

How To Behave Towards Autocracies

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The term *autocracy* denotes a system of rule with uncontrolled political power. An autocratic government operates based on authority of its own and is accountable to none. Ruler can be a single person (for instance a king, dictator, religious leader) or a group (party, junta, central committee, council). Autocracy comes also into existence whenever derived legitimacy only seems to exist and governmental power is practically exerted in an uncontrolled way.

Autocracies can be legitimated in different ways, such as through violence respectively military power, religious power, ideas of uneven birth, economic, organizational or technical structures. In any case, uncontrolled power is propagated and implemented - leading to more or less autocratic systems. At this totalitarian organizations and states, wherein the entire life - up to private things, ideas, and wishes - is subsumed to the ruling power, constitute an extreme; authoritarian systems, in contrast, operate only with autocratic elements and let some societal areas untouched.

Since autocracies reclaim all power for them, they regard any deviation from their ruling opinion and their norms as an expression of hostility and threat. That's why autocratic systems operate in a steady mode of war towards any deviation, particularly towards any opposition.

Third entities getting into the realm of rule of an autocracy are subdued or annihilated. Totalitarian systems favor to annihilate all humans who resist against being subjugated. In no rare cases massacres up to orgies of annihilation are exerted. Hence even totalitarian autocracies violate basic laws of humanity - leading to a systematic contrast between humanity and absolute power.

If autocratic programs or rulers compete with each other, they usually fight violently against each other - a further reason why autocracy and war are closely linked with each other. At it, autocratic claims of one type (for instance religious war) or claims of different types (for instance a military system and a religious movement) may clash.

Since power works as a drug, autocratic rulers do not resign from power - on no condition. Even at given massive failures and a dramatic demise, no deep system reform can emerge in an autocracy since legitimated critique is not possible and any

approach of pluralism is missing. Instead of propaganda and subjugation of any critique are enforced - usually a way to further reinforcement of autocratic structures up to totalitarianism.

Overview

There is a deal of distinct autocracies (such as Islamic State and associated terror organizations, Al-Qaida, North-Korea, Saudi Arabia, diverse African dictatorships, and some succeeding states of Soviet Union). Many states on Earth are prevalingly autocratically structured (such as Turkey with a tendency to complete autocracy, numerous Arabian, African, Asian, and some Central- and South American states). Finally diverse hybrids of democracy and autocracy exist (example: Hungary, but above all the USA - adequately represented by the current candidates for presidency Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump).

Bringing down Autocracies by Force?

Considering the impacts and structures of autocracies, it seems to be standing to reason to overturn autocracies by force. However, that is the right way only in exceptional cases for several reasons:

1. If an autocracy is supported by a broad majority (of so far not subdued persons), projects of an enforced overthrow go against the will of a majority of the people. Hence the project can be legitimated only hardly.
2. Counterforce against an autocracy exactly corresponds with the autocratic worldview - confirming that view at least in the eyes of their supporters. Hence the autocracy is strengthened so far it is not wiped out by a politically and militarily clearly superior counterforce.
3. According to their basic structure, autocracies tend to use particularly high percentages of their social products for armament and war-fare. Correspondingly they usually constitute by far stronger military powers than expectable from their economic, scientific, and cultural capacities. That's why resistance against an autocracy usually deals with a militarily superior counterpart.
4. Also aside of the presented specific objections, war is generally a particularly bad option since it renders exactly the contrary of public welfare and happiness: Widespread misery, destruction and death.
5. Once a war has started, it develops an extremely strong dynamics of its own, wherein all kinds of peaceful communication and behavior are out of force: As a black hole in space is even capable of warping time, the logic of war subdues

all reality around it. Finally only the destroying logic of war remains, exactly the contrary to life and democracy.

Hence war should be avoided or stopped as far as possible. Arms exports are to denounce globally. A ban of all arm exports should become an energetically pursued political aim. Here particularly the United Nations are at stake, that is, particularly the many middle and small countries, that are interested most in realizing effective global institutions.

The formula: ...is waging war against his own population (that is often used in media without thinking over) implies the latent or explicit assumption that violent resistance against a certain autocracy would be legitimate and reasonable. The result then is usually strictly contrasting with what is achieved: All involved parties slide into a disastrous war or they are not able to end such a war.

Indeed, in certain (exceptional) constellations it is reasonable to declare and wage war against an autocracy: If a grave injury against humanity, particularly a genocide, is happening in a state or an organization, the community of nations must end the crime at fast and radically as possible. Indeed, it must be practically possible to do so.

Apart from that, the community of nations has to strive after avoiding war. That includes the behaving with autocratic states.

Then What?

In dealing with autocracies, particularly totalitarian systems, indeed, *business as usual* should not be the line of orientation. In contrast, all given potentials should be used to counteract to a development towards totalitarianism and to strengthen developmental options of humanity.

- Autocratic propaganda should not be accepted or even overtaken. Thus the assertion that with a won election democracy would exist in a state and the winners would be democratically legitimated constitutes propaganda if parts of population may not have the right of free opinion and political activity. Instead this contradiction or similar contradictions should be clarified in public. Propagandistic labels for autocracies such as *Democratic Republic* should be consequently queried.
- If an autocracy is economically dependent from support, only projects that serve the whole country (not only the ruling class, party and so forth) should be fostered.

- Economic measures, for instance boycotts, can be reasonable if such measures are linked with clear critique of certain ways of behavior and clear demands. A criticized country has to have a chance to correspond with a critique and to regain the consent of the community of nations.
- Given a conflict between a totalitarian and an authoritarian system, democracies should deny the totalitarian system and support the authoritarian one - indeed linked with critique and concrete demands of human rights.
- The political systems on Earth should be systematically assessed with regard to their performances for the public, regarding the practical implementation of human rights, and the given opportunities of participation of the entire population. Transparency is a precondition of development for single states, but also for constructive international and global communication.