

3.2.2.3.2.2 An intellectual avant-garde imposing personal freedom

Imposed freedom has a long history.

Plato considered rule by philosophers who imposed their wise decisions upon citizens way superior to democracy.

During the age of enlightenment in Europe, civil liberties were, in many cases, not taken by those who later enjoyed them, but granted by rulers who were influenced by philosophers.

After World War II, constitutions were imposed on Germany and Japan which embedded a high degree of personal freedom.

On the other hand, there has been a definite trend over the past few decades for democratic political systems to curtail the personal freedom of those ruled.

The fault is with democracy itself. Voters, once they have gained self-confidence, are always more likely to express negative, rather than positive sentiments in elections.

More freedom will not be achieved anytime soon by giving a majority of people with limited intellectual capacities ever more power over the political fate of a country.

That an intellectual avant-garde, elected or not, imposes freedom is a much more distinct possibility than more personal freedom resulting from ever more democracy.

If the intellectual avant-garde is in power only for a limited period of time, then its legacy should be a constitution that strongly limits the power of subsequent parliaments and governments to curtail the freedom of those ruled.