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Editorial Globalisation – the issue of political power in the contemporary world

The collapse of the Communist Block that took place at the turn of the 1990 and the IT revolution that accompanied it have resulted in a far-reaching re-evaluation of both the life of individuals and socio-political life. The Western world, seemingly triumphant in the “Cold War”, believed that the dispute regarding the relations between an individual and a state had been finally resolved in political, legal and economic dimensions – Francis Fukuyama almost officially declared “the end of history”. From now on, the world was to follow the only right path – that of democracy and the free market. The state of war was to be replaced by the state of peaceful and creative competition. Of course, it was admitted that there would be disturbances and local and temporary deviations from the right direction. Nevertheless, recent history has demonstrated that relativism, the ‘product’ of European culture which had been holding a strong position for most of the 20th century, has been overcome. The ideological and political evolution of homo sapiens is over. According to Fukuyama, the history of humanity can be described as a caravan heading for the same city; at the final stage of its journey this caravan has to cross the last mountain range through the same pass. And, having finally reached that city, all travellers would agree that, in fact, all the time (several thinkers including Samuel Huntington do not agree with this claim) it was “one journey with one destination” (Fukuyama, F. *The End of the History and the Last Man*).

But has the world really reached the stage of the “end of history”, even understood metaphorically as the end of ideological

and political evolution? New challenges and problems, previously either absent or not particularly pressing, have begun to dominate political discourse: globalisation, ecologism, gender, political terrorism, identity politics, and transhumanism are a few examples. On the international arena, a new superpower, China, is consolidating its position. Although it is opening up to the market economy, it is doing so in its own specific way, while remaining outside the community of democratic states. New political challenges are emerging in the Western world – attitudes critical towards liberal democracy or even hostile to both parliamentarism and capitalism are becoming increasingly common. In a 2010 interview conducted by Nathan Gardels, editor-in-chief of *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Fukuyama repeated his claim from almost twenty years before that the future of the world lies in liberal democracy. But in 2017 he noticed a serious threat in the increasingly strong decentralisation trends in the US and the EU, the examples of which were Brexit, the growing resentment towards the EU, and Donald J. Trump's success. He viewed them as reactions to the effects of globalisation and interpreted as a revenge of the "democratic" part of liberal democracy on the "liberal" part (America: the failed state). So perhaps the end of history has been prematurely announced?

The latest issue of *Horizons of Politics* is devoted to various aspects of contemporary reflection on political power, which embraces a great number of contemporary challenges to liberal democracy whose common denominator is the process of globalisation and its actual form.

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