

Everyone present in the Group found this book very interesting, accessible and, at the same time, frightening. The authors analysed the rise of autocrats in history, including Hitler and Mussolini, and showed that they shared common factors such as no acknowledgement of the legitimacy of opposition politicians and lack of respect and obligation to the institutions of Government, written and assumed. A large part of the book followed the political history of the USA, understandable as the two authors are Professors at Harvard, leading to the first election of President Trump. They demonstrated how, apart from echoing the norms of previous autocrats, his personal traits of lying, bullying, nepotism and insulting the media he didn't like, ie "fake news", added to his definition as an autocrat. This book was published in 2018, and our discussion reflected on President Trump in his second term, concluding that he is further damaging democracy and worrying for all of our futures. In the words of one of the Group, "an easy read, but not easily read."