ideologue or an expert, the
philosopher is a representative of a power that serves to correct or improve upon two
other societal powers: economic power and political power.

For Bobbio, who uses the examples of Julien Benda and Gramsci (Bobbio, 1993a) in
examining the relationship between politics and culture, the political philosopher can
be described as one who either betrays culture or reduces its effect. The more the
intellectual resembles the politician, the more he betrays culture. On the other hand,
the extent of the intellectual's refusal to become a politician is matched by a
Corresponding increase or decrease in the effect culture can achieve. In remaining
aloof from politics and in executing an exclusively professorial role, the intellectual is
able to exert little effect on the outcome of politics. Conversely, if the intellectual
plays a very central role in affirming the benefits of a particular ideology, he/she is
said to "have betrayed his[/her] mission as a cleric", as a person of scholarship and
learning. Both positions, Bobbio maintains, are extreme. There is an element of risk
in making culture and politics two antithetical terms, as there is in giving them
identical meanings.

Bobbio admires Benda's commitment to the tradition of rationalism, even at the risk
of seeming anachronistic, given that "it seems increasingly clear that this first half
century, in the history of culture, is marked by the triumph of irrationalism" (ibid.:52).
As concerns the figure of Benda, the intellectual, Bobbio says:

We see how unflagging he is as we see him around us each day. Faced with
those who denigrate science, he defended the scientific method and thus
contributed to its transmission. Faced with iconoclasts, owing to having taken
sides or vanity, he gave the example of his unconditional love for the classics. Faced with those who adored the new, he defended the old. Against lack of discipline passed off as inventive geniality, he delivered a eulogy of discipline, of order, of the system. Against those who adored the different, he ... sought that which is not changeable in the history of man but that which is always true of man. Against romantic decadence, he reaffirmed the supremacy of reason (ibid.).

Bobbio clearly sees the intellectual Benda as “a militant philosopher”. Indeed, Benda often shot into action not because he had something to say, but because “more than to defend his own theses, he had to fight those of others” (ibid.:38). Bobbio had such a mission in writing articles for the publication of GL’s newspaper, recently re-published as *Tra due repubbliche* (Bobbio, 1996).

In finding a solution to the question of the relationship between culture and politics, Bobbio looks to Croce, who maintained:

> Each of us can contribute daily, in the most varied ways, to restore, and strengthen ... the love of liberty, without expecting or waiting for the absurd [to happen] - that politics would change its nature. [We can] counter politics with a non-political force, which politics can never radically suppress because this [liberal] force re-germinates anew in the breast of man; politics will always have to reckon with this force (Croce in Bobbio, 1993a:24).

We saw that for Bobbio, politics and culture are not antithetical terms and they cannot be considered as a unified concept. They are, as Croce described, distinct terms, but terms which can be integrated with each other. “There exists a non-political force, and therefore politics does not embrace and does not suffocate all of man” (Bobbio, ibid.). Accordingly, political life must recognize this non-political force which is also a vital part of “the life of the city”. In its non-political dimension, this force was also a moral one, says Bobbio in his interpretation of Croce. This moral force is “the mission of the man of culture” which Bobbio calls the politics of the man of culture. This conception of cultural politics as a moral force does not culminate in the betrayal of culture or in the reduction of its effect. For, Bobbio says,

> Since [the man of culture] defends and nurtures moral values, no one can accuse him of being a slave to particular passions. But, at the same time,
since he acquires a clear awareness that no republic can do without these moral values, his work as an artist, poet, philosopher and critic is efficacious to the society in which he is a citizen. He becomes, therefore, a man of culture, a conscious ... bearer of this non-political force (ibid.).

For Bobbio, the political philosopher is a bearer of culture, of a non-political force. However, he goes on to say that the class of intellectuals "has its own political function" (ibid.:31). This function must be different from all the other categories or classes in society. In setting out the problem of the relationship between intellectuals and the political class, Bobbio suggests that two preliminary conditions must be met: i) in a given country, intellectuals must comprise, or believe they comprise, a category unto themselves; and ii) this category must have, or believe it has, its own exclusive political function. In considering intellectuals and political class, Bobbio notes that Anglo-Saxon and continental experiences differ. In Anglo-Saxon countries, he contends, the two conditions described above are not met and, therefore, "the problem either does not make sense or cannot be brought clearly into focus" (ibid.). Bobbio has attempted to synthesize the case of the United States by claiming that American intellectuals are not a cohesive group and work in isolation from one another.

In describing intellectuals, Bobbio says that it is true that intellectuals comprise a category unto themselves but this category does not have its own exclusive political function. "There are intellectuals who tend to constitute a homogeneous and differentiated group but ... they see themselves to be pure intellectuals, and are given little credit by society; therefore, it would be out of place to speak of their political characterization" (ibid.).

His style of philosophizing is "traditional", in that he places philosophy alongside political science. Political science as he defines it is the body of research that adopts the principle of verification or falsification as a criterion of the acceptability of its results; it uses scientific techniques which allow a strong or weak causal explanation of the phenomenon investigated; and abstains from value judgements (Bobbio,
1989b:46,47). However, in Bobbio's examination of these three forms or conditions of political philosophy, he notes that each one lacks all the characteristics of science.

Political philosophy, as research into the best form of republic, does not have a value-free character. As research into the ultimate foundations of power it does not mean to explain the phenomenon of power but to justify it, an operation which has as its aim the characterization of behaviour as either permitted or forbidden. This cannot be done without recourse to values (Bobbio, 1989b:47).

Any investigation into the essence of politics will reveal that it cannot be defined on the basis of empirical verification or falsification, "because what is presumptuously called 'the essence of politics' derives from a nominal definition and as such is neither true nor false" (ibid.).

Philosophy stands to benefit from the political which involves party politics, especially, as well as acts either for or against a government or political system. The pluralist character of politics, the existence of dissenting voices, enriches philosophy and the cultural heritage from which philosophy is formed.

3.2 From Antonio Gramsci to Zygmunt Bauman

Marx has civil society coincide with economic relations rather than with the superstructure of ideologies and institutions. Antonio Gramsci rejects this economic-determinist view of Marxism and instead identifies two superstructural levels: civil society and political society. For Gramsci, civil society comprised a group of private organisms while political society existed at the level of the state. Civil society and political society correspond to "the functions of hegemony which the dominant group exercises throughout society and direct domination which manifests itself in the State and legal government" (Bobbio, 1989b:29). Civil society is the sphere in which ideological apparatuses operate; its task, Gramsci believes, is to exercise hegemony and obtain consensus. Gramsci uses several categories to represent the contrast between civil society and the state:
"consensus/force, persuasion/coercion, morality/politics, hegemony/dictatorship, leadership/domination" (ibid.:30). Bobbio comments that Gramsci has "recovered the natural law meaning of civil society as a society founded on consensus", although that society of consensus is what will rise out of the extinction of the state rather than through the state whose legitimacy of power is achieved through the social contract.

Gramsci's theory of intellectuals on the basis of Bauman's distinction between "legislators" and "interpreters" has been taken up by James Martin in 'Between ethics and politics: Gramsci's theory of intellectuals' (1998). He calls attention to the importance and enduring value of Gramsci's theory, saying that it points us to the agents through which particulars are made universal (ibid.:83). The tension between the ethical and political functions of "organic intellectuals", Martin argues, can be seen through Gramsci's liberal-bourgeois assumption that knowledge and power could remain distinct (ibid.:68). Martin assesses the ambiguity of Gramsci's theory that "as agents of hegemony, intellectuals were argued to mediate ethics and politics by adapting people to the dominance of particular social groups ... through their articulation of cultural norms" (ibid.). The intellectual function of setting examples to follow within a precise political context revealed the peculiarity of intellectuals. On the basis of that view, we can see that Gramsci's recommendation for revolution subordinated the ethical to the political. Their hegemonic role brought intellectuals to a position of privilege.

Bauman expresses the theme of culture as "the ideology of intellectuals". Here, intellectuals of modern and postmodern ilk propose, respectively, legislative and interpretive strategies of culture. The legitimation of class, once carried out through the work of intellectuals, results in ideology, and the construction of ideology constitutes organic intellectuals' major skill and function. Gramsci thought that class potential could develop fully through the values elaborated by "organic" intellectuals who legitimized both the class's claim to power and its historical role (Bauman, 1992:1). That form of culture Bauman describes as the story of the man-
made world, a story "guided by man-made values ... and reproduced through the ongoing process of learning and teaching" (ibid.:2). The phenomenon of culture expresses values and thus legitimizes the role of intellectuals. Bauman delineates three premises that reconfirm that function of culture. First, at birth, the individual is not socialized, though this incompleteness is gradually mitigated through the nurturing process; second, humanization occurs through a learning process based on the imposition of social norms that govern individual passion and instinct; third, educators hold the key to successful cohabitation in society, for learning cannot take place without intellectuals who set examples. There is a need for culture to form the individual, to prepare him for his role as a citizen.

Bauman's distinctions are useful in considering the crisis of modernity that occurred at the beginning of the twentieth century, although the transition from legislators to interpreters took place "in a contradictory way with elements of each coexisting simultaneously" (ibid.:69). Bauman believes that intellectuals no longer exercise great cultural control, for "the prevalence of interpretive strategy signifies a radical departure in the cultural discourse" (ibid.). The original introduction of the concept of culture, followed by the establishment of the culture-oriented vision of society, Bauman argues, has in more recent times given way to postculture. The radical shift in the role of intellectuals who now provide interpretive strategies rather than legislative ones, is also associated with their clear judgement that some values are superior to others. But since the hierarchy of particular cultural values has been contested, the current situation of the west cannot be described as a "cultural" one (ibid.). Bauman foresees the emergence of a new phase in the experience of intellectuals, which will result in "a reorientation of cultural discourse" (ibid.). He suggests that both the interpretive role as well as the more traditional legislative role of intellectuals have been superceded and that the social function of intellectuals must be re-established on an alternative basis. Bobbio's very different belief is that the role of intellectuals is to watch over and be ready to criticize the ends pursued by political institutions, and the form the institutions take.
Although Bauman provides two differing conceptions of the intellectual's role, that of the modern intellectual and that of the postmodern intellectual, Bobbio steers clear of the postmodern school, in that he endorses the original view of the intellectual's role as "an articulator of universal knowledge". He does recognize that intellectuals may be either ideologues or experts (technicians), and not purely disseminators of culture. Bobbio is interested in the role intellectuals can play in reinforcing democracy within the context of some of the paradoxes that all contemporary societies must contend with. These paradoxes derive from the tension between the democratic process and the development of mass society. Although democracy presupposes the free development of human faculties, "the effect of the rise of mass culture is a general conformism" (Bobbio, 1988:72). Mass society tends to suppress the individual's sense of personal responsibility, particularly since "a highly efficient media machine aims to reduce to a minimum the area reserved for personal and rational choices, for convictions which do not rely on instant emotional reactions or the passive imitation of others" (ibid.). The cultural industry must preserve a pluralism of views and convictions, and foster critical thought – culture serves to widen the individual's accessibility to conflicting worldviews, just as political industry depends on the extension of the power base.

Bobbio does not believe that intellectuals can argue in support of any position they like and remain innocent. Marx abolished the legality of the representative state in his theories, and argued that the "essential thing was that the historical subject changed for all to work out for the best, irrespective of the forms in which the new historical subject 'organized' its authority" (ibid.:106). As a result, actually existing states that were dictatorships came into being. In a similar fashion, Pareto, who scorned the bourgeoisie of his day for not opposing revolutionary violence with counter-revolutionary violence, bore some responsibility for the rise of Fascism (ibid.). Indeed, Bobbio argues, "it is much too convenient to detach intellectual works from the historical process which has generated them ... and classify them as a species ... in a state of perpetual innocence, unsullied by the mud of history" (ibid.:106,107). Intellectuals are responsible for what they write, and the most
important question, irrespective of whether it is examined by traditional intellectuals or by the intellectual who represents a political class, is "getting the issue of institutions onto the agenda of the Left" (ibid.:108).

The distinctive feature of the working-class movement, Bobbio maintains, "is that it transcended the separation between intellectuals and the masses" (ibid.:107). The working class movement did not rely on individual intellectuals, but on the "collective intellectual". For Bobbio, the most important aspect of intellectual pursuit is the problem posed by the call for new institutions that would replace the bourgeois hegemony, and the relationship of continuity between old institutions and the new ones.

Bobbio prefers lucid thought to the excited shouting of those taking part in mass demonstrations and open-air rallies, which is one of the features of participatory democracy. Imagination and insight and the primacy of discussion over harangues serve to facilitate the intellectual's endevour to reduce the gap that separates "a product of mass culture from the true citizen" (ibid.:73).

3.3 Bobbio comments on philosophy as culture

As we saw in Chapter II, in Bobbio's early writings, he was inspired by the English contractarians Locke and Hobbes. He sought to prevent the progressive political division of Europe at the height of the Cold War through the tactics of observation and debate and by summoning the intellectual back to his primary duty: "to remain perplexed by all solutions" (Bellamy, 1987:142). Bobbio's tactics and strategy of peaceful co-existence have been supplemented by the need to find techniques and instruments that foster tolerance and inquiry, with a view to embracing the merits of liberalism, and of a socialism, finally liberated from its Communist past.
For Bobbio, philosophy improves political life and political life enhances the State. The degree to which this occurs varies across historical time.

After World War I, Italy was still in a phase of intensive industrialization and nothing had improved. The new generation of young people had no corresponding new generation of intellectuals or mentors to guide them, since the thinkers of the preceding generation still dominated Italian philosophy.

The new generation's mentors (Gobetti's, for instance) were men of the preceding generation: Croce and Gentile, Pareto and Mosca, Einaudi and Salvemini. ... When we read about the intellectual formation of the young of the new generation – men like Carlo Rosselli ... – they seem to take their models from the generation of the Risorgimento (more from Mazzini than from Marx); they seem the last disciples of idealism rather than the standard-bearers of a new consciousness. Their paths diverged later, however, leading some into and others out of Marxism (Bobbio, 1995e:103).

In essence, Croce sought the rebirth of idealism to combat positivism, that is, he attempted to diminish the theoretical relevance of economic factors in the historical process. Croce was concerned with the role of human will in the fashioning of history. Bobbio undertook a critique of idealist historians: "Idealist historians thought history could be written by approaching historical events from the wrong side (that is, from men's ideas, not from their socioeconomic relations)" (Bobbio, 1995e:9). In developing this position and distancing himself from idealism, Bobbio rejected the attempt to separate liberalism from the ideology of the free market. Croce, "during the 1920s debate with Luigi Einaudi, made clear the distinction between ethical-political liberalism and economic liberalism" (Urbinati in Rosselli, 1994:xxxvii). Bobbio, in agreement with Einaudi, has always maintained that "the free market was the foundation of liberal institutions" (ibid.) whereas Croce maintained that it was "theoretically inconsistent to recognize the primacy of economic over ethical liberalism" (ibid.).

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, philosophy was considered to be an area of knowledge that offers neither easy solutions nor important truths; many of the issues that seem urgent to contemporary philosophers do not concern individual
priorities. Bobbio's approach to philosophy is more about method than clear answers. His approach is essential to unravelling national political scenarios; he does not offer any therapeutic ideals, but rather an approach that puts freedom alongside authority, that emphasizes equality as the identifying trait of the Left and refutes the presumed symmetry between Fascism and Communism, ex-Fascists and ex-Communists. Philosophy's place is that of marking "the first major distinction in the world of political doctrines" (Bobbio, 1988:180). That distinction concerns idealist and realist theories of the best form of the state and individual development.

It is possible to include within the category of idealist theories those which propose a model of the state based on the combination ... of historically existing forms ... and those which idealize a historical form. This is what happened in ancient times to Athens, Sparta, or the Roman Republic and in the modern era to the ... English monarchy ..., and in our own time to the Soviet Union ... (ibid.:181).

Realistic theories, Bobbio adds, are those which consider pragmatically the state and politics in general "as relations of power and dominion" (ibid.). Machiavelli started the realist tradition and it was taken further by Hegel, who defined philosophy "as the comprehension of the present and of the real which must have no truck with 'the search for some beyond whose whereabouts God only knows'" (ibid.). Marx's doctrine also belongs to the category of realistic doctrines, Bobbio claims, since Marx negates the state and predicts its disappearance. "The recurrent theme of nineteenth-century ... philosophy is that the direction in which historical progress is moving is towards the diminution ... of political power, understood as the ultimate power because as a last resort it has recourse to force in order to assert its validity" (ibid.).

But at the end of the twentieth century, the structure of philosophy for this purpose has changed. Bobbio considers the state of philosophy today: "Whoever moved towards philosophy with the purpose of finding in it a safe and universal guide to the journey throughout the varied territories of knowledge is disorientated and disappointed, and easily reaches this conclusion: 'many philosophies, no philosophy'" (Bobbio, 1996e:8).
If one interprets philosophy as a theory that explains a sphere of activity or thought, there would appear to be no complete theory: "How can each one of these orientations claim the name of philosophy if none of them succeeds in imposing itself as a universal guide to a determined culture?" (Bobbio, 1996e:8). In that case, is one to think that all philosophical schools are a matter of opinion, or "express specific psychological, cultural and political situations — as simple ideologies?" (Bobbio, 1996e:8). As these questions acquire more intensity and philosophy undergoes increasing fragmentation, many areas of individual science are now tending to join forces, with the result that those disillusioned by philosophy are in turn enthused by science.

The enthusiasm regarding scientific progress casts a shadow ... on the immobility of philosophy, yet it cannot remain indifferent to this attempt by the sciences to ... organize knowledge in a unitary form, with the secret ambition ... of doing away ... all with the guidance and control of philosophy. If something beyond unitary scientific knowledge remains, to the scientist and his admirers it seems only to be a matter of unverifiable affirmations, an expression of moral or religious exigencies, of indistinct intuitions, ..., in short, 'ideologies' yet again (Bobbio, 1996e:9).

On taking stock of philosophy today, then, the two salient facts, according to Bobbio, are that there is no longer "one Philosophy but many philosophies, not many sciences, but Science" (Bobbio, 1996e:9). This state of affairs in which philosophy and science seem to have reversed roles, dates back in history, Bobbio says.

The ancient and traditional relationship between philosophy and science seems to have reversed: the philosophy of universal reason has descended towards the 'personal fact'; science has ascended from specific data, or claims to have ascended, to legislative reason. But these events are not new. There are good reasons to maintain that the origin of this situation should be considered to derive from long ago ..., after Hegel's attempt to conceive philosophy as 'total knowledge' failed ... (Bobbio, 1996e:9).

Today, Bobbio maintains, vis-à-vis philosophy we ask ourselves the same question: "Between religion and science, what is the place of philosophy today?" (Bobbio, 1996e:9).
Either we maintain as valid the claim of absolute truth – and thus it seems that one cannot fail to invoke religious experience – philosophy has to yield to religion, or one renounces absolute validity, and then one has good reasons to believe that the sciences are sufficient – philosophy has to yield to science. In other words: .... What is left for philosophy? ... One is tempted to reply that between revelation’s (or intuition’s) claim of absolute truth and science’s empirically verifiable truth, there is no place for ... personal certainties, which have a historically determined validity and are therefore ephemeral – little flames that between two great ... fires do not generate any heat at all (Bobbio, 1996e:9,10).

In philosophy, Bobbio claims, all agree that tolerance should be understood as the renunciation of the centuries-old tug of war to have one’s own ideas prevail. As Locke warned, "No man can believe or know for any other man, and the attempt to take responsibility for the beliefs of another is therefore as absurd as it is offensive" (Redhead, 1995:110).

One view of truth is a form of solipsism, i.e., that the truth perceived by the individual is the only truth, which is his own truth. Bobbio asserts that this truth will not triumph over error, either (i) through the providential law of history or (ii) through the increased intensity of its persuasive force. Rather, error is to survive alongside truth, acceptable by virtue of the moral principle of respecting others. He writes: "It would seem to be a conflict between theoretical reason and practical reason, between the logic of reason and that of the heart; in reality, though, it is a conflict between two moral principles -- the morality of coherence that will bring me to place my truth above anything else, and that of benevolence/respect" (Bobbio, 1994c:59). What is sacred is each person's conscience; this liberty of conscience that has weathered religious wars well, is characterized not by indifference, "but by the deep sense that in each man there is something beyond reach and inviolable" (Bobbio, 1994c:59). Today's personalistic conceptions of philosophy reinforce the integrity of each individual's conviction of his own truth. Here, Bobbio acclaims those who stop looking for others who resemble them, and who instead accept others' singularity as well as their own in an effort to re-connect, or to join in harmony. It is clear, Bobbio states, that there is an aspect of moral personalism that benefits from tolerance, as
expressed in the following maxim: "Act according to conscience and ensure that others are not induced to act against conscience" (Bobbio, 1994c:60). Truth can thus be preserved without doubling as an instrument to condemn the error of others.

For a start, tolerance is required. Tolerance, independent of moral reasoning, is also a practical utilitarian posture -- the lesser evil according to Bobbio. The level of tolerance can fluctuate with changing group dynamics and relationships. In a sect or a particular school, truth exists in proportion to the individual's relationship to that school or sect, and it is distinct from the error of others, and other members of that entity. Bobbio explains: "If I am the strongest, accepting error may be astute: persecution leads to scandal, scandal enlarges the patch I would like to keep hidden, and error propagates to a greater extent under persecution than under silence" (Bobbio, 1994c:60). Bobbio contrasts this position with that of the weakest, where putting up with error is prudent, as any rebellion the weakest could initiate would be crushed. In both cases, one hopes that silence will pay off more than rebellion. If two group members are equal, a principle of reciprocity comes into play "and tolerance becomes an act of interpersonal justice" (Bobbio, 1994c:60). In cases where one attributes to an individual the persecution of others, one is at the same time endowing others with the right to persecute. In all three cases, Bobbio affirms, tolerance is a calculation that has nothing to do with one's conception of truth.

Because religious and ideological controversies are more often characterized by the hard and fast positions discussed above than is philosophical debate, Bobbio maintains that the "exclusive faith" of the religious man makes for a clear separation of truth from error. The philosopher, unlike the religious man, is open to doubt and "is always moving on, following a path not to a port but on an endless trip, ever ready to depart anew" (Bobbio, 1994c:61). This observation by Bobbio is most important because it sheds light on his view that no religion should be reflected in the affairs of state. The line between truth and error cannot be drawn categorically because there is no absolute divide. Exclusivism is defined as the acceptance of only one doctrine as being true and scepticism is the position that no doctrine is true. Bobbio finds that
between the two positions is another view: true doctrines can be many, and there is no exclusive conception of truth.

Bobbio contrasts exclusive truth with the idea of inclusive truth, which is that many truths exist in association. For the proponents of exclusive truth, tolerance can be an expedient or a lesser evil, whereas from the point of view of inclusive truth it is something much more important. Indeed, tolerance is a necessary condition for life and the development of philosophical thought. In it both the philosophy of liberty and the liberty of philosophy find perfect harmony.

There are various alternatives to exclusivism. The customary view, according to which one aspires to reach a total conception of reality by manipulating many opposing doctrines "to reconcile, blend or confuse them into one", Bobbio calls "syncretism" (Bobbio, 1994c:61). If the exclusivist is tolerant by calculation, the syncretist is tolerant by necessity, for he finds peace only through his conviction of the sheer vanity of the great philosophical and ideological controversies. "For this demonstration to be possible, each doctrine must therefore be expressed, manifested, fused and contrasted with opposite doctrines" (Bobbio, 1994c:62). The syncretism of the Reformation was one of the ideals of Christian humanism, yet in contemporary philosophy Bobbio would be more inclined "to consider as products, more or less lasting and wise, of the syncretist combination, the reconciliation of idealism with spiritualism, of idealism with existentialism, of existentialism with spiritualism, then Marxism with pragmatism, of neopositivism with historicism, of the end of Marxism with neopositivism" (Bobbio, 1994c:62). The most rash syncretist operations, aimed at finding a common meeting ground, were articulated during the impassioned years of the bipolar world when "the conciliation between Communism and Christianity, and in more strictly philosophical terms, sometimes even between Marxism and Thomism [doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas]" (Bobbio, 1994c:62) were attempted. Although one can accuse the syncretist of mixing impure combinations, he is not a sceptic, Bobbio cautions. Rather, if any admonition is called for at all, it would be that he believes too much in the truth of others and not too little. He is perhaps too trustful -- hardly a fault.
Eclecticism differs from syncretism, since it holds that every system of truth is mixed with error, thus no specific system is thought to be completely true or completely false. The eclectic refuses nothing from any of the various schools of thought; he looks for truth through the wise gathering together of each system's fragments of truth to create a new system. This contrasts with the syncretist's fusing of two or more systems. The eclectic's tolerance derives not from his indifference, as does the sceptic's, but from his belief that there is a little truth in every doctrine, and that truth "is the fruit of a compromise or of a comparison of different doctrines" (Bobbio, 1994c:63). Within the context of current ideological controversy, Bobbio roughly defines the varying positions of the "third way" as eclectic, and the position of Marxist-inspired Christianity as syncretist.

Syncretism and eclecticism, which emerged during the wars of religion and in the wake of the Napoleonic wars, respectively, express the exigencies [of peace and justice]. It is no coincidence that the turmoil caused by World War II led to some rather evident incarnations of both (Bobbio, 1994c:63).

Another position reflected most widely in contemporary philosophy is that of historicism, according to which truth is explained thus: doctrines are necessarily many – each one is true at a specific time and place. Historicism differs from eclecticism and syncretism, which share the conviction that complete truth is the result of a combination or sum of many partial truths. Bobbio explains that on the historicist view, the truth changes as historical situations change – veritas filia temporis, all truth in a determinate historical situation is the only truth. However, there are two versions of historicism – the absolute and the relative.

Absolute historicism, which combines the affirmation of the historicity of the truth with that of the rationality of history, where every phase includes the preceding one and is included by the next one, should lead rather, ... to intolerance: he who is convinced that he incarnates a necessary moment in the development of the absolute Spirit arrogates the right to trample those who impede his course. But often the idealization of history is corrected by a dialectic conception of truth, whereby every doctrine emanating from history is partial and the truth emerges from a contrast between the synthesis of opposites. On the other hand, the doctrine of tolerance is relative historicism, for which the affirmation of the historicity of truth does not imply a providential
conception of history: the various doctrines cohabit on different levels in different social milieux, not in a relationship of exclusion but of reciprocal integration (Bobbio, 1994c:64).

Bobbio reminds the political observer that "punishment continues to be meted out to those who have no fault and that in the general economy of the universe, it has in no way been demonstrated that those who suffer most are the wicked" (Bobbio, 1994c:209). Montesquieu's belief that "the principle merit of liberalism, apart from the development of trade and knowledge and the separation of powers, was the alleviation it brought to human suffering" (Manent, 1994:111), is also professed by Bobbio.

Bobbio holds that the prime value in human life is *la mitezza*, which translates as mildness or moderation, which he sees as an apolitical concept and virtue. The rightful perception of ethical doctrine is that based on natural right, and the correct conception of morals is that based on legal and cultural rules. Virtue and law lead to positive action: virtue provides an example to follow and law prescribes the Good as one's responsibility. A more detailed discussion of *la mitezza* can be found in *Elogio della mitezza e altri scritti morali* (Bobbio, 1994c).

Bobbio stresses that *il mite* is not submissive in his peacefulness and warns one not to confuse *la mitezza* with the Christian virtue of humility. He describes *la mitezza* as both a feminine virtue (Bobbio, 1994c:30) and a pure virtue in the sense that it embraces simplicity and non-violence. The cultivation of intrinsic individual morality supplants the role of religion in Bobbio's work:

> Intellectuals ... have always existed because, in every society, alongside economic power and political power rests ideological power, which exerts an influence not on bodies like political power [which is] never separate from military power, not on the possession of material goods, which one requires to live and survive, like economic power, but on minds through the production and transmission of ideas, symbols, worldviews, practical teaching, and through the use of speech (ideological power is closely dependent on the nature of man as a talking animal). Every society has its disseminators of ideological power, whose function changes from one society to the next, from epoch to epoch, just as relations, sometimes of contrast, sometimes of alliance, change vis-à-vis other powers. There are societies in which
ideological power is the monopoly of a caste, and others in which the centres that radiate ideological power are numerous, and compete with one another (Bobbio, 1993a:12,13).

Culture’s political role is that of renewal: “Cultural renewal [is] not simply a broadening of cultural horizons but also a new awareness of the role of the intellectual in society” (Bobbio, 1995e:166). An intellectual, according to Bobbio, does not make things but rather he reflects on things; he does not handle objects but deals in symbols; his working instruments are ideas, not machines. Rather than the history or sociology of intellectual thought, Bobbio takes up the theme of ethics and the politics of intellectuals. He defines this not as an analytical matter, but as a prescriptive or normative one. What is it that intellectuals should be or do? Our task is not to discover whether intellectuals are rebels or conformists, but to exchange some ideas on what intellectuals perceive as their political role. Above all, Bobbio says, the debate on the relationship between culture and politics can be discussed on the basis of two types of intellectuals: ideologues and experts. The political tasks of the intellectual-ideologue and the intellectual-expert, according to Bobbio, differ according to whether they are creators or transmitters of ideas.

A common pejorative definition of intellectuals is that of creators of consensus; yet for Bobbio, there are also intellectuals who realize their duty to cause dissent. “Particularly today in the countries afflicted with manipulated consensus, intellectuals are the only dissenters and this function should not be forgotten” (Bobbio, 1993a:118). The intellectual who has been assigned the role of promoting consensus by the powerful is an ideologue, not an expert. Clearly, if we think back to Bobbio’s initial description of intellectuals as mosche cocchieri, he would aspire to be an expert rather than a creator of consensus.

But what does Bobbio think then of the role of the intellectual, the philosopher-expert as it has been played out in recent history? How do his words about tolerance apply to a vicious past? As a form of oppression, the dangerous adventure of Fascism which, perhaps, began as early as 1914-15, with “Mussolini’s expulsion from the Socialist Party, the launching of the ‘Fascio rivoluzionario di azione internazionale’,
the founding of 'Il Popolo', financed by industrialists then in favour of entering the war, which was to remain the regime's newspaper till the very end" (Internet site 1:1), was, as we have seen, also the historical epoch on which Bobbio concentrates most intensely. Ideology, Bobbio warns, can guide both governors and the governed. His basic tenet in discussing Left and Right is that Fascism was on the Right and Communism was on the Left, and therefore opposite to the Right. Proponents of Fascism discriminate against their opponents by banning, *inter alia*, free speech and freedom of the press. As free speech and freedom of the press are the cornerstones of democracy, we can start out by describing Fascism as undemocratic. Having made this distinction, Bobbio defines himself as a "democrat by conviction, ... who has always sought to represent and defend democratic principles in Italy -- a country with a weak democracy" (Bobbio in Glotz and Kallscheuer, 1989:140). Gentile writes:

> From the beginning, the Fascists lived and represented their action through religious metaphors. One can outline the Fascist religion as a sacred-imbuing rhetoric and a liturgy that repeated Christian ritual in language and in manners, modifying it also through D'Annunzian utilization, with a marked propensity of the Fascists to immediately transfigure the vicissitudes of their politics into epic-religious terms, feeling themselves to be emulators and heirs of the heroism of the first patriots of the Risorgimento: 'Fascism ... is an open carboneria [coalfire] of sacrifice'. The Fascists considered themselves prophets, the apostles and soldiers of the new 'religion of the fatherland' [that had risen from the] 'immense pyre of war', sanctified by the blood of heroes and martyrs who sacrificed themselves to complete the 'Italian revolution'" (Gentile, 1994:46).

The blood of war victims served to renew the sacred character of the nation, and the carboneria provided the metaphorical fuel that fed the process of Fascist moral action.

At the outset of all philosophical discussion, Bobbio's message is repeatedly voiced. He has always had little tolerance for what he refers to as the "opposite admonishments" directed towards members of the PdA: that they were bland anti-Communists and overly severe as anti-Fascists, that is, they did not remain equally distant from anti-Communism and anti-Fascism (Bobbio, 1996b:8). Bobbio believes that there was more than sufficient reason to adopt that non-equidistant position, and
he defends that position even today. Over recent years, which have been characterized by historical revisionism, he says, the rejection of anti-Fascism in the name of anti-Communism has often culminated in “another form of equidistance that he finds equally abominable, between Fascism and anti-Fascism” (ibid.). Those who aimed to achieve democratic reconstruction in acknowledging the necessity to go beyond Fascism and anti-Fascism recommended that equidistance in the immediate post-war period. Bobbio disagrees with this view since going beyond Fascism and anti-Fascism would mean “preventing younger generations from being able to grasp the difference between a police state and a state based on law, between a dictatorship, albeit not as ferocious as the Nazi one, and a lame democracy like the First Republic” (ibid.:8,9). He is adamant that the negative aspects of Fascism be emphasized repeatedly so as to remind us that following World War I within the centre of Europe, Fascism was the first dictatorship imposed. Although it was subordinate to its powerful ally, Germany, Fascism was responsible for “unleashing World War II and it was a disgrace in the history of a country that had for some time numbered among civilized nations” (ibid.:9).

Italy can rid herself of this shame, the disgrace of Fascism, only if its citizens realize fully the price the country paid for what Bobbio calls the unpunished tyranny of a few and the obedience of many, albeit a forced and often not well tolerated obedience.

3.4 The Left's task in “taking stock” of philosophy

The fall of the Berlin Wall caused many modern political thinkers to think that the Right-Left dichotomy had become sterile, but more recently the phenomenon of globalization has been the principal cause of a call for an end to the Right-Left distinction. That call is based on a belief that economic, political and cultural problems cannot be examined only in terms of national states, within which the distinction between Right and Left was formed. Those who argue for doing away with the distinction consider that such a “great reshuffling of the cards” has occurred that the distinction has lost all of its descriptive efficacy. Yet the opposite
has occurred, Bobbio maintains, and the Right-Left distinction is stronger and more valid than it has ever before been in our history. Only those who believe in the pervasiveness of the market and trust the market to find solutions to all the problems of civil cohabitation can believe that there is only one road: the complete marketization of human relationships through globalization.

The Left-Right distinction, Bobbio argues, contains the crucial value dichotomy, which needs to be brought into political life by the "culture" he defines in his concept of the politics of culture. As global markets expand, there is a corresponding increase in the problems that the market creates or cannot solve.

The tyrannical or totalitarian element shared by both Communism and Fascism occupies the political sphere. But there are two other spheres which exert power in any society: economic and cultural ones. In these spheres, Bobbio says, lie the most significant differences between Fascism and Communism. There was a cultural polemic against Marxism and Leninism, such that these ideologies were seen to be the cause of the degeneration of power in Communist regimes. There was an economic criticism according to which collectivism, the planned economy and elimination of the market, was the reason for the downfall of Communism. The third criticism, concerning the totalitarian form of power, is the only criticism under which Communism and Fascism can be considered to be similar, Bobbio argues.

Communism represents a distorted attempt to realize a great universal ideal and free humanity from slavery. On a cultural level, Communism was a strong idea that "runs through the entire history of man, from Plato onwards, through to the Fathers of the Church, but Fascism had an opposite inspiration, particularistic and nationalistic" (Bobbio, 1996d:44). Despite the fact that both historical movements resulted in political regression and mass violence, they are antithetical in their worldviews and ends.

If we proceed to the economic sphere, there were significant differences: Hitler's Germany, unlike Stalin's Russia and even Mussolini's Italy, accepted the capitalist system. ... Has Italian culture reached such a point that it can no
longer understand the difference between Communism and Nazism? No longer sees the distance that separates Marx's *Capital* from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*? If that were true, we would really have to be worried (ibid.:44,45).

There are several different philosophies that can either limit or broaden one's philosophical worldview. An awareness of the philosophies that could have served to modify and/or improve the direction of Italian politics is crucial because this awareness increases the Left's chances of flourishing.

The positive and negative value-judgements of the Left and Right are integral features of the political struggle, where the spatial metaphor has completely lost its original meaning, which represents areas without axiological connotations, because sitting on the Right or on the Left no longer refers to a common father, but only to the speaker, a neutral institution (Bobbio, 1996c:41).

The Right-Left dichotomy that Bobbio is certain exists has become muted to the extent that nostalgia now characterizes or afflicts the Left rather than the Right. In the 1970s the Left had a privileged relationship with the future; therefore, it was the Right that experienced nostalgia, whether monarchist or Fascist. The Left now looks ahead with some effort, blighted by having been thrown off the course that appeared natural in former times.

Historically, one of the obstacles that has confronted the Italian Left is the fact that it is in fact threefold: there is the Catholic left, the Actionist left and the Communist Left, and then there is the conflictual relationship between all three. In addressing the question of the Left in general, and in examining the political-cultural debate, one has to reckon with this three-pronged identity. The interpretation of liberty as envisaged by each strand of the Left is a major obstacle to surmount in establishing the Left's future political programme. Bobbio considers the democratization of the Left and its embrace of the democratic method to be of paramount importance. Democracy must be reinforced by all the forces of the Left, for it remains the strongest antidote to the abuse of power.
Although Bobbio is adamant in his conviction that the body politic is permanently divided by competing attitudes towards change and political order, he emphasizes that the theoretical significance of the Left changed after the events of 1989 and the fall of the Soviet empire. At one time, Leftists could be defined as progressives, with faith in science and rationality, as compared with the conservatism of the Right. Since the time of World War I, the Left has gradually become more hostile towards industrialism and has become more cautious about modernity while "the Right, from Mussolini to Thatcher, has pressed home reformist policies based on a deep faith in scientific and economic modernization" (Keane in Bobbio, 1989b:viii).

Bobbio still sees all reality in terms of Left and Right, and good and evil. The struggle against the Fascist Right has been, is now, and will continue to be, a constant feature of man's existence. This fact of human existence is the reason why one "has a duty to be a pessimist" (Bobbio, 1984:99). Since Bobbio lived and fought against Mussolini's Fascist state and cultural intrusion, one may be tempted to argue that he is a product of that particular historical time and has consequently developed a worldview that rests on the need to resist all brutality, whether it be ideological, physical and/or intellectual.

The Left must, in general, take stock of contemporary society, and not fall into the trap of believing that the distinction between Right and Left has lost its meaning. Particularly after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the more recent phenomenon of globalization, Bobbio warns, the Left must take care to refuse to adopt a conception of economic, political and cultural problems that go beyond national States. The distinction between Left and Right emerged in national States and there is no need to believe that the cards have since been reshuffled. For Bobbio, the distinction remains. The Left has a precise role to play in the future, Bobbio warns, as the global market expands.

The phenomenon of globalization proceeds in all the more economically developed countries, along with the movement of populations from poor countries to richer countries. If there is a phenomenon that re-proposes the distinction between egalitarians and non-egalitarians or ... between those
who opt for a politics of inclusion and those who opt for a politics of exclusion, it is precisely that of emigration (ibid.).

In Italy, emigration is one of the main issues that serves to separate Right from Left, Bobbio thinks. As concerns "human relationships, decisions taken in legislative fora and, even in more general terms, conceiving the treatment of others, politics towards immigrants distinguishes the Left's policy from the Right's, on a daily basis" (ibid.).

Another fundamental difference between Left and Right concerns the applicability of Left and Right to the political struggle today. For example, it can be argued that the politics of the Left resembles the politics of the Right, or that "in the recent past the Left had bit by bit invaded the space of the Right, so much so as to render the Left politically irrelevant" (ibid.). It is not true, Bobbio argues, that the Left has lost its raison d'être. The ideals of the Left, which inspire the struggle for human emancipation from a condition of servitude vis-à-vis the capitalist system, have not withered. What is important, Bobbio argues, is that the Left does not accept defeat. The difference between Right and Left rests in the different way in which equality – the relationship between equality and inequality – is conceived by Right and Left.

The man of the Left is he who considers that which men have in common rather than that which divides them. For the man of the Right, on the contrary, that which differentiates one man from another is also politically more relevant than that which unites them. The difference between Right and Left is revealed in that for the Left equality is the rule and inequality is the exception. It follows that any form of inequality must be in some way justified, while for the man of the Right exactly the contrary is true – inequality is the rule and, if a relationship of equality among different subjects is to be accepted, it must be justified (ibid.:2).

When confronted with difference, such as the difference between men and women or between citizens and the immigrant population, it is not that those on the Left include all and those on the Right exclude all. "Rather, the rule of the Left is inclusion, save for exceptions and the rule of the Right is exclusion, save for exceptions" (ibid.). According to Bobbio, in answering the "three traditional questions – 'equality among whom? equality in terms of what? equality based on what criterion?' - the Left tends to give a more extensive reply" (ibid.) in terms of inclusion.
To the first question, we are obliged to proceed by degrees. Universal male and female suffrage is more egalitarian than only universal male suffrage, while universal male suffrage is more egalitarian than suffrage limited to literate males or to those who own property (Bobbio, 1996c:62). To be Left-wing, however, one need not proclaim that each person is equal in all things, since that would be a purely utopian vision. "The assertion that the Left is egalitarian does not mean that it is egalitarianist, advocating equality for everyone in everything" (ibid.:63). We can define egalitarians as those who, "while not ignoring the fact that people are both equal and unequal, believe that what they have in common has greater value in the formation of a good community" (ibid.:66,67).

To the second question, equality in terms of what, "the Left gives preference to fundamental human rights regarding consumer goods ..." (ibid.). Concerning the criterion for equality, the third question, "one usually considers the criterion of need and of work to be that of the Left while the Right [uses] the criterion of merit and of rank" (ibid.). The ethos of equality inspired the Russian Revolution as much as it did European social democracy. The history of socialism is largely the history of egalitarian ideals, pursued either through the complete abolition of private property or through policies designed to promote social justice by different forms of income redistribution.

Bobbio is against all forms of tyranny since tyrannical regimes do not foster a social and political environment where all can flourish intellectually and economically. In his thinking, the ideal state would bear the stamp of de Tocqueville and Cavour who shared the same anxiety about humanity's progress towards excessive democracy. De Tocqueville in particular represents one of the two wings of European liberalism; his conservatism is counterposed with Mill's more radical liberalism. Bobbio believes that de Tocqueville and Cavour made the most significant contribution to today's conception of liberalism. De Tocqueville "was firmly convinced that life in society must be based on and animated by liberty, above all religious and moral liberty" (Bobbio, 1990:52). As for Cavour, Bobbio's attitude is clear in his lengthy description
of the tug of war between the Italian statesmen Cavour and Mazzini in the mid 19th century:

"Mazzini proclaimed the educational role and responsibility of the state, in opposition to the liberal view of [the state] as a necessary evil whose functions should accordingly be restricted to the policing of society" (ibid.:71). Cavour had faith in the "progressive adaptation of institutions to the changing needs of society; .. [he] held the view that economic progress, far from conflicting with spiritual and moral progress, in fact runs parallel to it" (ibid.:72). Referring to Mazzini as a revolutionary and to Cavour as one who seeks to reach balance through the golden mean, Bobbio makes his commitment to liberalism and temperance clear -- somewhere "between reaction and revolution" (ibid.:71). He is a fervent opponent of paternalism and patronage, and this is echoed in his praise of how la mitetza influences the ethics of political culture.

In Italy during the late 1930s, "that minor Hegelism, which [constituted] Italian idealism was broken into two opposite streams, [one] leaning towards science (new positivism) and the other towards the rediscovery of religious experience, if only in the form of an upturned theology, such as that of Heidegger's existentialism" (Bobbio, 1984:241). Capitini was captivated by the spiritual crisis experienced at that time and felt motivated by a personal and radical need to find a solution that went beyond the social or the political, or "even less the merely institutional, [to consider] whether there did exist a streak of the most genuine existentialism". Capitini expressed the principal motives which inspired existentialism in stating that "l'essenza della religione è la coscienza appassionata della finitezza" (ibid.) [the essence of religion is the passionate consciousness of finiteness]. It is one's passionate awareness that is to be emphasized rather than one's finiteness, for, as Bobbio has commented, it serves to mark that which distinguishes it. He writes eloquently of "the tension towards the overcoming of limit, not its acceptance, [but] travelling beyond it towards the intimate you [tu] of you all"73, not so much to stay within the situation, as existentialism does, as to keep from catching a glimpse of
'liberated reality'" (ibid.:242). For Bobbio, one of the tasks of the Left is to maintain a stance of passionate awareness.

Bobbio's intellectual heritage reflects his conviction that one's theoretical as well as rational orientation and progressive development derive from the dyad right-left. He believes that this view is also reflected widely in the work of both ancient and contemporary authors from heterogeneous disciplines. The objective reality Bobbio sees in the political dyad is reinforced by the mathematical or scientific one. This "instinct of combinations" (inspired by Pareto) which pushed him to examine all possible arguments can be found in every book and article Bobbio has ever written, within every address given at conferences and round tables, at the heart of each newspaper commentary, as well as in his myriad of letters to other thinkers (Bobbio, 1996b:81). The completeness of the bibliography produced by Carlo Violi (Laterza, 1995) on the entirety of Bobbio's works shows the completeness of Bobbio's discussion of culture. It was in 1950 that he contributed to the founding of the Società Europea di Cultura. Today he looks back on this experience through his perception of himself as an old man:

The Greeks used to say that things can be distinguished from one another according to whether they are 'of nature or of conviction'. Age is of nature and things of nature are precisely those that do not depend on us. I also remember Machiavelli's other distinction, which is just as famous: virtue and luck. Old age is good fortune, not a virtue ... (ibid.:109,110).

The purpose of establishing the Società Europea di Cultura, along with "Urs von Balthazar, ... the scientist [John B.] ... Haldane, ... Antonio Banfi, Henri Lefebvre the historian, André Siegfried [and] the English poet Stephen Spender" (ibid.:110), was to counter the Cold War through moral resistance. Morality is one of the most difficult spheres to fathom in terms of Right and Left. Today, Giuliano Amato has put his finger on the moral difference between the two, saying that the Right is willing to help the downtrodden and the weak while the Left is ready not simply to give aid or assistance but to enable the weakest in society to walk on their own (Amato, 2000).
Production of things and the production of human relations, in Lenin's view, are the only vital forces at work in society. Colletti writes: "Marx ... [studied] ... 'modern' society, the capitalist mode of production and exchange, not Britain, France, etc., as such" (Colletti, 1974:9). Marx confronted us with an organic unity that was to be the basis of all history. It was not the first time that intellectuals have foisted organic unity on communities of people, but Marx's *Communist Manifesto* was different. It successfully aroused the working public's rebellion against the ravages of uncontrolled free-market society so that the workers desired organic unity. Intellectuals have great power or, as Zygmunt Bauman maintains, had great power.

In the article entitled "The Upturned Utopia" (Bobbio, 1989a), Bobbio refers to the crisis of Communism as a world movement which promised "emancipation of the poor and oppressed, the 'wretched of the earth'" (1989a:37). Not only has the Communist regime stumbled on its revolutionary ideology, and the Soviet superpower been defeated, but a dream has died. Communist revolution and ideals, which led many people into morally-inspired action, but also exposed many to cruelty, sacrifice, or indeed death, have left a trail of material and spiritual bankruptcy. "From the Red Army in Russia to Mao's Long March, from the conquest of power by a group of resolute men in Cuba to the desperate struggle of the Vietnamese people against the mightiest power in the world", this inexorable force, Marx's "solution to the enigma of history" (ibid.), has ended, fragmented and torn, yet it continues to bleed in the memory of some of those who took up the Communist banner. "The first utopia that tried to enter history, to pass from the realm of 'words' to that of things, not only came true but is being upturned, has already almost been upturned in the countries where it was put to the test" (ibid.:38).

Bobbio sees the end of the Soviet empire as giving way to animated popular movements that have confirmed the Communist failure, movements which are
adamant in their demands for what he refers to as the four great freedoms of modern man:

individual liberty, or the right not to be arrested arbitrarily and to be judged in accordance with clearly defined penal and judicial rules; freedom of the press and of opinion; freedom of assembly, [and finally] the most difficult to achieve -- the freedom of association out of which free trade unions and free parties were born, and with them the pluralist society in whose absence democracy does not exist. The completion of this centuries-long process was political liberty, or the right of all citizens to participate in collective decisions that concern them (ibid.).

These freedoms, Bobbio contends, are not those of progressive or popular democracy but liberal democracy "which emerged and consolidated itself through the slow and arduous conquest of [the above-mentioned] basic freedoms" (ibid.). The fact that popular movements in former Communist regimes are demanding the great freedoms of liberal democracy "all at once" (ibid.) implies at worst revolution, and varying forms of counter-revolution or graduality at the other extreme. Here, Bobbio compares the present state of the new democracies of eastern Europe with the political evolution of western Europe:

In Europe the State of freedoms [i.e., the liberal state] came after the law-based State, the democratic State after the State of freedoms. But on those squares today people are simultaneously demanding the law-based State, the State of freedoms and the democratic State (ibid.).

The demands for democracy made by the popular movements of the former eastern bloc cannot be met promptly, given that western democracy is in continual transition. More and more it is the group -- trade unions, organizations, professional associations, political parties -- rather than the individual that dominates political life in today's democracies. No longer is there a sovereign organic power but a plethora of conflicting groups trying to achieve supremacy; hence the need to distinguish "between elites which impose themselves and elites which propose themselves" (Bobbio, 1994a:303).
Television is at the centre of this discussion of groups and elites which impose themselves. In particular, Bobbio fears the possibility of a society modelled on television, which he considers to be naturaliter of the Right. The entry into politics of Silvio Berlusconi, Bobbio argues, reflects an Italian society increasingly "created by television" (Bobbio in Bobbio, Bosetti and Vattimo, 1994:36). In the sense that television is naturaliter of the Right, Berlusconi and his political supporters are naturaliter of the Right. They possess "interests that are not those of the Left; the Left thrives on great principles and is associated with human suffering" (ibid.). In March 1994, the election was won not by Berlusconi, Bobbio contends, "but by the society that his empire of mass media and advertising created" (ibid.). That society enjoys "watching silly families at table who glorify this or that product" (ibid.). Moreover, in such a society, the Left and its traditional values has no grip, Bobbio argues.

The hope of revolution has remained constant despite the failure of the Communist utopia, but the democratic challenge is not easy to meet. Although "the conquest of the freedom of the modern world ... cannot but be the starting point for the countries of the upturned utopia" (Bobbio, 1989a :38), Bobbio reminds us that the realization of the law-based liberal-democratic state is insufficient to deal effectively with the "original problems" that provided the basis for the generation of the proletarian movement. The need, hope or desire for revolution is doubly clear today.

The poor and forsaken are still condemned to live in a world of terrible injustices, crushed by unreachable and apparently unchangeable economic magnates on which the political authorities, even when formally democratic, nearly always depend (ibid.:38,39).

The very same problems continue to plague humanity. The failure of Communism does not mean that the problems are not still there. The injustices that Communism failed to address and eradicate are still with us. Bobbio perceives one overriding question: "Are the democracies that govern the world's richest countries capable of solving the problems that Communism has failed to solve?" (ibid.:39). There is
nothing for one to rejoice about, as "the end of historical Communism ... has [not] put an end to poverty and the thirst for justice" (ibid.). The scale of these problems has increased our sense of being overwhelmed owing to technological developments hastening the globalization process. Bobbio reminds the reader that a material and spiritual abyss rests between "our world" and the "rest of the world", and that life after Communism is still no picnic.

The path to follow to make an important contribution to socio-political balance would be one that combines liberalism and socialism, despite the fact that "opposition between liberalism and democracy remains as strong as ever" (Bobbio, 1990:73). The two terms do not represent antagonistic political traditions, Bobbio says, but can draw from one another as long as socialism is interpreted as "social responsibility". Perry Anderson applauds Bobbio's synthesis of liberalism and socialism as "bold and creditable" (Anderson, 1988:1), but lacking in coherence.

'The cause of liberalism will be lost ... if it is not prepared to socialize the forces of production now at hand', even -- if necessary -- resorting to 'intelligent force' to 'subdue and disarm the recalcitrant minority'. The aims of classical liberalism now require the achievement of socialism. For the 'socialized economy is the means of free individual development' (Bobbio in Anderson, 1988:6).

What Anderson describes as Bobbio's lack of coherence in merging liberalism with socialism has become even more apparent in recent years, owing to Bobbio's battle to prevent the reform of the first part of the Italian Constitution by Berlusconi and his followers. In the tutelage of the fundamental values of the Italian Republic Bobbio has strived to prevent the judiciary becoming subordinate to political power. Bobbio's emphasis is that of protecting the rights-based State from all abuses of power.

According to Bobbio, judging by the literature produced in the past century, it is possible to identify at least three arguments in support of the view that socialist democracy is preferable to liberal democracy. (a) Liberal democracy, also referred to as bourgeois or capitalist democracy, came into existence as representative
democracy, with elected representatives. Socialist democracy, on the other hand, is a direct democracy in the double sense either of a democracy of all the people without representatives or else of a democracy based ... on mandated delegates subject to recall. (b) Bourgeois democracy has allowed people to participate in political power ... through the extension of the suffrage to the point where all ... enjoy the vote; but only socialist democracy will allow them to participate also in decisions on economic matters, which in capitalist society are taken automatically. ... (c) Finally, and above all, liberal democracy offers the right to participate directly or indirectly in political decisions, but this is not paralleled by any increased equality in the distribution of economic power ... Socialist democracy, by contrast, holds a more equal distribution of economic power to be one of the prime aims of the changes which it aims to institute in the economic regime, and thus transforms the formal power to participate into a real and substantial power, at the same time bringing democracy itself to its ideal fulfilment, a greater equality among men (Bobbio, 1990:76,77).

The liberal movement and the socialist movement have both embraced liberal democratic ideals and, consequently, both liberal-democratic and social-democratic governments have emerged. However, the commitment to democracy of each form of government differs. The dyad liberalism-democracy "means above all universal suffrage" (ibid.:77) and free expression. In governments based on socialism and democracy, however, "it signifies above all the egalitarian ideal, which can only be achieved by the property reforms proposed by socialism" (ibid.). The basic difference between the two forms of government is that "in the former case democracy is a consequence, in the latter it is a presupposition" (ibid.). There is a significant difference between their democratic identities for, "as a consequence, it is the political liberty which follows from and completes the series of more particular liberties; as a presupposition, it remains to be completed under the changed conditions which socialism aspires to create through the transformation of capitalist society" (ibid.:77,78).
3.5.1 The Italian problem

Today's Italy is wrestling with the thorny question of constitutional reform, a delicate question in itself, and further complicated by the admonitions expressed by departed or ageing members of the Resistance movement who participated as members of the Constituent Assembly back in 1948, and who drafted the present-day Constitution. This Constitution was written in the aftermath of two concurrent wars, an international war and a civil war, and after emerging from a phase of destruction, hardship, and the dramatic end of Mussolini. The keenest supporters of parliamentary reform are convinced that if constitutional reforms are not effected, Italy cannot realistically aspire to "enter Europe" (La Stampa, 19/7/1996:7). In addition to the thorny question of institutional reform, the other major questions facing Italy are the efficacy of its government coalitions, the unrelenting flow of immigrants and a solution to Tangeropolis [Bribesville]. Rather than tactical strategies concerning the balance of government and relations with the centre and Catholic representatives in Italian politics, Bobbio has called for yet another consideration of "what the Left is" (Bosetti, 1997:21), documented in an interview with Giancarlo Bosetti. The decline of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the political experiment known as real Communism have provoked "a crisis of social democracy, tout court" (Bosetti, 1997:21).

Despite this, we cannot say that Bobbio holds the task of preserving the Left to be more important than the construction of a future based on an inclusive strategy. Bobbio endorses the strategy of political intransigence à la Gobetti, who stressed that political intransigence is the essential condition necessary for apertura culturale, cultural reawakening and openness. The Left thus defends a process, calls attention to the need for cultural openness; this defence of culture is one of the Left's defining characteristics.

Bosetti argues that given today's pressing political problems, such as pension reform and the European agenda, Bobbio is overly concerned with theoretical issues. However, Bobbio believes that all sides, and particularly adversaries of the Left, are
repeatedly and more and more vigorously demanding where the Left is headed. Following years of worldwide electoral failure and the dominance of the free-market Right, social democrats recognize the fragility of the Left's position as well as the need for reforms that carry the support of the public.

This problem is not a tactical one at all. It is not only a matter of tactical problems or of strategic problems. These are essential problems of historical perspective that we must at least address, despite our being aware of the enormous difficulty posed by trying to find solutions that are not simply interlocutory. I thus ask myself the question: 'Are we sufficiently prepared for a serious debate on these themes?' ... 'Where is the Left headed?' (Bosetti, 1997:21).

Bobbio has placed himself left of centre in the ideological mind-set, but to get to the core of his thinking, one has to consider other notions of "the Left": the new Left, Euro-Communism of the genre promoted by Enrico Berlinguer,75 Marxism, communitarian socialism, Fabianism, social democracy and all the movements coined in the name of leaders like Lenin, Trotsky and Mao. This task, however, is not sufficient to give one an accurate idea of what "the Left" is; indeed, one might just as well begin with what it is not, and examples abound to the extent that the reader gets lost, interested/disinterested or bound on a rocky road to forms of meaning that do not connect with the present. Part of the solution would be to concede that change itself moves faster than any human potential to gauge it. As soon as one recognizes that one cannot speak of socialism tout court or any pure form of what "the Left" constitutes, the mist begins to clear. We can gain a clearer idea of Bobbio's vision of the Left if we consider the thinkers whose thoughts converge in his, namely, Mondolfo, Gobetti, Salvemini, Rosselli, Capitini, and Calamandrei.

One remaining element of the Italian Left, the Refounded Communists (RC), led by Fausto Bertinotti, has placed much importance on its tactical strategy. The relationship between the PDS and RC is a matter of party tactics, as Bobbio confirms, but even this relationship can best be handled by urgently addressing the future of the Left.
Even this problem, I would say, cannot be solved entirely but can only be clarified or mediated through our tackling the problem of the Left today, from the point of view of a long-term perspective, and from our proposing, yet again, the general theme of what the Left’s task in contemporary society is – in a way which is appropriate to the difficulty that the Left, if it continues to exist, as I am sure it will, is going to face in the next century (Bobbio in Bosetti, 1997:21).

At this juncture, when Bosetti wonders whether the differences within the Italian Left can be overcome, Bobbio recalls that the weakness of today’s Italian Left, or the controversial relations between different Lefts, is but a repetition of what occurred in January of 1921, when the Communist faction split from the Socialist Party to form the Communist Party.

That after so many years ... this wound has still not healed is intolerable.... It is still an obstacle to the creation of a strong and winning Left. An obstacle so grave that on the eve of a congress that ought to constitute the basis for a reinforcement of the Left’s ranks ... it is an almost preliminary condition that it be resolved to ensure the success of the debate. ... One of the anomalies of Italian socialism is that inevitable internal disagreements are almost always resolved, rather than through a majority and a minority within the party, which usually happens in other countries, through splits that gave rise to new parties. [These new parties are] almost always in stiff competition with the parties from which they split. The adverse results of these ruptures are there for all to see. In addition to the catastrophic split of 1921, it is useful to recall ... the current one between PDS and RC (Bobbio in Bosetti, 1997:21).

These splits have always benefited the Right, Bobbio insists, and weakened the Left. In the first years of the Republic the Left experienced a dramatic and troubled existence, through unifications, divisions, fusions on the Left and splits on both the Right and the Left, Bobbio says, but always in the Socialist Party’s search for autonomy from the Communist Party. “This autonomy was sought sometimes from the Right, sometimes from the Left, from the centre, or from who knows where, and ended in Craxi’s break that could not be remedied, so drastic as to shift the Socialist Party so far towards the centre that it led it right out of the traditional area of the Left” (Bobbio in Bosetti, 1997:21).
In 1996, however, a centre-Left coalition finally won the elections. Bobbio sees that moment as a turning point which spells an opportune moment for overcoming "the wound of division" (ibid.:22).

Bobbio contends that part of the reason for considering whether a Left still exists is to ask oneself what history means. But asking oneself what history means "is to believe that there is an intentionality in historical development, which has to be understood as a conscious direction towards an end" (Bobbio, 1996a:116). History, which is necessarily ambiguous, is described, expressed or recounted with "different answers according to who [questions it] and in what circumstances" (ibid.). As we confront the failure of real Communism and "the disappearance of a myth, it is more ambiguous than ever" (ibid.). At present, we cannot guess or bet on the destiny of history:

The two interpretations that dominated the last century were Hegel's, which triumphed and which perceived history as the progressive realization of the idea of liberty (the Hegelian and clearly also the Marxian view of history as the transformation of the realm of need into the realm of liberty), and Nietzsche's catastrophic one according to which humanity is moving towards the age of nihilism (ibid.).

In his consideration of philosophy and the task of philosophy, Bobbio assures us that there is no pre-established historical plan that we can attribute to Providence or Nature. Yet he believes that the outcome of humanity's historical condition is headed in either a positive or a negative direction. "The human world is either going towards universal peace, as Kant predicted, or it is going towards a war of annihilation, and thus the word genocide has been coined in contrast to pacifism ... " (ibid.). He entreats us to admit, however, that "no one can believe in a universal cause when modern thought is so fragmented, so diffident towards general ideas ..." (ibid.:116,17).

It is clear that socialism has developed new constituencies and the task of realizing socialist ideals is much more difficult after the failure of real Communism, owing to modern dividedness. However, the strategy of much of the Italian Left, particularly
the policies of Walter Veltroni, Giuliano Amato and Massimo D'Alema, leaves much to be desired. Bobbio would prefer that the current mainstream party of the Left forget about reproposing a "liberal revolution", since all of its members have become liberals, and instead hoist anew the flag of "social justice". Social justice, Bobbio argues, had always been the main concern of the millions of men and women who "made the history of socialism" (Bobbio, 1996:137). Social justice cannot, he believes, be limited to solidarity or charitable generosity. The Left today should aim at implementing "severe justice", since even when mendicants crowded on the steps of the churches in former times, generous solidarity was a feature of society. Solidarity cannot ensure justice as it can be endorsed, or eschewed, by any citizen. Only through law can the guarantees required for a just society be ensured. Law does not have the moral weakness or volubility of men. Accordingly, a just society can only be realized through legal protection, and not simply through the goodness of fellow human beings.

To be kept in mind, however, is that the "salvation" of Italy has less of a chance of materializing if it is linked to constitutional reform. "I remain convinced, as I have for the last fifty years, that costumi are of greater value than institutions" (ibid.:138). Here, we can translate costumi not only as modes of life, conditions of society and outward bearing or behaviour, but also as established usage having the force of law.

3.6 Politics of culture or inclusion

Any theory of forms of government has both descriptive and prescriptive features.

In its descriptive function, the treatment of forms of government rests in ... a classification of the various types of political constitution [which] in historical experience ... can be discerned by the observer. In this case, the political writer acts like a botanist who, after having observed and studied attentively a certain number of plants, divides them up according to differences or draws them together according to similarities and, in the end, is able to classify them according to a particular order. The first great classifications of forms of government, such as those of Plato and Aristotle, are of this type: drawn from
the data generated by historical observation, and reflecting the variety of forms organized in Greek cities (Bobbio, 1976:3).

Bobbio chooses a "politics of culture" to facilitate the liberalization process, rather than the "culture of politics". In other words, it is important to recognize the political character of cultural commitment, but it is also important to maintain an awareness of its autonomy from any form of bureaucratic meddling. Bobbio's concern is primarily with the man of culture, (meaning) the intellectual, who should not, he argues, divide the world into two opposing camps, such as often occurred at the time of the Cold War. Although Bobbio stated this opinion as early as 1951, it serves as a lesson to us today, for instead of two "truths" - a red (Left) and a black (Right) truth - there are many versions of truth. The task of the intellectual, "who ought to shy away from alternatives which are too clearly-cut", is not an easy one (Bobbio, 1955:9). The man of culture's first responsibility is to reflect, to doubt and to avoid taking up hasty solutions (ibid.).

For Bobbio, the task of the man of culture is to re-establish trust in discussion and to ensure that dialogue continues, even among opposing parties. Dialogue is both an identifying feature of individual liberty and the political duty of the intellectual. Bobbio evokes the foundation of the Società Europea di Cultura in 1950 as an example of inclusion among heterogeneous cultures, for one of the Società's main principles was that of maintaining fruitful dialogue among its members. "Time would seem to give credit not to those who saw either all red or all black, but to those who did not fear to insinuate some doubt into the overly excited defenders of one side or the other" (ibid.). In other words, the man of culture must have one sole ambition - that of playing no one's game - "which is advantageous to all" (ibid.:11).

Bobbio writes that "The task of the man of culture is today more than ever that of sowing doubts, not of gathering certainties" (ibid.:15). Certainties, steeped in dogma or in the pomp of myth, are "the stuff of the chronicles of pseudo-culture of improvisers, of amateurs, of impartial propagandists" (ibid.). Culture, on the other hand, means "measure, careful judgement, circumspection, the assessment of all arguments before pronouncing oneself, listening to all witnesses before deciding,
and ... never deciding, in the manner of an oracle, any question on which a ... definitive choice depends" (ibid.).

One might say that the man of culture cannot stand aloof, that he also must commit himself, that is, choose one of two alternatives. But the man of culture has his own way of not remaining aloof, which is to reflect more on the problems of collective life than is normally done in official institutions of academic culture ... He has his way of committing himself: that of acting in the defence of the very conditions and presuppositions of culture. He too has his way of deciding, as long as it is clear that he can only decide in favour of the rights of doubt rather than the claims of dogmatism, of the duties of criticism rather than the seduction of infatuation, of the development of reason rather than the empire of blind faith, of the veracity of science rather than the deceits of propaganda (ibid.).

Bobbio praises what he calls "la fecondità del colloquio" or enrichment provided through calm discussion, particularly when the discussion is undertaken by men of culture. The enrichment derives from going beyond the barriers or [iron] curtains put in place by "official politics". By 1952, the year in which Bobbio wrote of la fecondità del colloquio, the Cold War had already resulted in the division of the world into two extreme poles - Communism and anti-Communist ones.

In the 20th century, scientific research came to occupy a large part of the terrain previously left to philosophers, for many metaphysical arguments about human destiny have been tackled with greater success by biologists, economists and sociologists. Today, Bobbio argues, science is the only great enterprise of knowledge, and it spreads across many fields of specialized research. The biologist or scientist gives more convincing replies than the philosopher, who, Bobbio says, speculates on a few abstract problems. Given the great increase in the mass of scientific data, it is impossible for the philosopher to try and dominate the entire scientific world.

The politics of culture comprises a view of liberty that is universal. Liberty belongs to everyone, and has been achieved historically, in Bobbio's view. Individual liberty is the historical result of the class struggle of the bourgeoisie, fighting for its own emancipation. It is not therefore possible to say with Marx that individual liberty is a
bourgeois value that is destined to perish with the bourgeoisie. Individual liberty is a universal value, and Bobbio “challenges anyone to find a man, bourgeois or proletarian, who would be more of a man by renouncing it” (Bobbio, 1955:68). Even though liberty was acquired by the bourgeois class who intended it for a few only, it was in fact acquired for all. For Bobbio, individual liberty was achieved through an age-old struggle waged by the bourgeois against two Leviathans – the absolute state and the absolute Church. It created an aggregate of constitutional mechanisms against the return of these powers and as a guarantee for the individual; these mechanisms proved to be genuinely effective. Indeed, Bobbio argues, those who deride constitutional mechanisms should be careful, since they have not been able to offer any other more effective guarantees of individual freedoms. Any Leviathan, whether political, religious, mediatic, among others, is a danger to individual liberty.

In a similar vein, the advent of the republic in Italy and the framing of the Italian Constitution have helped preserve democracy and individual liberty in the post-war period, and this has successfully reinforced Italy’s position within Europe. Efforts to discredit the heritage of anti-Fascist republicanism, as well as moves to have the Italian Constitution modified so that a semi-presidential or presidential system results, could undermine the liberty achieved. Whether the threat is from the Right or from the Left, intellectuals must work continually to spell out the differences in the political aims and methods of these two poles to preserve liberty.

We must show the maximum respect for the institutions that emerged from the bourgeois revolution, for these structures, Bobbio says, have been historically attained and maintained. “It would be a sign of scarce historical consideration if one were not able to distinguish the countries where these structures exist, even if they creak or function poorly (where it is a matter of making them function better, not of destroying them) and those countries where they have never existed” (Bobbio, 1955:69). Just as one relies on the Left-Right dichotomy to relate and explain a political position, the human condition with regard to individual rights is to be perceived according to whether those rights exist, regardless of the fact that they emerged out of bourgeois struggle. The benefits are the patrimony of all.
Another aspect of the politics of culture is tolerance. Truth emerges only as history unfolds, and therefore truth is always in the process of being defined; only a part of it can be seized by us:

As for the idea of tolerance, it rests on the philosophical principle of awareness of the historicity of truth and therefore on the incapability of man to arrive at a definitive and absolute truth. Those who are willing to topple the state of rights without batting an eye must remember that they must first topple completely this deep conviction from which modern thought and life were born, and substitute it with not only the principle that absolute truth can be arrived at ... but also that this absolute truth is consigned to a power of this world such as the state (or the party) (Bobbio, 1955:70).

Bobbio argues that it would really be a great leap forward, after the long struggle against the churches who claimed to have the only truth, to end up saying that a public entity like the state or the party possessed absolute truth, without the help of any supernatural revelations or divine intervention. This claim is not new. It was sustained during the time when the struggle for the principle of tolerance was being waged, and it was precisely the most stubborn adversaries of bourgeois parties who sustained it — those people who any modest progressive today would not hesitate to call reactionaries.

Bobbio concludes his reflections on tolerance by suggesting that readers consult “Chapter XII of Hobbes’ De Cive”. There they will read that

among seditious theories, ... among those theories that in the Leviathan state it is not legal to maintain, the first is precisely that according to which judging between good and evil can be determined by the individual. Why should it be ‘seditious’, according to Hobbes, to maintain that the individual can judge good and evil? Because judging good and evil is only to be done by the state (Bobbio, 1955:70).

By contrast, Bobbio insists that judging between good and evil is the right and the duty of the individual. This was not immediately apparent in Hobbes’ time owing to the need to secure peace. Demands for liberty at that time gradually rose up from those who struggled against the dogmatism of the churches and the authoritarianism
of the state; each social reality brings different changes and requests for the expansion of rights. Now, we need to move from Hobbes's rational hypothesis "to the analysis of real societies and their histories" (Bobbio, 1996a:53), for humans are no longer "a generic entity but seen in their ... concrete situation in society: as a child, old person, sick person" (ibid.:48). There is now more "status for the single individual" and as the social context develops, that status increases.

Hobbes' teaching is an admonishment to thinkers who consider the great questions of liberty and equality from "a narrow angle, without having fully understood the importance and the gravity of their discussion" (ibid.). In addition to the Communists and the Catholics, Bobbio’s strategy of inclusion makes room for the bourgeois class, and all other classes as well, with a view to ensuring diversity and the elaboration of truth.

If we were to examine better the principles on which our civilization rests, we would not be so easily inclined to consider them the ephemeral conquests of a class, which can be swept away, without necessarily sweeping away the values that it brought. Bourgeois civilization, just like all other civilizations, must be developed and integrated, but it cannot be eliminated. The politics of the 'tabula rasa' are the politics of barbarians. Therefore, it would be a 'grave evil' if we were to witness its decline (to the decline of that which it brought, whether good or evil) without being troubled, rather, by giving it ... the final blow (ibid.:70,71).
Politics in today's world takes place largely on cultural terrain. A correct reading of Bobbio's work brings to light the importance of culture in human development and in the mind-set, each individual having been shaped by a plethora of media and other anthropological influences. Bobbio believes that, in the few societies which have reached a certain level of culture, the political class does not justify its power solely on the grounds of possessing it. Rather, the attempt is made to give it a moral and legal basis, to make it seem to originate as a necessary consequence of doctrines and beliefs generally recognized and accepted in the society that it directs (Bobbio, 1989b:83).

In this chapter, I emphasize that Bobbio teaches that philosophy is the Left's best political tool, even after the fact that the traditional Left has been routed. The neo-liberal Right, while hailing the "end of history" and the victory of capitalism on a worldwide scale has brought people on to the streets in protest. Those protesting represent a new gathering of political and social forces, be they of the far Left, minority groups, of Catholic inspiration or precarious workers of the post-industrial age, that can inject new energy into the Left's cause. Bobbio is convinced that this Left wishes to voice its commitment to philosophy – to those perennial ideals of equality and justice. The unbridled marketization of society, the tendency of multinational corporations to dictate policy and the mediatic control of individual conscience have aroused the anger of many on the Left. Bobbio is satisfied that their commitment to act epitomizes "steering clear of elusion", of grappling with politics rather than avoiding the practical issues that affect the dimension of the liberty one can live, day to day.

The intellectual, Bobbio believes, can work to prevent the realization of the "new poverty" of neo-liberalism. That task involves recognition of the deficit of "workerist culture" (Negri, 2002:5) and of its attachment to hegemonic values. All sectors of society, not merely the shrinking group of industrial workers, have a right to civil liberties as well as representative inclusion in society and a share in common
goods like ecology and wealth. Social democracy has not exhausted its historic mission, Bobbio argues, for abuses of power accompany every age.

The new systems of hegemony that involve "immaterial labour", those which produce information and cultural content rather than commodities, must be as pluralistic as possible. Otherwise, Bobbio warns, human endeavour and public opinion will fall prey to particular powers, be they political, economic or spiritual. His formula for liberalism thus rests on the lesson of anti-Fascism, where conflicting voices and different modes of expressing culture are ensured through a legal framework that guarantees pluralism and human rights.

There are both advantages and difficulties that spring from an analysis of Bobbio’s philosophy. Bobbio’s conception of the intellectual differs from that of several other contemporary thinkers. For Rorty, as I discussed above, the philosopher ought to seek originality and promote pluralistic idealism; others should not look to philosophers for wisdom and essential morality since the genuinely original thinker is driven by curiosity and is not limited by practical morality. For Bauman, intellectuals emerge as the elite of the modern age who carry out the task of regulating society and converting “inferior elements” by educating them. The intellectual sets the rules based on a conformist understanding of truth, judgement and taste. This technique fulfills the centralist ambitions of the state in regulating society through a “cultural” operation, one that artificially inculturates the primitive and non-universal aspects of humanity. In the postmodern age, intellectuals have become dispossessed of cultural authority, since the state has gradually become more dependent on “a self-sustaining legal rationality” (Martin, 1998:69). In other words, the intellectual’s legislative function has diminished. In the postmodern age, the intellectual takes on the new role of interpreting the acceptance of the plurality of cultures. The degree to which the legislative function overlaps with that of the interpretative function remains open to debate.

It is not absolutely necessary that we draw a political and moral synthesis from the work of Bobbio based on his contribution to democratic and anti-Fascist theory.
Bosworth argues that for more than a generation the Italian Left was linked in one way or another to the Italian Communist Party and forged its identity on the ‘myth of the Resistance’ (Bosworth, 2002:2). Bobbio, however, conceives the Resistance as a movement that exemplifies opposition to the Fascist dictatorship which punished the majority of Italians and which resulted in the ultimate evil of alliance with Nazi Germany. In this thesis, I have sought to prove the validity of Bobbio’s moral claim.

A perennial issue is that individuals cannot simply rely on intellectuals to resolve society’s problems. Each person, in grappling with important questions, must take stock of the fact that many intellectuals defend ideas that promote their own particular interests and political agendas. The role of the intellectual is to guide others, to provide the raw data, analysis and conclusions that allow those without expert knowledge to make their own decisions. Bobbio’s belief that intellectuals are little more than mosche cocchieri reveals how little politics, particularly Italian politics, has been influenced by intellectual thought and guidance.

Bobbio’s opposition to Fascism generates a politics of culture that contrasts with the religious anti-Fascism of Catholics and the ideological anti-Fascism of Communists. The heritage of the PdA is a cultural legacy that sought to combine people from all walks of life in a movement that scorned the order, hierarchy and inertia of Fascism. For members of the PdA, Fascism had taken away the political [pluralism] and had depoliticized the masses, since it was a regime that “organized consensus” (ibid.:5). Mussolini’s main targets were the trade unions and socialist sympathizers and, by abolishing the Italian parliament altogether in 1939, he curtailed their political representation.

In their cultural genealogy, Bobbio and his forebears Gobetti and Rosselli, among others, are connected by a common anti-Fascist tradition or thread that both precedes and goes beyond political affiliation, where “liberty is not only a blessing but also a conquest, an ethical form that is superior to that of those who live emphatically up on high and do not see the immorality of indifference, of apathy” (Crifò, 1994:105). In the tradition of anti-Fascism espoused by Bobbio, liberalism
does not represent general interests but is in itself the struggle for the conquest of liberty. In that conquest, philosophy has a major role in that it is a form of militant engagement.

Although Bobbio affirms that the bulk of his political writings concern peace and democracy, any genuine understanding of his philosophy requires an in-depth knowledge of the Italian experience of Fascism and the Resistance. That is Bobbio’s point of departure, and it is an important one, for in Italy an attempt is currently under way to treat Fascism and anti-Fascism with “equal cultural dignity” (Mack Smith, 2000:19). Bobbio and the group of intellectuals who endorse his philosophy have taken on the task of preventing what they believe to be a move to establish cultural uniformity, which would be incorrect in terms of historical, political and moral teaching.

Bobbio fears that the democratic method is being threatened by a number of historical trends. Current political problems and public debates will be followed by new ones; increasingly, technical knowledge is required to solve these problems and lead these debates. These conditions result in government by expert technicians and, perforce, diminishes the applicability of democratic principles. Professional experts only comprise a small, albeit increasing, percentage of society, thus the sovereignty of ordinary citizens is decreasing, Bobbio warns. He also draws our concern to the “undemocratic and atomizing impact of the mass media” which continue to undermine popular sovereignty (Keane in Bobbio, 1989b:xxi). Democracy presupposes the free development of the individual’s learning faculties, but the modern mass media violate that tenet by exercising a form of mental power, through persuasion (or dissuasion) (Bobbio, 1989b:70).

The contemporary problem of the governability of complex societies is, in Bobbio’s view, caused by the increasing demands of civil society and the inadequate capacity of institutions to respond to them. The capacity of the state may have already reached its absolute limits, he warns, and this serious condition generates a crisis of the state’s legitimacy deriving from its ungovernability. The institutions of the state
represent legitimate power: Bobbio recalls the Weberian sense of legitimate power, that decisions emanate from an authority endowed with the right to make binding decisions for the collectivity.

Processes affecting the legitimacy of the state as the sole collective authority, especially at times when the state cannot meet public demand, lead to what Bobbio refers to as delegitimation and relegitimation. In periods of institutional crisis, powers are formed in civil society. These aim to achieve their own legitimacy, despite the undermining of legitimate authority. In truth, civil society (or public opinion), Bobbio argues, holds the key to finding solutions in times of crisis and actually provides the political system with new sources of legitimation and consensus. Public opinion influences and forms the basis of social movements, and even if the opinions held by the public are diffused by mass media, still the functioning of public opinion is essential to democracy. Note that the totalitarian state absorbs public opinion with official opinion (ibid.:26).

The mass media are necessary, vital to the formation of public opinion and a prerequisite of democracy, Bobbio maintains, but they must embrace pluralist views, rather than views that reflect “the delirium of power” that derives from the close relationship between the state and the media (Bobbio, 1995f:1). Editorial and proprietorial regulation in the media industry merits further study; in the Italian case there is an urgent need for regulation since political power is manifestly tied to that of mass communication. The right to complete information cannot play second fiddle to political consensus and economic revenue.

The way forward is to preserve and promote democratic political culture and the democratization of the international system, according to Bobbio. That task, however, is somewhat difficult. Protesters in both democratic and authoritarian states have taken to the streets in recent years and, some would argue, market power has gone into retreat because the question of “security” has moved to the forefront. The imperatives of war and politics are displacing democracy.
Bobbio strives to establish, promote and maintain a democratic political culture. "Establishing" that culture on an enduring basis has been a constant challenge for Italian intellectuals, owing to the country's late start in diversified and technology-based economic development, as well as its traditional dependence on agrarian society and the unyielding influence of landowners. The spurt of industrial growth that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century did not significantly change the economic and political scenario, because the new class of more liberal industrialists were dwarfed by the predominance of landowners. The "old" problem of combining socialism and democracy remains a topical and urgent problem, Bobbio insists. The history of the last century has not provided any evidence that such a combination is possible. Indeed, the past hundred years have hindered the belief that the combination of democracy and socialism is feasible. The only way forward, therefore, is to "patiently begin to clarify the terms of the debate" (Bobbio, 1988:89).

First, it is necessary to define democracy as government by the majority, as opposed to government by one, by a few, or by a minority. Then, Bobbio advises the reader to review the entire history of political thought, to discern that the concept has changed -- not in terms of its descriptive use, but in terms of its prescriptive use, or the value judgement anyone applies to the concept of democracy. That value judgement comprises either a positive or negative view of democracy. The adoption of a politics of culture hinges not only upon the positive view of democracy, despite its possible dangers, but on a clear distinction between government by the people and government for the people. The introduction of a little scepticism by intellectuals can only stand to benefit human welfare. Bobbio's scepticism is "an invitation for people to reflect ... on the events of history, to renounce slogans, ready-made formulas, ... to give up showing off doctrinal unity with a high and mighty air" (ibid.:101). The politics of culture requires busying oneself with the study of the mechanisms of power, and not merely the ideologies which legitimate or refute those ideologies. What does it matter, Bobbio argues, if one is taken for someone who has everything to learn?
To foster Bobbio’s politics of culture, one cannot believe in taking short cuts. Rather, one must follow the example of the historical Left in Italy by attempting to get back on the democratic highway. An indication of the Left’s renewed fervour is its numerous contributions to the debate on the democratic and socialist paths to a better society. Intellectuals can reinforce democracy by asserting their independence, by standing apart from pure politicians, and by distancing themselves from day-to-day problems that need to be resolved. Politics and culture, Bobbio says, are two different and unmistakable ways of acting within society.

Socialist intellectuals are difficult to identify because they do not form a homogeneous group, and there is no doctrine that all socialists accept. The anomalous configuration of the Italian political system resulted in a tough life for the PSI. It needed to keep one eye on the so-called democratic political area and the other on the Communist Party, given its great tradition of battling for the cause of workers. The period of the Cold War was characterized by the fictitious democracy of the so-called democratic countries and the equally false socialism of the so-called socialist countries.

The highway to democracy for both socialist and capitalist states, Bobbio argues, involves recognition of one particular feature common to both states: the major decisions in economics are taken autocratically. He is certain that there are grounds “for suspecting that the progressive widening of the democratic base will eventually run into an insuperable barrier ... when it tries to pass the factory gates” (ibid.:101). The battle for socialist democracy will be won or lost in the field of democratic control.

The question of the relationship between means and ends depends on the decisive influence which the means adopted exert on final outcomes. For Bobbio, the precept that “the end justifies the means” ought to read “the end justifies the means which do not modify, and thereby corrupt, that end” (ibid.:99). As Laski puts it, “The classic purposes of the State, liberty, equality, social justice, ... need examination not merely in terms of their virtue as ends, but in terms of their practicability as ends in
the light of the institutions through which they are to be achieved" (Laski, 1932:54).

The years of anti-Fascist resistance led by the partisans and the Italian people was a formative epoch in the history of Italy and that epoch has been interpreted and analysed in different ways. Bobbio highlights the motives behind the enduring controversy, in a context where the "resistance question" is accompanied by "enemies, sincere friends, false and calculating friends and those who stress the limits [of the Resistance] and who contest its significance" (Fofi, 1996:4). The enemies of the Resistance constitute past and current Fascists, those who like to "lead a quiet life", a life of order, where the form may be changed as long as the substance remains – the maintaining of privilege. Sincere friends of the Resistance are either those who experienced dictatorship and do not wish to repeat a similar experience, or those who saw in the Resistance the possibility of a new openness to democracy (ibid.5).

For Bobbio, democratic culture must necessarily be based on social justice. He continues to prefer stringent justice to generous solidarity, since solidarity is a facultative virtue. Bobbio argues that generous solidarity has always been with us, since beggars first occupied the steps at the front of churches, as they do today. In struggling to bring about social justice, Bobbio looks to the Left, and urges the Italian Left to cease being seduced by "liberal revolution", since "all have now become liberals, particularly the adversaries of the Left" (Bobbio, 1996h:17). He believes it is time for the Left to once again lift the banner of social justice, the same banner that accompanied the long path of millions of men and women who contributed to the history of socialism.

As a boy, Bobbio was educated in the cult of the Risorgimento. As an adult, he has been particularly aggrieved by recent interpretations of World War II and the events that occurred at the signing of the armistice with the allies, but he is nonetheless against the portrayal of that historical moment as a sign of "the death of the nation". The year 1943 marked the end of la patria matrigna or stepmother of the nation, which had sent thousands of young men to fight and die in an unjust war of
aggression, in far away countries like France, Greece, northern Africa and the former States of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

The loss and shame deriving from that episode of Italian history resulted in Bobbio becoming part of the group of Italian patriots who chose to return to Italy its dignity as a nation. He rejects the concerns raised by those revisionists who question whether Italy was indeed a genuine nation and to whom the responsibility can be attributed if it was not. Indeed, he calls them "proclaimers that seek the applause of millions of forgetful Italians" (ibid.).

Bobbio’s politics of culture includes the matter of style and human qualities. He compares the personal style of Romano Prodi and Silvio Berlusconi in the media vis-à-vis the Italian public, where the former comes from the school of “politics” whilst the latter exemplifies the school of “politics as entertainment”. While Prodi converses calmly with his listeners, and answers their questions, Berlusconi gives long speeches to celebrate his triumph, interrupted by thunderous applause and shouts of approval. According to Bobbio, Berlusconi believes himself to be the saviour of the nation and makes a show of his Christianity, defining himself the Lord’s chosen one. Berlusconi is committed to the task of protecting Christian values, values that are threatened by “atheist Communism”. By contrast, Bobbio describes Prodi as a good politician, an anti-Berlusconi, characterized by good humour, seriousness, simplicity, stubbornness and bonhomie mixed with astuteness. Prodi’s non-ostentatious affirmation of his Christian beliefs renders Prodi a more credible politician in Bobbio’s view.

The fact that Berlusconi’s Forza Italia constitutes a political party based on the personality of one man means that the voters of Forza Italia chose a person rather than a programme. Bobbio takes Berlusconi as an example of an authoritarian personality, one who is absolutely confident of himself, of his capacity to resolve even the most difficult problems for himself and for others. He leads the Freedom Alliance, he holds the monopoly on private television channels. There is thus a clear incompatibility between his business empire and his leading political role.
[Berlusconi's] preferred motto is 'Let me get on with it, I work for you'. Why was he not able to keep his election promises? Because he was not allowed to work. He always speaks in the first person. He leads, others follow. ...

(ibid.).

Bobbio's life cycle has coincided with the span of the last century, for he was born in 1909. He reached the age of eighty just a few days before the fall of the Berlin Wall. Yet Bobbio, one of the founding members of the Società Europea di Cultura, was one of a group of European intellectuals for whom, culturally speaking, the Wall never existed. It must be said that the position and experience of many intellectuals living in Eastern Europe during the Cold War did not allow them to share his perception of European intellectual harmony. At the end of the twentieth century, Bobbio is certain that Communists, ex-Communists and even socialists have gone through a slow and difficult apprenticeship: so slow that it has still not been completed.

The totalitarian degeneration that occurred in the Soviet Union and in several Warsaw Pact countries in the post-war period was incompatible with socialist ideals. The implementation of Communism was based on an indictment of capitalist methods of production and principles of distribution, which, it was claimed, denied the gains of living to the majority of workers, and culminated in the establishment of regimes that did not guarantee justice and the elimination of privilege. Through their obstinacy, proponents of Communism produced the very situation they sought to prevent – the absence of political and intellectual freedom. A terrible price was paid for the establishment of Bolshevism in Russia and Communism in Eastern Europe.

In Italy, the experience of Fascism culminated in the formation of a group of anti-Fascist intellectuals who, in their anti-Fascism, set out a prescriptive agenda for transforming politics. Fascism brought about what has been described as "the most complex opposition that would ever have been possible" (Capitini, 1996:67). The presence of Fascism compelled the exponents of Italian culture to take up a struggle and to face problems which otherwise would not have been tackled with such
urgency. Paradoxically, as noted by Garin, without the advent of Fascism, Croce would have never written his beautiful pages on the “religion of liberty” and historians and intellectuals like Bobbio and his predecessors would not have theorized with such vigour on justice and liberty (Garin, 1996:vii).

From 1976 to 1996 Bobbio was a regular contributor to the Turinese daily newspaper, *La Stampa*. His editorials address, among other issues, the role of the intellectual, the secular philosopher, and the primacy of justice over solidarity in a just society. The best resource to fully grasp Bobbio’s message lies in the study of the period from the crisis of Fascism until the early post-war years, and how it was experienced in Turin. He stands out as an advocate of a non-dogmatic and laical socialism based on the force of ideas, yet he is somewhat attracted by the more cohesive, disciplined and severe Communist Party (Bobbio, bb:1). Together with a group of intellectuals inspired by Gobetti and Rosselli, he has continued a tradition of politics that can be defined as liberal socialism or *Socialismo liberale*. Gobetti demonstrated that a liberal need not contaminate his/her ideas and values by a commitment to militancy in practical activity on the Left, for:

> we, as serious anti-Fascists, although we do not defend lost positions ..., want to counter Mussolini’s Italy with the uncompromising revolution of a people who have decided to conquer their self-government with liberty, without tutors or tyrants; we prefer harsh and bitter victuals to insipid food, even if that food is poison ... Our provocations will induce the regime to take up bolder positions that will spur the revolt of dignity against attempts at corruption (Gobetti, 1997:633).

In October 1942, when Bobbio joined the PdA, its members interpreted the war of liberation not as a class war but as the harbinger of a democratic revolution; they fought alongside the Communists in the Resistance and recognized the great ideals Communism inspired. Despite the PdA’s recognition of the idealistic thrust of Communism, and the fact that its members waged the anti-Fascist struggle through a united front with the Communists, the question of liberty was the question that eventually weakened that political alliance. Bobbio recalls:
For us [members of the PdA], *Socialismo Liberale* was a kind of 'little red book' of the Resistance; the same criticism Rosselli directed against the Italian dictatorship was adopted by the Action Party with respect to Stalin's Soviet dictatorship. We thought the socialist and Communist movement had created a new dictatorship in the Soviet Union precisely because it had forgotten the liberal tradition of freedom (Glotz and Kallscheuer, 1989:134,135).

The identity of the PdA differed from that of the Communist party; the PdA comprised two main groups: one group represented the Italian anti-Fascists living in exile in France, many of whom had escaped Fascist repression at home, while the other group constituted the liberal-socialist movement founded in 1936-37 by Capitini and Calogero. The GL movement was inspired around 1930 by Rosselli's book *Socialismo liberale*, whereas the liberal-socialist movement was born a few years later as a clandestine movement that formed at the *Scuola normale di Pisa*.

The ideologies and political and social programmes that characterized the Resistance movement merit further study. As Valiani has noted, the question remains as to whether the Italian Resistance was an attempt at genuine revolution and, if so, to what extent (Valiani, 1983:493). Its legacy today remains controversial although Bobbio believes that its historical analysis is necessary to shape the best politics.

The goals of the PdA are described by Bobbio below; the moral thrust of those goals is still valid today. The dialectical and mobile political position adopted by the PdA remains a method that is crucial to the role of the intellectual as the sower of doubt rather than the advocate of certainties. The possibility of achieving the renovation of Italian political life is within easier reach today, for the proletariat has dispersed and the revolution of the proletariat no longer occupies other political forces that previously concentrated their efforts on expressing virulent anti-Communism.

'We had clear and firm moral positions, but our political positions were subtle and dialectical -- and therefore mobile and unstable, continually in search of an insertion in Italian political life. ... Moralists above all, we advocated a complete renovation of Italian political life, beginning with its customs. But we thought that for such a renovation there was no need of a
revolution. We were consequently rejected by the bourgeoisie, which wanted no renovation, and by the larger part of the proletariat, which did not want to renounce revolution. We were thus left tête-à-tête with the petty-bourgeoisie, which was the class least inclined to follow us ... it was a rather painful spectacle to see us, ... thrown together with the most fearful and feeble layers of Italian society, minds in perpetual motion trying to make contact with the most ... withered mentalities, provokers of scandal winking complicity at the most ... conformist of citizens, these super-intransigent moralists preaching to specialists in compromises' (Bobbio in Anderson, 1988:8).

Bobbio promotes a view of socialism that features a strong element of realism, as prescribed by Rosselli, "by doing away with the mediation of schematic Marxism" (Rosselli, 1994:123). Marxism did provide a stepping stone to liberal socialism; however, already in 1930 Rosselli warned that Marxism had to be surpassed.

The materialistic theory of history undoubtedly served a valuable purpose at the outset by providing an alternative to views of the historical process that were excessively ... narrow, but when it had fulfilled this critical function and was forced into slavish obedience to a preconceived thesis, it paved the way for dire excesses (ibid.).

Bobbio does not share Rosselli’s view that Marxism is tantamount to false realism. Most of Rosselli’s writings are dedicated to discussion with Communists on fundamental political themes like freedom and democracy. Unlike Rosselli, Bobbio does not contest the realism of Communism but considers Communists to be his interlocutors, "not as enemies to defeat but interlocutors of dialogue on the whys and wherefores of the Left" (Bobbio, 1993a:213). The inspirational ideal behind Communism was thus acknowledged by both Rosselli and Bobbio. For Rosselli, the ideal itself, the uplifting and empowerment of the masses, is limiting. The ideal of a perfect society of free and equal persons, with no classes, no struggle, and no state, is being transformed more ... every day into a limiting ideal that in itself is worthless but that serves as a stimulus ... for the spirit (Rosselli, 1994:84).

For Bobbio, the main ideal of Communism is a trademark of its superiority as a political ism and he identifies Communism as a humanist ideology. In Né con Marx né contro Marx (1997a), Bobbio’s view of Communism as a bulwark against Nazi-
Fascism emerges. He sharply condemns the increasing tendency of some revisionists to equate those who fought to prevent Auschwitz with those who fought to maintain and expand the implementation of camps like Auschwitz on a worldwide scale" (La Stampa, 13/12/97:23).

The views that shaped the PdA are to a great extent the same views shared by Bobbio today. Of paramount importance is how Fascism and Communism are perceived. Fascism, in Bobbio's view, should be judged to be irredeemable as a political choice while Communism can be seen as simply requiring mediation and dialogue. Although much of Communism's moral superiority lies in the fact that it sought to combat the evil of Fascism, Bobbio reminds the reader that the cause of liberalism can be bolstered by any novel approach to politics. Thus he invites the intellectual, in fulfilling his role as a political scientist rather than that of the politician, to re-read Marx. The liberal must not limit his research to particular views, but should consider all views. Similarly, the translation of aims and values, be they from the Right or the Left, whether they are religious values and/or other particular values, keeps the liberal state alive and helps it to develop a moral conscience. "The important thing is, starting from the observation of radical evil, one agrees in maintaining that the only antithesis of evil, the only attempt to overcome it, is to be found in the creation of moral life, comprising the uniqueness and the novelty of the human world" (Bobbio, 1994c:189). That uniqueness results in Kant's view that social competition results in the development of human talent.

As the representative of liberal socialism, the PdA held that Fascism, which had been anti-liberal in politics and anti-socialist in economics, was the complete negation of liberal socialism. Vis-à-vis Communism, on the contrary, [the PdA] considered itself to be its dialectic negation; ... a negation which at the same time was an affirmation of all that Communism had represented in defeating Fascism and as the antithesis of capitalism. Fascism had been the enemy. In those years, the Communists were adversaries with whom one needed to establish a dialogue on the great themes of liberty, social justice and, above all, democracy, to resist the counteroffensive of the reactionary Right ... (Bobbio,1996b:130,131).
Bobbio's investigations ultimately culminate in his endorsement of the goal of socialism, using liberalism as the means of reforming socialism. Through that combination, it would be possible to improve on both liberalism and socialism. Following World War II, the CLN attempted to realize this marriage, but it was driven from the top echelons of Italian post-war government by those who feared Communist expansion, or rather by those who feared any policies to the left of centre. As a result of American dictates, this fear had to be respected in exchange for material help with reconstruction.

Modern men and women, Bobbio warns, enjoy private independence but have lost the liberty of participating in collective power; hence the waywardness and misguided ethics of European society today. If, as Bobbio holds, political power is legitimate only when based upon the voluntary consent of those governed, then clearly individuals possess certain rights independent of the institution of sovereignty. "The individual must be taken into account not as an abstract entity but as a producer, consumer, citizen; to each activity must correspond some associational function and the state, as a supra-functional entity, has the job of coordination and not domination" (Bobbio, 1989b:130). Once again, we are reminded that the good society must ensure that human beings are not reduced to mere instruments of political power, such as occurred during Fascism.

After the historical experience of Communism, Bobbio is concerned with whether socialism can still be considered the continuation of the "immortal" principles of 1789. For Bobbio, the role of scientific socialism in the evolutive process of modern culture is not to be underestimated: he looks to the Left today to capture and capitalize on that heritage.

Bobbio's dialogue with Marxism aims to extract all its positive elements for use in shaping the modern state. He recalls that Communism derives from an honourable tradition which dates back to the beginning of western thought. Marxism has compelled "the adjustment of one's own philosophy to a richer and wider
perspective; it emphasizes neglected aspects of history and, by the authority of its emphasis, translates them into demands" (ibid.). Most importantly, "like any other system of belief, [Marxism's] rise is the outcome of its environment, and its acceptance by large bodies of men is no more unnatural than their acceptance of other creeds" (ibid.:238). Marxism, like Christianity, had a positive impact on the development of liberalism – the existence of both philosophies ensures debate and a pluralist recognition of difference.

Bobbio's analysis of liberalism and his study of the challenges liberalism raises for modern Italian democracy constitute sources of contemporary reference on the persistence of a separate identity for the Left and the Right. His work urges us to assess anti-Fascism and anti-Communism in formulating our moral judgements of the Right and the Left. Although Bobbio accepts the comparison of Communism with Nazism on a historical level, he is convinced of the superiority of Communism's ideals.

Since Bobbio was never a Communist, it is inaccurate to suggest that he mended his ways or corrected his view of Communism. He does not underestimate the crimes committed in the name of Bolshevism, nor does he believe that these are constituent elements of Communism. Rather, they can be considered a political decline in the countries that implemented Communism. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the suppression of the independence of Poland, among other deeds, brought about a critical review of Communism, particularly as concerns the lack of democracy in all regimes. Despite all this, the ideals that inspired Communism are still noble; this premise he considers sufficient for Communism "to move pacifically towards a more advanced form of democracy, or at least be capable of being integrated with western democracy" (ibid.), if socialist reformers were able to exert their influence.

Bobbio criticizes Communism for its failings in the process of liberalization and the emancipation of the state from religious affairs. The confessional state of divine inspiration reappeared in the form of the doctrinal state that tolerated one doctrine
alone: Marxist-Leninism. Once again the distinction sprang up between the orthodox and the heretical (Bobbio, 1989b:124).

We saw in Chapter I that the city of Turin, where Bobbio lives, and the region of Piedmont in general played a significant role in the political modernization of Italy. As Italy's industrial vanguard and the city that gave birth in the early 1920s to the Communist-inspired factory councils as well as the journals of Gramsci and Gobetti, Turin is distinct. It was also home to a group of intellectuals who considered the working class to be the modern expression of the "liberal spirit".

In April 1923, when Gobetti established his publishing house in Turin as the voice of anti-Fascism, it was a move to constitute an organized cultural landscape to oppose the mono-culture of the Fascist hierarchy. Many intellectuals of various inspirations gathered round Gobetti to support his endeavour. The city of Turin played an extraordinary role in preserving the intransigent voice of humanist political culture; dialogue was sought with all cultural voices, reformist and conservative alike.

Gobetti wanted to show that the real Italian problem stemmed from the need to remedy the betrayal of the Risorgimento. Rosselli took Gobetti's analysis one step further, saying that Italy's problems were part of a larger, European problem. The bourgeois classes conspired to thwart any efforts that would adversely influence their wealth during the Risorgimento, and at the same time the participation of the people had been completely overlooked.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the special conditions prevailing in Turin as the leading industrial city of Italy culminated in a change of political direction. "Culturally speaking, Turin had been prevalently positivist and socialist-leaning [whereas] the dominant culture in the Italy of the twentieth century was anti-positivistic and anti-socialist" (Bobbio, 1996b:68).
Bobbio finds Gobetti’s analysis of Fascism as “the autobiography of the nation” correct, but Gobetti called exclusively for an Italian revolution in the national cultural tradition, “rather than seeing the solution to Italy’s problems as part of a European problem” (Bobbio, 1995e:117). Under Fascism, diversity was difficult if not impossible, whereas the “abstract totalitarian idea of equality [meant] the elimination of those who [were] not the same” (Bobbio, 1996c:111). In Italy and in the rest of the world, those who seek to reduce inequality between people constitute “a dangerous threat to those who are satisfied with the situation” (ibid.:82). Part of the way to prevent Fascism would be liberalism in the full sense, a liberalism not limited strictly to economic development and the expansion of the market. We must recognize, Bobbio says, that “traditional Communism has failed but its challenge remains” (ibid.). We have created affluence for two-thirds of society in the western world but not for the other third, and we cannot close our eyes to the fact that poverty afflicts most countries. “One has only to shift one’s attention from the social questions within individual states which gave rise to socialism in the last century to the international social question in order to realize that the Left has not only not completed its task, it has hardly commenced it” (ibid.).

Bobbio writes that “The history of modern ethics, starting with the theory of natural right, is an attempt, or rather a series of attempts, to form an objective ethics, either rational or empirical, or both rational and empirical; in other words, secular” (Bobbio, 1994c:173). One could say with McLeish that liberalism is “grounded in the belief that there is no natural moral order which can be confidently known by states or churches, and that individuals must be free to pursue their own conceptions of the good” (McLeish, 1994:423). But there are still many related ideas to consider in examining the Italian case for secularity: it begins with Gobetti’s adoption of culture as a method, a daily exercise in initiative to ensure the ascendancy of the working class, and continues through to Aldo Capitini’s philosophy of persuasion, his ethics of non-violence and rejection of lies, and his strategy of non-collaboration as a form of protest.
One of Bobbio's most important influences, Hobbes, is at the forefront of his discussions, for Bobbio sees Hobbes as the chief architect of the modern state. He has occupied himself with Hobbes over the course of his entire life. In his study of Hobbes, Bobbio acknowledged that *Leviathan* was not a portrayal of the totalitarian State, but of the modern State that was born out of the ashes of medieval society. *Leviathan* is the title-holder of the monopoly of legitimate force: legitimate because it is founded on the consensus of its citizens. The authority of the state is the basis of justice for all citizens. Although Bobbio looks to the state for its fundamental role in the establishment and exercise of laws to ensure justice, he would not wish to see the liberty of intellectuals and their prime duty of critical engagement be regulated by the state. Individual liberty is a moral value. The maintenance of internal and external order is the government's sphere of action; to proceed beyond its sphere of action, however, would result in uniformity of behaviour.

One of Bobbio's overriding concerns about government, which arose as part of his anti-Fascist commitment, is the abuse of power. Yet one of the most distinctive features of Hobbes' theory of the state is the unaccountability of its sovereign. The power of the sovereign, to whom Hobbes attributes absolute legal and theoretical authority, is void only in the event that the sovereign cannot guarantee protection for his citizens. The sovereign has no obligation to citizens other than providing that protection; thus, in Hobbes' state, there is "the lack of any sanction ... other than the covenant, together with the good faith of the subjects who obey the law of nature which tells them that self-interest is best served by observing their obligations and remaining acceptably docile" (Reik, 1977:99).

The docility of citizens is anathema to Bobbio. He invites citizens to be *mite* [mild or meek], such that they listen to their opponents and engage in dialogue, adopt an attitude of moderation, and develop the habit of not only living with dissenting opinion, but of encouraging it. They must, he believes, be "engaged", preferably militantly engaged. While Hobbes stresses the necessity of obedience to the sovereign, Bobbio, anxious to prevent dictatorship and the abuse of power,
underscores the importance of individual vigilance and democratic procedures which can allow for the alternation of political power.

It is difficult, Bobbio argues, to capture the ethical charge of early liberalism, and to see that religious freedom brought about non-confessional states and political liberty brought about democratic states. Today too many intellectuals have become too accustomed to pursuing an economic critique of the western state; Bobbio advises them to seize anew the significance of the one truly secular principle of tolerance.

At the same time, Bobbio recognizes that it is hard to promulgate only such laws as are necessary, and to remain ever faithful to the authentic constitutional principle of society. In his description of Hobbes, who had not the slightest hesitation in choosing between the excess of freedom and the excess of authority, Bobbio perhaps speaks for himself: "He fears the former as the worst of all evils; he is resigned to the latter as the lesser evil" (Bobbio, 1993b:70).

Bobbio's study of Husserl's phenomenology formed part of his quest for clearer thinking and meaning, an attempt to dispel all forms of existentialism and mystification. He condemns what Hobbes described as those "empty words' ... part of a whole language of abstractions propagated by the 'Kingdome of Darknesse'" (Hampsher-Monk, 1992:13). Bobbio takes up the dialectical method, primarily by examining dyads which are later analysed and interpreted as belonging on the Right or the Left. The history of political thought is traced through this dichotomy, with the help of classic political thinkers and modern intellectuals. Bobbio also tackles the question of whether the responsible intellectual acts on the basis of conviction or ethics of pure intention.

Most of Bobbio's academic teaching years were spent at the University of Turin. He had, since the time of his research under Solari in 1934, conceived of the philosophy of law as a discipline of the jurist rather than the philosopher; this approach to the philosophy of law contrasted with the philosophy of law then
dominant in Italy, prevalently inspired by the spiritualistic philosophy idealism. This was concentrated on two main themes: the "concept" of law and the "idea" of law, from which were derived the two classical tasks of the philosophy of law: the ontological and the deontological. Bobbio undertook to overcome the limits of speculative philosophy to embrace what later became known as analytical philosophy.

Bobbio's conversion or move away from speculative philosophy occurred over a long period of progressive maturity during which he freed himself from the cultural influences of his formative years. That particular cultural milieu was influenced by the dominant philosophy of the time: idealism. Bobbio's academic path began to change when he realized that the totalitarian realities of Nazi-Fascism had brought only tragedy to Europe. Moreover, the end of what had been eulogically referred to as the "world of yesterday" and the difficult reconstruction ahead in a very uncertain world brought with them the realization that speculative philosophy alone was entirely inadequate to interpret the tragedy that had occurred. Post-war reconstruction caused him to eschew the other-worldliness of philosophy, for he believed that one needed to start from studies that were less lofty and more terrestrial: economics, law, sociology, history. The attempt to travel a new path through phenomenology that had claimed to establish philosophy as a rigorous science did not satisfy Bobbio, at least as concerns the understanding of law and of the science of law.

Following the turbulent world events of 1989, Bobbio continues to confront the collapse of political certainties by returning repeatedly to a discussion of the dichotomy of Left/Right. Above all, he insists that this dichotomy is useful and valid today and that it will be well into the future. The indispensable influence of language in our processes of understanding, as well as the expressions and artistic revelation one uses to denote Right and Left, are but small fractions of political reality; the essence of certain realities and the way the world "is" present a picture of concrete facts that utterly defy post-modern nihilism. In his criticism of historical materialism, Bobbio focuses on extra-linguistic reality where particular interests are defended by
erecting walls against the undesired effects of democracy, socialism, and all forms of political radicalism.

Bobbio comes back repeatedly to his own personal experience of Fascism, his participation in the Italian Resistance and the reality of occupied Italy during World War II. Today, the Fascist question continues to figure prominently in the debate of both the Right and the Left. Spontaneously formed groups of citizens ousted the Nazis. But even today the Italian Right strives to deny the importance, numbers and impact of these groups. Bobbio, on the other hand, continues to perceive the Resistance as the key to understanding the Left’s formation, active political participation and historical memory: the Resistance movement today remains, for Bobbio, an example of democratic and socialist ideals. He holds that Fascism was a negative experience for Italy, but it had universal significance; it was not simply "one story" amidst the history of various peoples in the world. All Fascism is dictatorship based on a class regime – the opposite of democracy.

The historical vulgata of the Cold War years worked adversely to legitimate the Italian Republic that was born from the anti-Fascist victory, and to purify the post-war government from the poison of nationalism, De Felice states. For Bobbio, if the idea of "nation" is a necessary for a sense of community to emerge, then "nation" should at least conform to the democratic and republican Constitution, and its spirit should be formed on the basis of patriotism emanating from that Constitution. De Felice criticizes Bobbio’s glorification of his Resistance memories. He objects to Bobbio’s description of the Resistance, saying that his account portrays how one would like it to have been, not how it was. De Felice argues that the effect of such glorification is that Resistance ideals were woven into the ideological fabric of the Italian Left; as a result, the Left has never shaken loose from the stereotyped notions of historical hegemony. Bobbio insists, however, that the Left was anti-Fascist and can be equated with anti-Fascism.

Bobbio states that he positions himself on the Left, as an anti-Fascist. The anti-Fascist Resistance ensured liberation from foreign powers, and promoted national
unity at a time of crisis. However, immediately following the Liberazione the Catholic philosopher Augusto Del Noce spoke out about anti-Fascist Italy's need to pursue a politics of the centre rather than of the Right or the Left. It was time to go beyond anti-Fascism, he said, to overcome it. Del Noce was convinced that the PCI would eventually undergo a process of gradual democratization based on prudence and mediation; indeed, this was to be hoped for, as bipolarity had too many negative effects and resulted in the clash of Right and Left. Moreover, the monoculture of anti-Fascism would only lead to another form of dictatorship, this time an anti-Fascist one. Bobbio takes Del Noce to task\(^8\), reiterating his conviction that Communism is characterized by anti-Fascism, part of the positive legacy of the Resistance. Moreover, he says, the multi-faceted identity of the PdA was no monoculture, as was Fascism.

Critics of anti-Fascism accuse the Left of having overbearing power over the city of Turin and of having effected the "homologation" of all culture within the designs of an "intellectual class, comprising Bobbio, Galante Garrone and Einaudi, that has concluded its own propulsive thrust" (La Stampa, 20/1/97:20). That criticism has been indicative of a project under way to diminish the importance of the ideas that crystallized in the PdA. Giulio Einaudi was asked to comment on this accusation of a tendency by the Left to homologize culture, and he replied: "Cultural alternatives are born independently of the legislator" (ibid.). It is a statement that emphasizes the autonomy of culture. Bobbio and his fellows from Turin continue to be the representatives and "concrete expression of the reconquest of freedom, following the Fascist regime and dictatorship" (ibid.).

Intellectual culture, which can be defined as responsibility, is different from apolitical culture. Bobbio thinks that "the two prime values that ought to be defended by political function of culture are freedom and truth" (Bobbio, 1993a:55,56). Bobbio returns repeatedly to the turn of phrase used by Cattaneo: "Brahmin schools", where philosophy works from the knowledge gained through experience; this is the sphere of experimental philosophy.
Bobbio takes the example of the *ventennio* of Italian Fascism to illustrate the existentialist tendency of many historians, critics and lettered men who hid away or "took refuge in the intimacy of their own work" and he attributes their withdrawal to the blossoming of poetic hermitism as well as negative philosophical existentialism. This isolation was also a consequence of the desire to distance oneself and one's creation from Fascism.

Bobbio notes that following Italy's liberation from Fascism, this intellectual tendency underwent a complete turnaround.

The figure of the committed intellectual emerged, new in part, who brandished his uncontaminated, total, indomitable civil passion against *I'anima bella*, the intellectual who speaks only from his chair and never descends or bends towards the misery and errors of the poor people. A generation of strong spirits succeeded a generation of decadents [sic], leaning towards a culture wielded as a reformative and revolutionary weapon (Bobbio, 1993a:56).

Bobbio considers himself among this second group. He views the acceptance of politicians' arguments without discussion as a form of betrayal and "academic desertion" and certainly not as allegiance. The modern intellectual who may be involved in formulating consensually acceptable policy has to interact and converge with politicians, but their relationship is one of apolitical complicity. Bobbio asks, rhetorically, why one ought to tackle the problem of the relationship between politics and culture. He and intellectuals like him tackle that question because they are not satisfied with the way in which this relationship is lived – that is, either as divorce or subjection. The two most common attitudes of the person of culture vis-à-vis politics are either an intolerance or lack of patience towards political life, considered to be an inferior sphere in which one is obliged to get down from one's pedestal, or a total dedication to the movement, party or ideology that one remains forever conditioned by – in other words, either apolitical culture or politicized culture.

Bobbio is significant in that he bridges the gap between theory and politics. Through the use of historical example, he documents his presence at the limits of both Fascism and Communism. He puts the politics of culture on the contemporary
political agenda since this key formulation is the glue that bonds liberalism with socialism.

The use of antithesis offers the advantage, in its descriptive use, of allowing one of the two terms to shed light on the other, so much so that often one (the weak term) is defined as the negation of the other (the strong term); for example, private as that which is not public; in its axiological use, it draws attention to a positive or negative value judgement that ... can fall on one or on the other of the two terms ... (Bobbio, 1995a:ix,x).

With the Russian Revolution and the rise to power of the Bolsheviks, who pursued a philosophical and economic doctrine that constituted a radical critique of bourgeois society, it had seemed as if a process of complete transformation had begun. Historically, this process was unprecedented. Instead of forgetting about the history of Marxism, or dwelling too much on the mistakes that were committed in its name, Bobbio invites us not to lose sight of what Marxism represented for all those who fought for the renewal of a better life after the fall of Fascism. He asks us to consider what the constitution of a Communist regime represented in an immense country like China. At that time, “would it not have been legitimate to ask oneself whether the advent of Communism was written in the future history of the world?” (Bobbio, 1993a:217). After the events of Tien An Men in Beijing just a few months before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Bobbio thought he had definitely settled all open accounts with actually existing Communism. He concludes that “only now has the search for the reasons why the attempt to create a utopia - a society free from poverty and oppression - culminated in the realization of its opposite, in a system of despotic power that came ever closer to the reign of Big Brother described by Orwell” (ibid.).

Bobbio makes this reference to China not only because China's system of government and political doctrine remain Communist, but since, for Bobbio's generation, China represented the country which, in a certain sense, epitomized the inexorable expansive force of Communism. At the time of Mao's conquest of power in 1949, Fascism had been defeated – or so he believed then – but Communism was stronger than ever. However, for Bobbio, the events of Tien An
Men Square, after 40 years of Chinese Communism, signalled the end. Yet he is still convinced of the moral superiority of Communism as compared with Fascism.

For Bobbio, Marx is useful in his function as a critic rather than as a system-builder. However, he does not weigh up the pros and cons of Marxism. Instead, he wishes to "draw attention to certain major consequences of turning Marx's work into a doctrine which is complete in itself, ... and from which answers can be logically deduced which are valid for any sort of problem" (ibid.:164). To conduct genuine research, Bobbio argues, it must be clear in the mind of the researcher that all answers cannot be "derived from a sole text or its interpretation" (ibid.).

Bobbio warns of the "typical distortion" that can occur whenever a doctrinaire position is based on authoritative writings. The doctrinaire thinker is bound to err in cases where reality does not fit the doctrine he upholds: "Rather than accept that the doctrine has provided an inadequate interpretation of reality, [the doctrinaire thinker, the ideologue] tends instead to want to prove that it is the doctrine which has been interpreted badly, and seeks to reconcile the two, not in a new interpretation of reality but in a new interpretation of the doctrine" (ibid.).

Our task, Bobbio advises, is to steer clear of the range of different brands of Marxism, since most Marxisms derive from "a problem which Marx either left unsolved, or which he did not solve satisfactorily" (ibid.:164,165). The conflict that results from the different interpretations of Marx may, Bobbio argues, be interesting, but it "is often useless for the advance of our understanding of reality" (ibid.:165). To illuminate the course of history, however, Bobbio does recommend that we examine critically Marx's works:

Marx's writings must be critically examined in the light of theoretical, historical and political science, as must every other work of human thought, and accorded their place within the history of human knowledge by being compared to the other great works which have illuminated the course of history (ibid.:168,169).
Combinations of Marx's philosophy with other philosophies have led to what Bobbio calls "genuine revisions" and the purpose for which these combinations have been carried out constitutes "a problem which has not been accorded the attention it deserves" (ibid.:169). Indeed, Bobbio draws attention to the fact that no other philosophies have undergone the same ordeal as Marxism. Revisionist combinations have been carried out as philosophical exercises, with two aims in mind. Such revisionist combinations are typically philosophical exercises, undertaken as the circumstances demand, either to tone down the aggressive implications of Marx's revolutionary theory by emphasizing instead its respectability, or to prove its credentials to academic philosophers by demonstrating its legitimacy as a system of thought (ibid.).

Today, part of the confusion is that a process of deindustrialization is under way in developed countries, accompanied, as Keane writes, by "the growth of a new underclass and the emergence of more 'flexible' technologies, production methods and consumer styles" (Keane in Bobbio, 1989b:ix). Bobbio, in the midst of this, attempts to tackle the post-1989 impasse of the Left. In terms of political philosophy, his message is that "the people who use the words 'left' and 'right' do not appear to be using the words unthinking, because they understand each other perfectly" (Bobbio, 1996c:29). The task at hand is not to ask whether the Left continues to exist, for Bobbio believes it implicitly does, but to work on defining "what is there left of the Left".

Bobbio is convinced that "The proclamation of human rights ... cut the course of human history in two" and has facilitated the "convergence of the three main currents of modern political thought, liberalism, socialism and social Christianity" (Bobbio, 1996a:65,66). A particular way of life, reflected in institutions and common behaviour, is now underpinned by a form of cultural convergence such that these three different groups "retain their own identity in the preference they show for some rights over others, and thus they create an increasingly complex system of fundamental rights" (ibid.:66).
For Bobbio, the essential methods of a politics of culture involve the strategy of criticism and hard argumentation, as well as a concern for the means used to achieve political aims. Cultured individuals must urge politicians to exercise ethical responsibility and to take honest account of the consequences of their actions. Even a good end does not justify a bad means to achieve it.

Intellectuals do not betray their role when they participate in politics, but only when they participate in a certain kind of politics. "Culture and politics are not incompatible: it depends on the politics one adopts" (Bobbio, 1955:200). Cultural life and progress, however, are incompatible with the "crude and violent myths of the autocratic state" (ibid.). They are not incompatible, Bobbio argues, with a liberating and democratic politics. The intellectual must choose a politics which is closest to the fundamental duties of the man of culture, which are "the promotion of liberty and the search for truth" (ibid.). Once that politics has been chosen, however, it is his duty to seriously practise that politics. Bobbio warns that the intellectual must not allow himself to be the instrument of a particular politics by giving up his rights and delegating his powers. To do so would be to exhibit fearful behaviour, result in unhappiness and, worse, reveal cunning and a loss of independence.

Those who participated in the Resistance had foreseen a course of Italian politics that did not materialize. For those radical yet not fanatical intellectuals who eschewed Fascist myths and were not inclined to create new ones, "the time quickly came when there was nothing for us to do" (ibid.). Just when, after their hard struggle, intellectuals like Bobbio finally hoped after years of preparation to enter the political playing field, "the challenge slipped beyond reach" (ibid.). They suddenly felt unemployed, just at the time when they had learnt an important lesson and were best placed to "swim". Their deep attachment to the theory of political commitment was left without a group or party to which such commitment would be worthwhile. Italian intellectuals were then most occupied with protesting, both within and outside political parties.
This protest took several forms, such as that of the PdA, where intellectuals representing the movement of popular unity protested against socialist parties, that of the liberals who protested against their own party, and that of the Catholics who proposed social reforms that their party had no intention of pursuing. Protest, Bobbio maintains, is both a right and a duty. However, it is important to distinguish between periods of great crisis and change and oppression, where protest is the only remedy left to people of liberal inspiration, and periods of reconstruction and necessary collaboration. During times of reconstruction, such as that of post-war Italy, protest derived from a feeling of impotence. Bobbio writes: “When a patient and productive common task needs to be undertaken, there is a need for modest and hard-working people who have no illusions of greatness” (ibid.:201).

In finding “a job”, intellectuals had to ask themselves whether the culture of which they were exponents and heirs was a culture suited to the construction of a democratic society. Here, Bobbio mentions that he is speaking of philosophy since it is a mirror of a cultural epoch, of anti-Fascism. During the years of Fascism, “in Italy we experienced the philosophy of evasion, that attitude of seeing history as condemned and filled with nostalgia for a lost paradise” (ibid.:203,204). But the “philosophy of avoidance” was most prominent in Italy’s recent history and influenced intellectuals to the greatest extent, Bobbio argues. That philosophy went from attualismo to spiritualism, and resulted in the philosopher finding not a refuge to escape his responsibility as a man of the time (Fascism), but instead a subterfuge through which he took on false responsibilities. According to De Felice and Duro (1993), attualismo is a contemporary Italian doctrine where all reality exists through the spirit alone. The perception of this reality is lived through action, whose “pure acts” culminate in self-realization (autocoscienza) and individual identity. The philosopher thus got a bad name as a deft conjuror of words and syllogisms, using that system to enclose himself, “like a spider that weaves a web and then waits for flies to fall into it” (ibid.:204). Regardless of how big the outside world is, “the system is logically perfect and harmonious, and that is enough for its creator
to feel self-satisfied and confident in the fate of humanity” (ibid.). Gradually, that system becomes an end in itself and those who look beyond it never encounter facts but only find other similar systems based on ideal formulae. For Bobbio, the history of philosophy under Fascism took the form of a continual and monotonous dispute among ideal formulae where words acquired a sacred and absolute value.

Ordinary people, the masses, never took part in that dispute and, had they done so, could have taken no comfort from it. Consequently, in the aftermath of the successes of the Resistance movement, the situation was that “people were not interested in philosophy since philosophers were not interested in the people, but only in themselves” (ibid.). Philosophy then took no account of the problems and errors of men and was therefore useless, Bobbio maintains. Both the philosophy of evasion and that of elusion were useless. “Both knew that the world was a scandal, but one hid it, by placing a world without misery and error in opposition to the scandalous world, either outside history, or at the end of history; the other disguised it, by saying that the world was a scandal, but that had been established by eternal decree, or was rational because it was real, or that real society, the real state was not the external one that made laws, made one pay taxes, brought us to die in wars, but the internal one existing within each of us ..., a magnificent society where there are neither bosses nor servants, neither oppressed nor oppressors” (ibid.:204,205).

Evasion and avoidance cannot foster a democratic society; such philosophies do not compare with the Enlightenment which was undergirded by an illuminating philosophy which was also militant in combatting ignorance and slavery. A militant philosophy, Bobbio insists, describes the philosophizing of those who do not look down from on high in fossilized wisdom but study concrete problems at the grassroots level. Only after having conducted minute and methodical research do they take up a position. He writes: “Taking a position does not mean obeying orders; it means listening to all voices that emanate from the society in which we live and not listening to those seductive voices that come from our laziness or from our fear
that are exalted as virtues, it means listening to the calls of experience, ... not only those that pass off as interior Enlightenment” (ibid.:205).

It is only after having listened and having tried to understand, Bobbio warns, that the philosopher can take up his share of responsibility. “To speak of militant philosophy is to ask a philosopher not only what he thinks but also whose side he is on” (ibid.). In Bobbio’s personal experience, the philosophers of evasion and elusion have always been on the side opposite his own. He belongs to a minority with “an Enlightenment programme, the programme of a few which has not become an atmosphere or a custom” (ibid.). Bobbio does not perceive philosophy as wisdom but as an enlightening [rischiamento]. Empirical philosophy – where only an approach based exclusively on observation and experience can lead to truth – must be the philosophy of democratic society and those societies that aspire to democracy.

Bobbio believes that one of the conditions that must be met to re-endow philosophy with a social function is that the speculative mentality be abandoned. He defines that mentality as an old conception of philosophy, as hidden knowledge that renders the philosopher a kind of priest who interprets absolute truth that he alone possesses. Moreover, a broadened positive mentality among philosophers and persons of culture is required. Rather than being above the questions that derive from different sciences and common experience, the philosopher should be at the heart of such discussion. The philosopher’s contribution should be conceptually enlightening.

Bobbio calls upon intellectuals, citizens, to aspire to be individuals of the Enlightenment, and neither romantic nor decadent. The romantic, Bobbio says, believes that the world is to be created anew, that some revolution is around the corner; the decadent thinker imagines that “the world has always gone along the same road, there is nothing that can be done to change that” (ibid.:202). To be an Enlightenment thinker, it is not sufficient to protest against constituted powers; one
must propose reforms, work towards new institutions and endeavour to influence public opinion to transform society.

Bobbio attributes Enlightenment thinkers with three characteristics: i) faith in reason rather than myths; ii) an aspiration to use science in a practical way to produce social benefits rather than contemplative knowledge; and iii) faith in the indefinite progress of humanity rather than the acceptance that history monotonously repeats itself. He describes himself as an Enlightenment thinker who has learnt the lessons of Hobbes and Marx. The Enlightenment thinker, as a man of reason, is more prone to pessimism than optimism, for “optimism always comprises a certain dose of infatuation and the man of reason must not be infatuated” (ibid.). Optimists believe history to be a drama, but one with a happy ending. Bobbio, on the other hand, believes that history is a drama but he does not, and cannot, know if it will be a drama with a happy ending. In today's world, he hears “not song but roars” which cause him to be a pessimist.

I do not intend this pessimism to be understood as a surrender. It is an act of healthy abstinence after many orgies of optimism, a refusal ... to participate in the banquet of ever jovial rhetoricians. It is an act of satiety rather than disgust. And pessimism does not restrain industry, it renders it more taut and to the purpose. ... I have my own yardstick to judge my peers, and it is based on the antithesis seriousness-fatuity, where the serious are good and the fatuous bad. I am not saying that optimists are always fatuous, but the fatuous are always optimists (ibid.:203).

In his philosophy and politics of culture, Bobbio no longer separates blind faith in historical or theological providence from the vanity of those who believe they are the centre of the world and that things happen as they command. He appreciates and respects those who “act well without asking for any guarantee that the world will get better”, for only the “good pessimist is able to act with a clear mind, with firm will, with a sense of humility and full devotion to his task” (ibid.).

intellectuals, Bobbio believes, must necessarily adopt empiricism as their method. As philosophical tools, neither revelation, “interior illumination”, magic nor occult knowledge can compare with the lesson of experience. Above all, Bobbio “believes
strongly in taking the wrong road" (ibid.:210), in finding the best way forward through experience. "In countries where empiricism is considered to be the national philosophy, there is a higher degree of democracy" (ibid.:208). In the years before the Republic was established, Italy had relied on philosophers of "speculative genius" who had rendered no service to the nation, with the consequence that society did not progress. Bobbio maintains that there is no need today to encourage the vices of seeing visions or drawing great syntheses that are not built on facts. "It is time to teach the philosopher that he should consider himself, Socratically, an artisan helping other artisans to better understand their occupation" (ibid.:207). Bobbio warns intellectuals that there is a need for more rigour in the study of facts and greater caution in formulating general theses, even at the risk of asking further questions rather than providing answers.

Moreover, Bobbio invites the philosopher who aspires to achieve a politics of culture to work harder, indeed to work like those who produce useful items, like ordinary workers in the factory or the shop. He advises persons of culture to avoid appearing like players in a limited or exclusive game that is played purely for their own purposes. Other major pitfalls that the person of culture should avoid are presumption and arrogance.

One of the reasons for the "divorce between politics and culture" in Italy is the endurance of a lazy attachment to speculative genius. Democratic political renewal, Bobbio affirms, corresponds with cultural renewal. Just as democracy is based on the principles of dialogue, consensus and social progress, "the culture suited to democratic society should not be dogmatic but critical, not closed but open, not speculative but positive" (ibid.).

Intellectuals are the expression of the society in which they live, and, he writes, "culture and society condition each other to such an extent that any talk of the possibility of cultural renewal in Italy must take account of the different types of society that developed in parallel" (ibid.:209). Two major components of Italian society were the industrial and farming groups, the former with longer
individualistic-bourgeois and trade union-socialist traditions and the latter with a semi-feudal and anarchic tradition. The two Italies of north and south, Bobbio contends, were exposed to cultural renewal that took one of two directions: that of the Enlightenment and radical liberalism or that of neo-Marxist historical materialism. These directions, the liberal revolution or the Communist revolution were symbolized respectively by the figures of Gobetti and Gramsci.

At the beginning of the Cold War, the enemy to be confronted was Communism. But in a country like Italy where a strong Communist party had developed "through a courageous and extensive contribution to the Resistance, and had participated in the elaboration of the new Republican Constitution, the problem had to be tackled not with the criticism of arms but with the arms of criticism" (Bobbio, 1996b:167). This criticism, Bobbio believed, was best undertaken through the spirit of dialogue rather than that of a crusade, with the purpose of definitely winning over Communist militants to democracy. This dialogue in the defence of democracy proceeded at the same pace as Bobbio's participation in the debate on the pros and cons of the Soviet Union.

His debate with Communist intellectuals began in the 1950s and took place in acknowledgement of what he refers to as the intellectual honesty and serious scholarship of Italian Communists. At that time, Bobbio aimed to persuade those intellectuals of the error they had committed, owing to their unconditional admiration for Soviet Russia. That error consisted in interpreting the rights of liberty as bourgeois rights which the proletarian state could do without – and would do without, were it to predominate.

Twenty years later, it became apparent that Italian democracy, which was always governed by the same party, the Christian Democratic Party, needed to opt for a change. Since it seemed clear that change could come about only through less antagonistic relations with the Communist Party, Bobbio concentrated on a discussion of the general theory and rules of the democratic state. By that time, after many years of democratic practice, the rights of liberty had been accepted by
all. Bobbio posed the question "Does Marxism have a democratic theory of the state that can rival the modern democratic model?" (ibid.:168). He had to reply that Marxism had no such theory of the state.

Since Marx argued that the State was destined to disappear, he "had not worried much about foreseeing what the rules ought to be in the realization of a State 'with a human face'" (ibid.) The State neither disappeared nor seems to be destined to do so in the near future. The real problem for Bobbio is "what State", although he admits that there is no acceptable alternative to representative democracy. This emphasis on the type of State required to meet society's needs indicates, as Bobbio himself claims, that his distance from old interlocutors like Marx had diminished (ibid.). In other words, the Marxist theory of the State had no place in Bobbio's conception of the State.

Through his intellectual endeavours, Bobbio was successful in effecting the reformation of Italian Communism. This reform was possible owing to the approach he adopted: pursuing a politics of culture. A good empiricist, he affirms, must assess any problem from all sides, because reality has many faces and it is difficult to grasp all of them. Therefore, the intellectual must exercise caution in elaborating his criticism and, in spite of all the verification he has done, he must be ready to accept the possibility of error. From the possibility of error derive two commitments that must be respected, Bobbio advises: that of not persevering in error and that of being tolerant of the errors that others commit.

Bobbio made a cultural attempt to free socialism from its overly narrow and dogmatic ideology, to render it a revolutionary yet non-violent force capable of interpreting in an unbiased way the new changes that occurred in the economy and society of contemporary Italy. In exploring and summarizing, in Chataway's words, the "most significant stages in the development of the major ideological currents that polarized the intellectual debates and political conflicts in Italian society" (Chataway, 1998:412), he takes the reader on a journey that justifies the meditative and rational response of the State envisaged by Hobbes, one that derives from the
privilege of a monopoly of force. The autonomy of culture from politics, Bobbio teaches, obliges intellectuals to refrain from competing with politicians. The task of the intellectual who does not want to remain indifferent to the drama of his time is that of noting contradictions, of revealing paradoxes, even at the risk of elaborating inappropriate solutions (Bobbio, 1993a:206). The genuine difference between intellectuals and politicians is that the former use the method of dialogue while the latter adopt the method of struggle.

Bobbio maintains that forming a synthesis involves starting with analysis, and to reach a system it is necessary that the criticism of systems be undertaken. Yet he adds that if philosophy is synthesis and system, much of his work cannot be considered philosophical. In his own words, Bobbio has sought to put together a philosophy of history – the only philosophy that interests him – while being aware that "a piece is always missing" (ibid.:1). Not only is there an excess of things to understand, but "the acceleration of history is such that when you start to become oriented the wind has already changed" (ibid.). Bobbio does not believe that 50 years from now any historian of philosophy would describe the current epoch as a particular "ism"; post-modernism is no exception.

In all epochs, politicians cannot do without intellectuals because appropriate decisions cannot be made if all the aspects of a question are not clear; "politics require knowledge as a resource" (La Stampa, 2/07/98:19). But, caught between the "giants" of science and religion, Bobbio contends, philosophers and intellectuals only have the role of mosche cocchieri; in other words, they are the size of flies or minute coachmen vis-à-vis future policy and democratic practice, and their influence is limited. However, the theory framed by intellectuals is reflected in practice, and the intellectual must be capable of translating his theories into concrete political action if he is to contribute to democratic theory.
First published in 1934; unless otherwise stated, translations from the Italian are by the author.

2See Autobiografia, pp. 10-11 where Bobbio states that his family was pro-Fascist, as most of the bourgeois of that time were; his family welcomed Mussolini’s march on Rome because it was thought that it would stop those who wanted Italy to “do as in Russia”; in October 1922, Bobbio was 13 years old.

3There are letters that attest to Bobbio’s correspondence with Giovanni Gentile and to the intervention of Bobbio’s paternal uncle who requested General Emilio De Bono, one of the quadrumvirates of the March on Rome in 1922, to ask Mussolini to arrange for Bobbio to sit a public examination on the philosophy of law to accede to a teaching position at the University of Urbino. Bobbio’s father and Bobbio himself also wrote to Mussolini to reiterate that request. Gentile, as a follower of Croce in early 1900, embarked on a crusade of idealism, to disabuse the middle classes of positivism and contributed to a variety of journals such as Leonardo (1903) that attacked materialism; later, Gentile became the Fascist regime’s Minister of Public Instruction. See ‘Sono cose note, ma io non posso dimenticarle!’ in Mezzosecolo, no. 11, Annali 1994-1996, FrancoAngeli, pp. 217-222.

4Leone Ginzburg, his close friend and fellow intellectual, was held in semi-liberty from 1936 to 1940 and was then forced into exile in a small town of the Abruzzo region; he died in 1944 at the German prison on via Tasso in Rome.


6Giorgio Amendola, one of the most prestigious leaders of the PCI.

7Foa uses the example of ethnic cleansing as a phenomenon that can be compared with evils of the past, although memory alone is not sufficient to comprehend the present; see Del disordine e della libertà, p. 33.

8Casucci also believes that a comparison can be drawn between Spain’s final emergence from Franco’s dictatorship where democratic forces experienced difficulty in developing a coherent political programme and Italy’s immediate post-war governance of democratic rule under the CLNs.

9The biographer of Benito Mussolini.

10Gramsci’s journal Ordine Nuovo and Gobetti’s journal Rivoluzione Liberale, initially constituted to promote a policy of culture, became the voice of the Factory Councils that surfaced in Turin during the two “red years” of 1919 and 1920.

11The Christian Democrats were still in the process of formation and the party was formally born after World War II.

121921-1943; from 1943-1991 Partito Comunista Italiano.

13Serra made this accusation in 1995, long after the events of 1989.

14Togliatti’s pen name: Roderigo di Castiglia.

15See Politica e cultura (1955).

16Del Noce’s role in the debate is a posthumous one; the articles included in Bobbio’s book, published by Reset in 1995, were actually written by Del Noce in 1945, immediately following the Liberation of Italy. Bobbio’s “dialogue” with Del Noce is based on a discussion of these articles which appeared in the Turin daily newspaper “Il Popolo Nuovo” – the daily newspaper reflecting the views of the Christian Democrats at that time. From the pages of GL, one of the eight newspapers published in the city of Turin in 1945, Bobbio also worked out a formula for the democratic renewal of the country; these articles were republished in 1996 by Donzelli, as Part I of Tra due repubbliche.

17See L’intellettuale socialista, Bobbio, II.

18Soon after their escape from the island of Lipari in the summer of 1929, Lussu, Nitti and Rosselli were met by Turati and Salvemini at the Gare de Lyon in Paris (see Lussu, 1997:10). The GL movement was constituted roughly a year later.

19Serra accuses Bobbio of being an intellectual who set out to prove and further the idea that innovation only requires that the past be destroyed. That purported destruction of the past has caused Italians to lose sense of the continuity of history and to grapple problematically with the creation of the 2nd republic. Only by destabilizing the 1st republic, Serra argues, was it possible to disseminate to all society that “sickness of uprootedness” that causes one to listen to a new and better history that does not compare with the unhappy existing one.

20From the verb vulgarare/divulgare = to make known, spread, divulge, often associated with a particular tradition or lesson, as in the vulgata of a philological text; plural vulgata.
21 14 October 1998; *Lezione magistrale* at the University of Turin on the date Giulio Einaudi received an honorary degree from the Faculty of Letters; source *La Stampa*, 2/1/99:21

22 Launched in 1922

23 Last year of publication was 1956

24 *Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino*; auto workers at FIAT today number 130,000, one-third of the city’s workers in the manufacturing sector (Reveill, M., in *il manifesto*, 5/4/00)

25 Initially this term described coalitions of the historical Left and Right parties in the post-Risorgimento period; “It came to be extended to describe the more general process whereby liberal politicians kept themselves in power by ‘transforming’ erstwhile opponents into allies by the use or abuse of government patronage, legislative concessions and compromises” (Glossary of terms in Gramsci, 1994:xl)

26 From Waldenses or Valdenses, a Christian sect arising in southern France in the 12th century, adopting Calvinist doctrine in the 16th century, later living chiefly in Piedmont

27 Therites of Homer’s *Iliad*; epic later depicted in Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*

28 A militant Italian Catholic movement that gained influence in the right wing of the former Christian Democrats; still a strong political force in northern Italy, especially Milan

29 Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803), Piedmontese aristocrat, dramatist and Italian patriot, noted for first having used the word ‘Risorgimento’ at the time of the French Revolution, in a clear call for Italian unity and liberty

30 Giovanni Gentile, a staunch critic of Communism and an advocate of spiritualism; Gentile supported an intellectual approach based on the theory of absolute immanence rather than transcendance

31 The lower clergy in particular had favoured the Resistance for it had borne more official Fascist pressure than the high ecclesiastical dignitaries

32 The Democratic Labour party of Meuccio Ruini was soon to disappear

33 *Laicismo*

34 In the original text, all verbs appear in the present tense

35 *Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1985:1328

36 Rosselli took up a teaching position in economics at the University of Turin in 1922 shortly after the *biennio rosso* of 1919/21, at the time of a clamorous series of strikes and the occupation of the factories by workers’ councils

37 Called Pitigrilli, who was related to a GL member of the Turin group

38 Geymonat’s books were published by Antonicelli’s publishing house, De Silva

39 In Italy the end of the Cold War was accompanied by the collapse of the dominant class and a series of corruption scandals that have opened the way to the Left in government and, in particular, to the Party of the Democratic Left as the party best placed to guarantee responsible government and the defence of the Welfare State

40 Subsequently revised in 1985

41 In addition to discussions on the abolition of tithes in Sardinia, the abolition of religious orders, as well as the design to introduce civil marriage in 1852

42 In his well-known speech of 27 March 1861

43 Individual conscience, self-perception, awareness

44 In Italy the current Right-wing coalition government of Berlusconi is trying to abolish the provisions of *Articolo* 18, concerning legislation that rules on the dismissal of workers without just cause by employers; the government’s confrontation with representatives of the main trade unions has been characterized by industrial action, public demonstrations and harsh debate

45 Re-published in 1923 and 1939

46 Quoting Cattaneo

47 Approved by the UN General Assembly in 1948

48 Augusto Monti and Silvio Trentin

49 Printed in the *PdA’s* clandestine newspaper

50 A reunification of Nenni’s PSI [Partito socialista italiano] and Saragat’s Social-Democratic PSDI [Partito social-democratico italiano]

51 Journalist Oriana Fallaci, who published *Anger and Pride* in Italy in December 2001, lumps together Islam, terrorism and the presence of Muslims in Europe; she affirms that the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York revealed the essence of Islamic civilization; “on April 12 the weekly
Panorama, which is owned by Berlusconi, gave the controversy a new lease of life when it published a violent diatribe by Fallaci on anti-semitism (Rouard, 2002:34).

Through his great cultural project of establishing a library in Milan to document the history of the workers' movement, Feltrinelli made the name of his publishing house by acquiring the rights to the novel everywhere except the Soviet Union, where it was banned until 1989.

The right to make inquiries, La Stampa (date).

Words of Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, President of the Italian Republic, in Il Messaggero, 04/04/2002.

Bobbio quoting Giacomo Leopardi.

Period marked by threats to the Italian State that derived from organized crime in the south and the challenge of terrorism in the north – from both neo-Fascist and Left-wing groups.

They were killed in 1944 and 1937, respectively.

To look on and offer unwanted advice or comment, especially at a card game.

President of the United States from 1977-1981.

Published by Le Monnier, 1881-1892.


Nuova raccolta di classici italiani annotati, 2 (Turin:Einaudi).


Starting point, impulse, start.

In 1921 a collection of articles written by some members of that group was published in Prague, called A Change in Orientation (Smena vech), by Kljucnikov, J.V., et al.

Montesquieu wrote that the sterility of the country determined the citizens toward an economic commerce in which it was necessary that they be laborious to supply what nature refused.

From March to December 2001, ten seminars were held on the theme “1900: Definitions and interpretations of the century.”

See Buttafaoco, P. in Il Foglio, Friday, 12 November 1999.

Problem first raised in 1961 by Renato Treves in speech at the Centro nazionale di prevenzione e difesa sociale.

Also translated as “meekness” by Chataway, T.

All of humanity.

See 'Appello di Bobbio per la democrazia' of 3 May 2001 [petition circulated by email]

Berlinguer was the former leader of the Italian Communist Party (PCI); the proponents of Euro-Communism admitted the impracticality of western Communist revolution and distanced themselves from Soviet foreign policy.

On 8 September 1943 General Badoglio announced, via radio, the signing of the armistice with the Allies; the Italian armed forces were instructed to stop fighting the Allies and to react to attacks from all quarters. The ambiguity of that message, and the failure to provide precise instructions to the soldiers resulted in the dissolution of the Italian army and, as soldiers travelled homewards, more than half a million were captured by the Germans and deported to Germany.

In the singular (movement).

He began teaching in the Faculty of Jurisprudence in 1948 and left that faculty in 1972 to join the newly constituted Faculty of Political Science.

Mussolini's biographer, who contested Bobbio's separation of Left and Right; he saw the main task of today's leaders as that of freeing history from ideology, and separating historical reality from current political needs.


Twenty years.

The philosopher generally associated with attualismo is Giovanni Gentile, Minister of Public Instruction during Mussolini's regime.
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Gentile Sig.ra Gobetti,

In seguito alla nostra conversazione telefonica del 31/08/1996, la prego di trovare in allegato alla presente una nota per il Prof. Bobbio nonché le tre domande che potrebbero servire da base per l'incontro che avra luogo giovedì prossimo.

Sarò all'aeroporto di Torino mercoledì prossimo, 4/09, alle ore 16.25. Ci vedremo al Centro Studi un po' più tardi.

La ringrazio e sono contenta di poter fare la sua conoscenza di persona.

Cordiali saluti,
Professor Norberto BOBBIO
C/o Centro Studi "Piero Gobetti"
Via Fabro, 6
10122 Torino

Fax no. 011-531-429

Egregio Professor Bobbio,

In allegato alla presente la prego di trovare le tre domande citate nella mia precedente comunicazione.

Vorrei esprimere i miei ringraziamenti più vivi per la sua disponibilità.

Nell’attesa di poter ringraziarla personalmente, le porgo distinti saluti.

C. Hardy
La politica della cultura: Quali sono le grandi linee di questo concetto? Si può interpretare questo termine anche come il confronto dell'individuo stesso con i suoi valori "antropologici" nel tentativo di rinnovare la politica con l'apporto della cultura? Con "la fine" della 1° Repubblica in Italia e la caduta del Muro del Berlino, sono maggiori le prospettive per uno sviluppo culturale della politica?

Come si può conciliare la responsabilità [concetto fermo], le regole del gioco [modificabili] e la fenomenologia [puntata verso la modernità] quando l'enfasi non è sui valori da scegliere bensi sulla loro realizzazione? La Dichiarazione universale dei diritti dell'uomo (1948), anche se non definitiva, "rappresenta la coscienza storica che l'umanità ha dei propri valori fondamentali nella seconda metà del secolo ventesimo". È una questione legale/politica perché i diritti stabiliti dovrebbero esistere in legge, ed essere garantiti. Per procedere nella direzione giusta, come si formula i metodi più adatti ed efficaci per raggiungere la fase della loro realizzazione?

C'è una tendenza umana di collocarsi a destra o a sinistra, o, in ogni caso, più vicino a sinistra o a destra. La sola definizione di "destra" e "sinistra", almeno per me, è un compito eterno, anche nelle scelte e nei comportamenti giornalieri. Il "discorso facile" -- semplice in termini di linguaggio e metafore, con poche riferimenti a programmi politici -- di certe figure della politica italiana odierna annebbia ancora di più la comprensione. In ogni stato democratico e liberale si deve accogliere tutte le espressioni d'opinione possibili; però, quando si parla del patrimonio storico della destra o della sinistra, certamente è l'esperienza stessa che fa emergere la politica di destra o di sinistra. Come lei ha già precisato, "Non è importante la mobilitazione [politica] in quanto tale, bensì il tema sul quale si riesce a convogliare la partecipazione della gente". Che dire delle polemiche sollevate dalle analisi di Ernst Nolte sui rapporti tra comunismo e nazismo e quelle provocate dalle critiche di François Furet all'antifascismo in quanto alibi storico di quella peculiare forma di totalitarismo che è stato il comunismo? Inoltre, alcuni dubbi sull'intera azione della Resistenza in Italia, svolta da più formazioni politiche, sono stati sollevati da Renzo De Felice. Come componente dell'identità della sinistra, qual è l'importanza della Resistenza come tema?