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SoPhi

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University of Jyväskylä

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SoPhi is a publication series at the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Finland. SoPhi publishes studies on social policy, sociology, political science and philosophy. Texts are chosen for publication on the basis of expert review.

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Correspondence should be sent to the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy/Publications, University of Jyväskylä, P.O. Box 35, FIN-40351 Jyväskylä, Finland. Our WWW-page is at <http://www.jyu.fi/~yhtfil/sop2.html>.

Publications can be ordered from Kampus Kirja, Seminaarinkatu 15, FIN-40100 Jyväskylä, Finland (tel. +358-(0)14-603157, fax +358-(0)14-611143, e-mail kkirja@bibelot.jyu.fi).

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The Idea of the Yearbook

At present, a wide variety of new approaches are available in the study of political thought: histories of concepts, speech acts, languages and mentalities, discourse analysis and rhetorical approaches as well as new forms of analytical and normative political theory. Debates between approaches are necessary aspects of the study of political thought with regard to both programmatic principles and research practices.

The subject matter of "political thought" is controversial as well. The meanings of both "political" and "thought" have changed and become more diversified than they have been in the past. In our Yearbook we understand both concepts liberally. "Political" should not be understood as a definite sphere, but rather as an aspect of human action and thought which can be present in different contexts. Neither should "thought" signify a delimitation of the ideas of "great thinkers", rather, it should be understood as a conceptual or intellectual dimension of politics in general.

The distinction between centres and peripheries is also a subject which has not been given the attention it deserves in the study of political thought. Neither the "provincialism of big centres" nor the possibility that peripheric countries, universities and research traditions can become thematic centres in research are really fully recognized in the study of political thought. The reception of ideas, concepts and debates between competing centres on the periphery may contribute critical and innovative modifications, giving ideas, concepts and debates a theoretical and political significance quite different from that in their original contexts. Equally important is the fact that ideas created or reformulated in the peripheries frequently remain unnoticed in major international debates because of the self sufficient provincialism of big centres.

Finnish Yearbook of Political Thought is our response to these considerations. Our periodical promotes both the mediation of current intellectual trends and debates to a "peripheral audience" as well as contributions from Finnish scholars to central debates on political thought.

The articles of this volume are mainly based on the presentations given at Reinhart Koselleck Seminar (University of Helsinki November 24th 1995).

Introduction

Reflections on Political Thought in Finland

Today 'Finland' can be understood as a contingent construct of thoughts, languages and practises. As opposed to the national historiography of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, 'Finland' appears as a plural and historical entity. For political thought Finland constitutes an arena in which opposed currents of thought and practices of several Empires have confronted and de- and recomposed with each other. The vocabularies of the central political cultures of Europe are transformed into a unique constellation. 'Finnish political thought' is, accordingly, not 'Finnish' in essence.

The construction of a specific Finnish polity is the result of successful decolonization. The politico-cultural location of Finland is a moving one. It has shifted from being a province in the Swedish Empire to an autonomous unit in 'Eastern' Europe, then to an independent state in 'Northern' Europe or 'Scandinavia. After the joining the European Union, Finland has recently been included in 'Western Europe'.

The construction of 'Finland' can be seen through some symbolic dates (cf. *addendum*). A conventional periodization distinguishes between the political regimes: the Swedish period (up to 1809), the Russian era (1809-1917) and independent Finland (since 1917-1918). Political and intellectual life has often been divided into the First (-1944) and Second Republic, although no changes in the

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constitution took place. Nowadays the slogan ‘Third Republic’ is sometimes used for the post-Kekkonen (1981-) era or for the time after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

To speak of ‘Finnish’ political thought in the Swedish period is questionable. Although the *autonomy* of Finland in the Russian Empire was, at least until the reopening of the Estate Diet sessions in 1863, administrative rather than political, it created space for nationalistic political thought in particular beginning in the 1840s, more or less simultaneously with other ‘new nations’ in Europe. ‘Finnishness’ was the official ideology of the Finnish ‘*First Republic*’ (1919-1944), shaped by the experience of the civil war and of a right wing intellectual hegemony. The ‘*Second Republic*’ in the post-war era has been shaped by the integration of the Left into Finnish political culture, by pro-Soviet neutrality and by the establishment of Finland as one of the ‘Western parliamentary democracies’. Recent changes in its international orientation, reorientations in the party system, neocapitalist stripping of the welfare state, and privatizations, an increased acceptance of pluralism and heterogeneity of cultures and life-styles have reshaped the political coordinates in Finland.

* * *

The most important Empire for Finnish politics has been, of course, the *Swedish* one. ‘Finland’ was only a common name for some of the provinces before 1809. The myth of the Free Nordic Peasant, the tradition of popular representation in the Estate Diet, the existence of Monarchic elements in the Republican Finnish Constitution, the Lutheran state church, the legal framework and the centralistic administrative structure combined with municipal autonomy are obvious aspects of this Swedish heritage. Even in independent Finland ‘to follow the Swedish example’ has been a common topos, although the populist opposition both to Sweden as a former imperial country and especially to Swedish as the language of the narrow Finnish establishment has also been strong, especially in the inter-war years. Today, however, the formerly nationalistic bourgeois parties are also proud of Finnish bilingualism. To be counted among the ‘Nordic

Welfare States' has been the latest demonstration of inclusion into the Swedish model.

To speak of a *Russian*, Czarist or even Byzantine impact on Finnish politics and culture is not so uncommon today. This is, however, an exaggeration: the Russian heritage in Finnish political and intellectual life is astonishingly narrow. Still, in the bureaucratic style, in terms of reverence towards the authorities etc., traits of the Russian heritage do have some significance, likewise in the relative strength of the revolutionary and Communist movements since 1905. Recently the old St. Petersburg 'multiculturalism' has also been appreciated as something from which the Finns, too, could learn today.

French practices of the Enlightenment and bureaucracy were mediated to Finland both through Sweden and through Russia. French was also the language in which the Russian authorities communicated with the autonomous Finnish part of the Empire in the 19th century. Human rights, freedom of the press and organization, the Republic, the multi-party system etc. can be seen as expressions of the reception of French thought models into Finnish politics. The revolutionary Constitution proposal of the Reds in 1918 was also inspired by French parliamentarism and by *Swiss* ideals of direct democracy as much as by the Soviets in Russia.

The *German* heritage is in many respects in the background of the Swedish one, for instance, in Lutheran Christianity and in the continental legal system. Idealistic, especially Hegelian, philosophy was decisive for the Fennoman nationalistic movement, which was originally a linguistic, philosophical and political phenomenon all at the same time. Finland as a unitary and homogeneous nation-state was constructed according to the model provided by German philosophy, in opposition to the imperial models of Sweden and Russia. The university system, the state-guided economic and social policy as well as the reception of Marxist Socialism also belong to the German heritage in Finland. In similar fashion the engineering and medical sciences in Finland were based for a long time on German models. German dominance was greatest in the intellectual life of the 'First Republic' but vanished rapidly after World War II.

The *British* political heritage, such as that of the Glorious Revolution, did not enjoy much of a reception in Finland. Parliamentarism

in the Finnish Constitution of 1919 was also interpreted according to the French paradigm implying the multi-party system. Commerce and trade, which have also shaped Finnish culture and politics since the second half of the 19th century, contributed, however, to an Anglo-phone orientation, especially in urban and Swedish-speaking Finland.

The United States provided the main direction of Finnish emigration at the turn of the century. Through the returning emigrants the American heritage played a role not only in business but also in the formation of Finnish Socialism and Communism. After World War II the impact of US culture has become overwhelming: it is not uncommon to speak of Finland as the ‘most American country in Europe’. The impact of the American style of thinking and type of empiricist research practice in the social sciences has been immense.

The plurality of imperial heritages has, today more than ever, an obvious significance for Finnish intellectual and political life. The plurality of competing intellectual metropolises and the distance to each of them has been one of the main advantages of Finnish political thinking. Anyone studying political thought in Finland has, as an implicit requirement of quality, to master several European languages. It is this plurality which gives specific opportunities for political thinking in the Finnish context.

* * *

The conventional dichotomies of political language appear problematic, when applied to Finnish politics. A specification of various ‘isms’ is needed in order to understand the originality of Finnish political culture.

It is easily to understand why there has never been strong ‘*Conservatism*’ in Finland. In this semi-colonial country neither aristocrats nor monarchists had a chance, while the strong bureaucratic component of the Swedish heritage did not mean an ideological conservatism. In particular, resistance to the parliamentary reform of 1906 remained marginal. The political influence of the Lutheran religion and the established State Church has also declined rapidly in

the 20th century. Conservatism in Finland refers to a resistant attitude to political change rather than to a definite political ideology. In this sense it can be found in all colours of the political spectrum.

The Fennoman *nationalistic* movement was a complex intellectual phenomenon. Its first wave was a revival of Finnish language and culture, symbolized by the creation of the national epos, *Kalevala*. The politicization of the movement was due to the philosopher J.V. Snellman, whose Hegelianism had some original traits: he omitted economy from the civil society and made the moral-political nature of action the basis for the distinction between state and civil society. Fennoman cultural nationalism put an emphasis on the education and elevation of the people, and it became the leading force in the university sphere and in the bureaucracy. In the late 19th century Fennoman politics were more exclusively concentrated on the language question, trying to replace Swedish with Finnish in all fields of life. In the Old Finns party of the turn of the century the critical impulse of a mass movement was replaced by paternalistic social and cultural reform.

It is very common to speak of the weakness of Finnish *Liberalism*: liberal parties and movements have always remained marginal in this country. Despite this much of Western liberalism – including human rights, freedom of the press and a market economy – characterizes Finland. Liberalism has emerged as a by-product in Finnish politics. The liberalization of the Finnish economy, culture and political rights without strong liberalism has been common to different political currents and not to a monopoly of ‘liberals’.

The lack of a specific *republican* language is characteristic of Finnish politics. Questions of polity – constitutional alternatives, citizens’ participation and political rights, parliamentary procedures etc. – have not been a controversial subject in Finnish politics. Since nobody defended the old order, an active defence of democratization was not needed when the occasion for it arose in 1905. The Parliamentary reform of 1906 was defended as a measure to strengthen Finland’s position in relation to Russia and as an occasion for social reforms. It was not seen as a creation of new chances of politicking for the citizens or new conditions for the political judgement of politicians in parliamentary decision-making.

Judging by their electoral support, the Social Democrats and also the Communists have been strong in Finland. *Socialistic* thinking has, however, not played an important role in Finnish politics. The “Socialists” have been those who emphasize “social reforms” more than others. This is partly due to the rural character of the early support for the Social Democrats and also for the Communists. The number of those on the academic Left remained small. The ‘November Socialists’ of 1905, the cultural leftists of the thirties and the academic Marxists of the seventies are all exceptions which never shaped the political thinking of the socialist parties.

The *agrarian* ideology in Finland had similarities to the Russian *narodniki* in its apology for a rural style of life and culture. Since the twenties the “Rural Union” (*Maalaisliitto*), later the Centre Party, has been a major force in Finnish governments. It combined rural populism with agrarian interest policies and with etatist identification with the Finnish State. The Kekkonen presidency incarnated the combination of populist sympathies and etatistic strategies of intervention, without worrying too much about legal and procedural obstacles.

The *totalitarian* tendency among the Whites in 1918 led to prison camps and to an ideology attempting to extinguish not only Communism but also all sorts of political and cultural pluralism. The right wing extremist Lapua movement around 1930 was an attempt to reaffirm the monolithic ideal of ‘White Finland’. Its strength is one of the features which located Finland’s ideology close to the new states of Eastern Europe after World War I.

The populist style, appealing to “the people”, has been common to several ideological currents in Finland. It has had, however, a common opponent, *legalistic* thinking. This is a mixture of the bureaucratic defence of the legal status quo, a constitutionalist defence of old “rights”, and a moderate liberalism defending the procedural approach to reforms against populist intervention and direct action. This legalism was part of the Swedish heritage in Finland and found use as a strategy against Russian imperial claims at the turn of the century.

Anarchists, syndicalists and the anti-authoritarian New Left of the sixties have been curiosities in Finland. The environmental and

anti-nuclear movements of the seventies gained a certain amount of popularity while the *Greens*, however, entered the Finnish Parliament as long ago as 1983. Since then the Greens have enjoyed relatively strong intellectual and electoral support in urban Finland and are now also part of the coalition government. Intellectually the role of the Greens can be seen as a new expression of the German heritage.

Female suffrage was an inherent part of the Parliamentary Reform of 1906. Since then women's contribution to Finnish politics has been considerable and the trend is gaining strength. Egalitarian thinking has been the main current of *Feminism* in Finland. In the seventies there was a wave of Marxist feminism, while since the eighties feminism has been characterized by its pluralism. American, Scandinavian, French, German and Italian currents play a role in Feminist and Lesbian thinking in present-day Finland.

* * *

To reflect upon the specificity of Finnish political thought from a present-day perspective makes it possible to look at certain less obvious features that also provide special potential for political thinking. Finland's *peripheral* position has, in certain respects, been relativized in the era of mondialization and, for as long as it remains, it can also be used as a resource against strong trends and fashions at the centre as well as to take advantage of Finland's inclusion in the European Union. The relative *lack of traditionalism* can be seen as an opportunity for liberation from the burden of history. The *rapidity* of intellectual and political changes, visible in sudden political turns, unknown in imperial cultures like Britain and Sweden, can now also be understood as an opportunity for flexibility in a world in which fixed conventions have become obstacles to action. The same holds for the decline of the strongly *organized* character of political movements.

Two features which still give Finnish thinking a special character are the *unitary* ideal in Finnish thought and the *ideological* character of political conflicts. As contradictory as they first appear,

they are in fact closely related. The nature of this unity was always controversial, but the idea of 'Finland' as a unity was common to all parties and ideological currents. Since the 1970s the consensus of opposed projects appeared to be ideal, and the peak of consensual politics has been reached by the present Lipponen 'rainbow' government. It consists of Social Democrats, the bourgeois Coalition Party, the Swedish People's Party, the Left Union and the Greens. Ideological currents are made 'commensurable' in terms of daily politics through common participation in the government.

Thanks to the relative decline of ideological politics an opportunity for a deliberative style of politics may be noticed. Ideological conflicts presented positions as if they were 'deduced' from ideologies and the necessary compromises always appeared as potential treason, instead of being understood as clever moves in politicking. The decline of ideological politics can be seen as a chance for increased deliberation between open alternatives concerning courses of action: the 'line' of the party, compromises involved with participation in government coalitions as well as alternatives in foreign policy appear as matters of controversial discussion.

The decline of ideological and organizational politics also helps us to understand politics not as a symmetrical controversy of positions but rather as a horizon of asymmetric conflicts between different sorts of politicization, opening new faces of contingency. For a politics operating with the asymmetries between different types of politicization, political thought can have a greater role for political action than in the established politics of recent decades.

Historical Coordinates of Finnish Political Thought

Date	Events in Finland	Events around Finland
12th century	Inclusion of 'Finnish' provinces into the Swedish Empire	
1530's		Protestant Reformation and State Church in the Swedish Empire
1640	University founded in Turku	
1703		St. Petersburg founded on Swedish soil
1721-1772		'Age of Freedom', the Four Estate Diet dominated Swedish politics
1772		Coup d'Etat of Gustav III for Enlightened Monarchy
1808-1809	War between Sweden and Russia, Finland occupied by Russian troops, Porvoo Diet, Alexander I granted Finland 'autonomy', Hamina Peace Treaty confirmed Finland's inclusion in the Russian Empire	
1811ff	Beginnings of a separate Finnish administration Helsinki became the capital of Finland	
1828	University moved from Turku to Helsinki	
1830s-1840s	Fennoman nationalist movement, first as a cultural and linguistic movement, then as a philosophical and political movement	
1847	Suometar, first modern Finnish language newspaper	

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Date	Events in Finland	Events around Finland
1863	Reopening of the Estate Diet sessions, beginning of Finnish party politics	
1899	February Manifesto attempted a reduction in Finnish autonomy	
1904-1907	Political general strike in Finland, Parliamentary reform with universal male and female suffrage, first elections to the Finnish Parliament (Eduskunta)	Russo-Japanese War, Revolution in Russia
1917	Law on Finnish internal independence	February Revolution in Russia
1918	Declaration of Independence Civil War between the Whites and the Reds, Defeat of the Reds with the help of intervention from German troops, Election of a German King by the Parliament (from which the Socialists were excluded), who never ascended the throne	Bolshevik Revolution
1919	Republican Constitution in Finland	Defeat of Germany in World War I
1929-1930	Beginning of the Right Wing extremist Lapua movement	
1937	Coalition between Centre parties and Social democrats	
1939-1940	Winter War against the Soviet Union, parts of Karelia ceded to the Soviet Union in the Moscow Peace Treaty	

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Date	Events in Finland	Events around Finland
1941-1944	Finnish participation in the war against the Soviet Union on the German side, reoccupation of lost areas and further parts of Karelia	
1944	Armistice with the Soviet Union, expulsion of German troops in the Lapland war,	
1945	Success of the Left in elections, coalition between Social Democrats, Agrarians and Communists & their allies	
1948	Pact of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union including the principle of Finnish neutrality in the disputes between the Great Powers	
1955	Return of the Porkkala area to Finland by the Soviet Union, Finnish membership of the United Nations and Nordic Council	
1961	Finland joins EFTA	
1973	Free Trade Treaty between Finland and the EEC	
1989-1991		Dissolution of the Soviet Union
1994-1995	Referendum in favour of Finnish EU membership with effect from the beginning of 1995	

Reinhart Koselleck

The Temporalisation of Concepts¹

It is a basic hypothesis of the lexicon *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* that the experience of modern times is simultaneously the experience of a new time. The relation of the acting and suffering people to historical time has changed in empirical as well as in theoretical terms. "History itself" (*Geschichte selber*²) has been discovered as something new in relation to the previous experience.

Let me begin by discussing some notes on the history of the vocabulary. A central expression to which, as is well known, only the modern times have genuinely conceptualised, is progress. *Progressio*, *progressus* has unlike the theological *profectus* gained new meaning on its neo-Latin, French and English settings: the openness of the future which is at the same time conceived as increasingly controllable. This can be seen in two strings of meaning:

1. The natural metaphor of ageing, of growing old, which finally leads to decline or ends in a new circle becomes out-dated. Bacon consciously left the age metaphor blank when he introduced *Veritas Temporis Filia*, the truth as daughter of the time. Pascal in his *Traité du vide* consciously brought the human progress of reason to contrast with the ageing of the world. Human beings constantly increase their knowledge: "de la vient, par une prérogative particulière, non

seulement chacun des hommes s'avance de jour en jour dans les sciences, mais que tous les hommes ensemble y font un continuel progrès à mesure que l'univers vieillit."

Fontenelle broke openly with the comparison to age in 1688, in order to stabilise the ability to increase the human reason which once derived from this comparison. "Il y a toutes les apparences du monde que la raison se perfectionnera". The healthy views of all good spirits do not know any age, "c'est à dire, pour quitter l'allégorie, que les hommes ne dégèneront jamais, et que les vues saines de tout les bons esprits qui se succéderont, s'ajoutent toujours les unes sur les autres".

Hence, the circular, natural conception of time is replaced by a progressive time in which human reason perfects itself. Leibniz took these considerations perhaps most consistently to a conclusion, so that there is, until now, hardly any axiom of progress which he theoretically would not already have been formulated. Leibniz has put forward the thesis, that the universe neither repeats itself nor ages, and he goes a step further by saying that the universe can never reach the point of completion, of maturity. Similar to Pascal he says, that *progressus est in infinitum perfectionis*. The best of all worlds is the best only if she permanently improves.

Leibniz thus has formulated a dynamic conception of time which has conceptualised temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) as being inherent in progress. The aim of completion is brought into the way of optimising. In this way we come to a further lexical reference:

2. Bacon, Fontenelle or Perrault still aligned their ideas of progression with the aim of *perfectio*. To discover the eternal laws of nature or art – or, as it was demanded in the eighteenth century, also of politics – means to define a finite aim. The same was also the case still with Voltaire, despite his polemical optimism, when he asked Rousseau: "Mais pourquoi n'en pas conclure qu'il (l'homme) s'est perfectionné jusqu'au point où la nature a marqué les limites de sa perfection?".

A really new, or at least a different time experience can be seen in two word formations: in *perfectionnement* and *perfectibilité*. The verb *se perfectionner* is old but the noun *perfectionnement*

was formed only in the first half of the eighteenth century. Turgot did not yet use the expression, he still liked to speak of the perfection *plus grande* which mankind emulates. Not until Condorcet does *perfectionnement* become a central catchword to sketch the processual character of the progression *infinite*.

As *perfectionnement* temporalizes the concept of *perfectio*, by using the theological expression in a historically new way, it articulates a specifically new time experience: it aims at the course of history, it articulates, following the intention of Condorcet, an objectifiable way of executing history.

A different case is the expression *perfectibilité* in Rousseau: this expression supplies the criterion which distinguishes the acting man from the animal. *Perfectibilité* is for Rousseau not an empirical determination of the course of events – as is *perfectionnement* – but a metahistorical category. It defines the basic condition of all possible history. Regardless of the pessimistic connotations Rousseau has connected with the expression, it is a basic definition which makes the process of history dynamic by refraining from a definite determination of aims.

Here I shall ignore the political and the social implications of this new conceptualisation. I only want to notice the semantic findings: with increasing reflection on progress the natural metaphor of time is forced back, it no longer carries enough strength to describe the experiences of modern history. Thus *per negationem* a genuine historical time is uncovered, a historical time which is aware of an open future, which takes the determinations of aims into the execution of acting.

I want to add here just one reference to German linguistic usage: The French plural *les progrès* is here still translated very naturally as progressing, as progression (*Fortgang*, *Fortschreiten*, *Fortrücken*) and so on. The emphasis still lies on the plurality of the single progressions which are empirically noticeable. It was only in the 1780's that the expression *Fortschritt* as a historical term was formulated by Kant. It is a word creation which sums up all single expressions of progress to a common concept.

This new collective singular contains the meanings of *per-*

fectibilité as well as that of *perfectionnement* in one word. It is an expression of an ambitious theoretical claim. Namely it indicates a temporal modality of history which has not been formulated in this way before. Progress as historical experience is redeemable only if the people are conscious of their task of arranging or staging this progress. In this respect the concept is a reflective and defines the conditions of possibility but not the empirical course of the progress. Formulated differently: the expression is a transcendental category in which the conditions of the cognition coincide with the conditions of acting and the deed. It is evident, that this is the path which leads to Hegel and Marx, a path, however, which I shall not follow here.

Closely related to the formation of the term "progress" is the coinage of a new concept: history. Until the 1780s it was only possible to connect history with an object or a subject. One could only say: the history of Charlemagne, the history of France, the history of civilisation. Only during the epochal turn shortly before the French Revolution did it become possible in Germany to talk of history itself, of history in general. History also became a reflexive concept which reflects on itself without having to be connected to a concrete object or a concrete subject. Only after that was it possible to speak of history in contrast to nature. Clearly a new space of experience is uncovered.

As in the case of progress, there is a convergence available which connects several components to a common concept: no longer are histories thematized in the plural but history itself as a condition of the possibility of all single histories. As the coinage of the concept history as narrative (*Historie*) and history as nexus of events get simultaneously contaminated, the objective and the subjective aspects of historical experience became reduced to one collective singular. With regard to the French word *histoire* we occasionally come across this contamination as well. The next *analogon* in the French language seems to be *La Révolution* which attributes to itself much of the German meanings of the progress as such and of history itself.

These few notes of mine on the vocabulary are intended to illuminate the thesis of temporalization (*Verzeitlichung*) concerning specific concepts of movement (*Bewegungsbegriffe*) of modern times.

These findings are certainly not limited to such expressions which explicitly thematize the temporal modalities. The surprising thing about the use of the hypothesis is that there is an entire socio-political vocabulary which refers to coefficients of movement and change. All socio-political concepts encounter a temporal tension which assigns the past and the future in a new way. In other words: the expectations are no longer deduced entirely from hitherto existing experiences, the experience of the past and the expectations for the future drift apart. This is only another wording for the temporalization which characterises modern times. Thus the complete terminology differs from the Greek-Christian tradition, though many elements of the original meaning are still contained in the modern usage.

Let me discuss this by giving some examples. Democracy in the Aristotelian tradition was a constitutional term which had two further alternative counter concepts, including their types of decline. What this triad characterises is the finiteness (*Endlichkeit*) of the predefined possibilities. However history proceeds, it always proceeds in the course of these quasi-natural organisational forms or stabilises itself into a mixed form, which is assumed to last longer. All experiences limit expectations so that – with exact analysis – it is possible to extract forecasts from the past into the future. The expectations are accompanied and limited by the previous experience.

All this no longer applies to the modern usage of democracy. Aristotle certainly still provides a multitude of interpretations which today remain usable in the analysis of a democratic constitution.

What is new is the expansion of the democratic constitutional form on megaspaces which exceed the oral communication of town people. New, too, is the setting of democracy as the only legitimate constitution which makes all other constitutional and ruling orders to appear to be wrong. But this is not what I would like to emphasise in terms of the questions under discussion. What in particular is new as well is that at the end of the eighteenth century a new horizon of expectation was opened by the concept of democracy which could not be deduced from or explained by the past.

When Rousseau defines democracy as an unrealisable constitution for angels, it is exactly this lacking realisation referring to infin-

ity which legitimates the plan to build a democracy. The German friends of the French Revolution, the young Görres, the young Schlegel or Fichte described themselves as democrats – also a new formation of the word – by proceeding from the assumption, that the aim of democracy, the identity of rulers and ruled can only be reached in a infinite approximation. But to reach for this aim is a moral duty. In this way an horizon is opened which turns democracy not only into a political concept – which it always was –, but into a concept of the philosophy of history as well. Hope and action come together in democracy. For the mode of realisation of the course of history the corresponding concept of movement was simultaneously created: namely democratism (*Demokratismus*).

Here we run into one of the numerous ”-ism” coinages which the temporalization of the categorical meanings generally brings about in socio-political vocabulary. I think of liberalism, republicanism, socialism, communism and also of conservatism, all of which have a common temporal structure. They are all movement concepts (*Bewegungsbegriffe*) which serve in practice to socially and politically realign the resolving society of estates (*Ständegesellschaft*) under a new set of aims. What is typical about these expressions is that they are not based on a predefined and common experience. Rather they compensate for a deficiency of experience by a future outline which is supposed to be realised. The basic pattern, the constitutive difference between the store of experience (*Erfahrungshaushalt*) and the horizon of expectation (*Erwartungshorizont*) in temporalization, marks all of these key-concepts (*Leitbegriffe*). Needless to say, these are concepts of the industrialised world which leave rural life behind, because rural life is naturally determined by a revolving time model on which the everyday life over the seasons was based.

The aforementioned concepts leave, – despite all Christian origins of the meanings – the eschatological or occasional apocalyptic space of expectation behind them. The Christian future expectation was as determined, albeit in a different way, as the future expectation of the antiquity. It was determined by the certain, though in a chronological sense uncertain return of Jesus Christ. Any prophecy which once seemed to be disproved by the events, used this failure as a basis for the certainty of its own future realisation. We are

dealing here with a kind of expected future which is assumed to be infinite.

The political future outlines of concepts of movement are quite different: They always remain bound to human planning and action and have to be adjusted to and fitted into changing events.

As an example I could mention Kant, who conceived in his work *Zum ewigen Frieden* in 1795 the concept of republicanism. It was Kant's aim to conceive the Basel peace treaty between republican France and monarchical Prussia as the starting point for a possible League of Nations (*Völkerbund*) – which is, by the way, also a word created by Kant. The difference between systems of governing in the two peace making countries was now dodged by Kant, who deduced both constitutions from the principle of republicanism. The Prussian King was thus obliged to rule his country as if it were already a republic all citizens could accept. Republicanism is hence, a determination of movement which declares constitutional change the principle of the constitution.

This shows how modern this conceptual definition is, as opposed to the earlier concept of constitution. In the French speaking world it was to my knowledge Vattel, who first defined the revision clause as a prerequisite of every reasonable constitution. This theoretically stems, of course, from Rousseau's *Contrat Social* in which the *volonté générale* is sovereign.

In conclusion: The temporalization of central or basic historical concepts (*Grundbegriffe*) is extended not only on concepts, which explicitly have to thematize the time – like progress or history. The other conducting concepts (*Leitbegriffe*) are also conceived and used in a way in which the change of the existing conditions is desirable, necessary, and therefore required.

From these findings it is possible, briefly, to make conclusions regarding the other criteria which structure our modern vocabulary politically and socially.

By "democratisation of linguistic usage" we mean: the dissolving of *stratum* or *status* specific usage of the terminology. To put it roughly, the political language in former times was restricted to the aristocracy, the jurists and the clergy. Thus, ensuring that the expressions were not used by the lower strata and did not to be trans-

lated. This has changed rapidly since the eighteenth century. What was only possible in theological setting earlier becomes a political postulate now: Speaking to all people at the same time. Political language was first extended to encompass all educated people, the amount and spread of newspapers increased rapidly – a process which repeated in Germany after 1770 what has been done in England and France already a century before. The intensive repetitive reading of the same books, primarily the Bible and the psalm book, is replaced and outstripped by extensive reading which constantly includes new occurrences. Finally, the sounding-board of the political language expands to the lower classes which are supposed to be integrated in new way .

This process includes the compulsion to abstraction. The political concepts have to win a higher degree of generality, in order to be conducting concepts (*Leitbegriffe*). They now aim to speak simultaneously to people of most different living spaces and most varied classes with often diametrically opposite experiences. The concepts become catchwords in their use. This can be illustrated by the expression *Emanzipation*, which turns from a legal term, a *terminus technicus* related to the change of generations, into a historico-philosophical movement concept which indicates and practically sets off whole movements (*Prozesse*). Originally related to concrete individuals, later expanded to groups, nations and classes which demand all inclusive equal rights, the concept finally becomes so generalised that its reference to concrete actions can be recalled wilfully.

A further modern result, however, lies in the generalisation of modern concepts. With the global interdependence of all events the immediate spaces of experience no longer contain all the factors which constitute this experience. This means, the actual experience here and now which determines our everyday life, is determined by social and political factors which exceed our experience. This gaping difference can only be bridged by a political terminology which is universally usable. Behind the numerous abstract catchwords of present-day language lies a compulsion to abstraction which sets the preconditions for making politics.

Finally, the liability to ideologies of all kinds also follows from these results. Ideology, this neologism, has, after being criticised by Napoleon, challenged a criticism of ideologies. It is a question of conscious contents which can neither be proved to be an error nor an open lie. They are rather attitudes which derive from the socio-economical life situation. As is known, this method can be extended to the whole historical past. But what makes this discovery a phenomenon of modern times?

I think that here too an answer can be found in the temporalization (*Verzeitlichung*) of conceptual language. For if the concepts are always preconceptions (*Vorgriffe*) towards the future which is no longer built up on previous experience, then there are no more controlling possibilities to disprove or to confirm these anticipations. The future can be, so to speak, specifically occupied by a particular social stratum, so that every stratum is able to project a different future on to another stratum. Everybody can then be analysed ideology-critically because every concept can be put in another perspective. In other words, the partiality of the modern vocabulary is constitutive for our politico-social language. Whether this is merely a phenomenon of modern times, I would like to keep as an open question for discussion.

translated by Klaus Sondermann

Notes

- ¹ The paper was originally presented in Paris in 1975 and served as a basis for the lecture in Helsinki in November 1995. The many French quotations refer to the original audience. All the quotations are presented and documented in the corresponding articles of the lexicon.
- ² Note the difference between the German and English concepts. *Geschichte* refers to *Geschehen*, to that which happens, while history has *historia*, the story, as a reference, cf. the article *Geschichte, Historie* in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, vol. 2, 593-717. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 1975.

Melvin Richter

Appreciating a Contemporary Classic

The Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe and Future Scholarship¹

A Contemporary Classic

After more than a quarter-century, there are now in print all seven of the substantive volumes of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, or to give its full title in English, *Basic Concepts in History. A Dictionary on Historical Principles of Political and Social Language in Germany*.² A definitive work on its subject, the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, or *GG*, as I shall call it, is unlikely to be superseded for a very long time to come. Although any or all of its articles may be corrected within the predictable future, it will continue to be indispensable. Thus the *GG* will join the *Pauly-Wissowa* lexicon for classical learning as among those indispensable classic works first consulted by anyone beginning serious research on the subjects it covers.

But what exactly is the *GG*? Some of those who praise it tacitly diminish their praise by classifying it as a reference work, a dull genre executed by faceless contributors, rather than by an individual with shining abilities. So to describe the *GG* as a multi-authored

lexicon, while not completely inaccurate, is seriously to underestimate the originality of its program, and the high quality of its execution. Nor does such well-merited praise suggest that the purposes of the *GG* are advanced by prematurely canonizing it. After all as a work of scholarship, its value in part derives from those of its statements which can then be revised in the light of subsequent research. More generally, the distinctive advantages of *Begriffsgeschichte* can be realized only after both its method and findings have been subjected to vigorous criticism and reworking by those who care enough to separate what is worth preserving from what ought to be discarded because of faults in the method, inadequacies in its application, or ideological biases in one or another article.

It is in this spirit that I propose two main purposes for the rest of this paper. First, I should like to continue the dialogue among English- and German-speaking specialists in the history of political thought and intellectual history.² Perhaps the single most relevant issue involves the relationship of individual concepts to the political language or languages in which they are used. For English-speaking historians such as John Pocock, Quentin Skinner, and Keith Michael Baker have developed distinctive modes of treating political and social thought and language historically. Still another Anglophone tradition, that associated with A. O. Lovejoy, is being continued by Donald Kelley in his own work and as Editor of the *Journal of the History of Ideas* founded by Lovejoy. All of these modes of analysis applied to political language by English-speaking historians, while differing in some regards among themselves, raise important questions about the linguistic and extra-linguistic dimensions of historical analysis.

The second issue I propose to raise, concerns future uses of the method and findings of the *GG* now that it is finished. What sorts of research, applications of *Begriffsgeschichte*, or comparative analyses ought to be undertaken?

But before turning to these questions, let me summarize briefly what I take to be the main points of the *GG*.

The project encompasses about 120 concepts covered in some 7,000 pages. Articles average over fifty pages; the most important contributions are monographs exceeding a hundred pages. Yet it is not the *GG*'s scale but its program that makes it notable. What are

its stated purposes? 1) to provide for the first time reliable information about past uses of political and social concepts by assembling systematically extensive citations from original sources; 2) to characterize the ways in which language both shaped and registered the processes of change which transformed every area of German political and social life from approximately the middle of the eighteenth-century to that of the nineteenth; 3) to sharpen our awareness at the present time of just how we use political and social language.

By understanding the history of the concepts available to us, we may better perceive how they push us to think along certain lines, thus enabling us to conceive of how to act on alternative and less constraining definitions of our situation. This work aims at much more than providing histories of concepts. It opens the way to understanding how those experiencing the historical formation of the modern world in German-speaking Europe conceptualized those great changes, incorporated them within their respective political and social theories, and acted upon these contested understandings. Comprehensive and highly structured, the *GG* could not have been planned and executed without Professor Koselleck's pointed historiographical queries and hypotheses.

The *GG* seeks to correlate political and social concepts with the continuity or discontinuity of political, social, and economic structures. But the history thus provided goes beyond social and economic history. Because those who lived through the unprecedented rapid changes of modern history did not all experience, understand, and conceptualize structural transformations in the same way, their prognoses differed sharply, as did their actions as members of different social formations and political groups. The range of alternatives depended upon the concepts available. What these concepts were, how they were contested, and the extent to which they remained constant, were altered, or created *de novo* are the integrating themes of the *GG*'s project. In order to treat them, the *GG* has utilized both the history of concepts (*Begriffsgeschichte*) and structural social history.⁴ Its program is anti-reductionist, positing the mutual interdependence of both types of history, which it sees as in a condition of fruitful irreducible tension. Thus, as formulated by Professor Koselleck, *Begriffsgeschichte* simultaneously refuses to

regard concept-formation and language as epiphenomenal, that is, as determined by the external forces of "real history;" while at the same time, he rejects the theory that political and social language are autonomous "discourses" unaffected by anything extra-linguistic. This position has endeared the *GG*'s method to neither social nor intellectual historians, both of whom prefer their respective professional oversimplifications. These simply ignore concepts or structures respectively.

As a lexicon of political and social concepts. The *GG* charts the concepts constituting specialized vocabularies, that is, the semantic fields or linguistic domains, of political and social language used in German-speaking Europe. In addition, the *GG* proposes a set of hypotheses about how particularly during the *Sattelzeit* (approximately 1750-1850), German political and social vocabularies were transformed at an accelerated speed, and in certain specified directions. These changes in language both conceptualized rapid transformations in the structures of government, society, and the economy, and helped produce determinate reactions to them.

The *GG* combines the study of the languages used to discuss state, society, and economy with identifications of the groups, strata, orders and classes that used or contested such concepts. This program requires contributors (occasionally individuals, more often teams) to look back as far as classical antiquity, and forward to the conceptual usages of our own time. The *GG*'s objective is to identify three types of political and social concepts, each defined in terms of German usage at the present day: 1) concepts long in use, such as "democracy," the meaning of which may still be retrieved and understood by a speaker of the language today; 2) concepts such as "civil society" and "state," whose earlier meanings have been so effaced that they can now be understood only after scholarly reconstruction of their prior meanings; 3) neologisms such as "Caesarism," "Fascism," or "Marxism," coined in the course of revolutionary transformations they helped shape or interpret.

What is specifically modern in such concepts? High on the agenda of the *GG* are a number of hypotheses about conceptual developments during the period Koselleck calls the *Sattelzeit*: 1) *Verzeitlichung*, the disposition to insert modern political and social

concepts into one or another philosophy or horizon of history set out teleologically in terms of periods, phases, or stages of development. The concepts of progress and emancipation are among the best known ideas which were put into temporal frames of movement towards historical goals. Such impositions of temporal patterns have produced discernible consequences. They led to tensions between perceptions of the present and some more desirable future. Thereby such historicized and future-loaded concepts greatly increased the emotional charge, intensity, and polarization of passions in political and social life during this period. For this use of historical time helped create the horizon within which such concepts functioned thereafter. Especially significant for establishing such horizons oriented towards the future were eschatologies, religious or secularized, which made political actors conceive of themselves as either already living in an unique period, or else in one that would make history by transforming the world as hitherto known. Dr. Motzkin's paper⁵ admirably states other aspects of this hypothesis.

2) *Demokratisierung* (democratization) of political and social vocabularies, which prior to this period, had been specialized and relatively restricted to elite strata. During the eighteenth century, profound changes occurred in the manner of reading, what was read, the political messages delivered, and the size of the audiences to which they were directed. Previously the same texts had been intensively read and reread. Now many more texts became generally available, and were read more rapidly. Political and social concepts came to be communicated through varied media rather than through books exclusively. In these ways was increased the size of the reading public exposed to political concepts. As for nonreaders, many of them became familiar with the themes of contested discussion they encountered through personal participation in large-scale political movements of a kind previously unknown.

3) *Ideologiesierbarkeit* (the growing extent to which concepts could be incorporated into ideologies). Under the systems of estates and orders characteristic of pre-revolutionary Europe, political and social concepts tended to be specific and particularistic, referring in the plural to well-defined social gradations and privileges such as the liberties of the *Bürger* (citizens) of a city, or to stories connect-

ing chains of events. But beginning in the 18th century, those older terms remaining in use began to become more general in their social reference, more abstract in meaning, and hence took the linguistic form of "isms" or singular nouns like "liberty," which replaced such prior usages in the plural as "liberties," or "history," which took the place of previously discrete narrations. These abstract concepts easily fitted into open-ended formulae which could be defined according to the interests of movements and groups competing for adherents. Neologisms were coined in unprecedented numbers to designate newly created ideologies: liberalism, conservatism, anarchism, socialism, communism, fascism.

4) *Politisierung* (politicization) of concepts. As old regime social groupings, regional units, and constitutional identifications were broken down by revolution, war, and economic change, the publics being addressed became much larger than before. More and more individuals previously uninvolved in politics became the targets of messages meant to persuade them. These newcomers were mobilized by competing movements and parties. In the process, political and social concepts became more susceptible to use as propaganda slogans and terms of abuse. In short, concepts increasingly served as weapons in political conflicts among antagonistic classes, strata, and movements.

Now that the *GG* is completed, what is it that we know about political and social language that we did not know before? And what difference does it make to possess such knowledge? Perhaps the single most important answer to the original editors consisted in contrasting the political and social concepts created by the advent of modernity and those which preceded it. Since we live in this modern, or as some say, post-modern world, we have much to learn about every one of its aspects that is illuminated by the *GG*. Some queries about this aspect of the *GG*'s findings will be considered below. But a work of this scope is directed to more than one audience, and hence has more than one justification. Let me list some of its more obvious contributions.

For those concerned with politics and the history of political thought, the *GG* provides situated, that is, contextual accounts of how key concepts came into existence, were modified, or became

transformed, always understanding that these concepts were contested. The founding editors were convinced that *Geistesgeschichte* and *Ideengeschichte*, both older German styles of writing such histories, were seriously inadequate because they did not treat thought within its context, because they did not address the question of what historical actors thought was at stake when they disputed the meanings and uses of abstract terms in use, or else proposed new language. The *GG* was meant to help us to understand when and why ideologies first emerged so as to combat ideological thinking in our own times and places. And by specifying alternatives excluded by ideologies, the *GG* may suggest categories of thought and patterns of action previously unidentified and unavailable. Recently we have seen how retrieving the concept of civil society has turned out to be valuable to those who have emerged from the repressive setting of the former Soviet bloc.

For scholars concerned with political and social thought in the past, *Begriffsgeschichte* enables them to avoid anachronism and to penetrate to the original meanings of the texts they read, as well as to the practical goals of their authors. Definitions of key terms need no longer be phrased unhistorically, nor remain at a level of abstraction which makes understanding difficult or impossible. Like much recent work in English, the authors of the *GG* sought to avoid erroneous interpretations derived from the false assumption that the questions of political and social theory always remain the same, and that their histories should be written in terms of the debate among canonical great thinkers about these perennial issues.

For political theorists today who discuss the meaning and application of such subjects as justice or equality, the *Begriffsgeschichte* of the *GG* is more closely fitted to their needs than any other type of historical treatment. Conceptual history enables political philosophers to perceive the relationship between past and present uses. The dangers of applying one or another conceptual usage may emerge from learning what have been its past implications and consequences. Again, because of present-day associations, a political philosopher may assume intuitively that there is some connection or opposition among concepts that is logically rather than contingently given. Detailed knowledge of past usages may reveal that such assumed con-

nections are fortuitous rather than logically given.

Finally, the *GG* is of inestimable value to translators of German political and social thought. Far more precisely than any other work previously available, the *GG* indicates the range of usage in German theorists. Thus indispensable information is provided about theorists' language, their intended audiences, and actual reception.

Some Unresolved Questions about the *GG*

Now that I have briefly described the program Professor Koselleck stated in the first volume of the *GG*, I should like to consider some problems about the *GG* as a historical work on political and social language.

It is clear that what is most needed after the *GG*'s completion is a further analysis of its findings. Before synthetic judgments can be made about the adequacy of the *GG*'s program and method, a considerable amount of analysis will be required. Although the *GG*'s introduction sets out a number of hypotheses about changes in political and social concepts, the work contains no analysis of its findings. More than twenty-five years of research and seven thousand pages of findings are or soon will be available to those seeking to answer the questions posed when this project was undertaken. Certainly the first order of priority is to make a systematic assessment of the extent to which the studies now available in the *GG* confirm, disconfirm, or confirm in part the *GG*'s hypotheses about the nature of conceptual change during the *Sattelzeit*. To note this absence of evaluation is neither a reflection on the editors nor a call for Professor Koselleck personally to undertake this task. But if historians continue to use *Begriffsgeschichte*, the original hypotheses of the *GG* ought to be reconsidered in the light of this unprecedented evidence now available for their evaluation.

Another difficulty derives from the *GG*'s lexicon format. This was adopted reluctantly, but there turned out to be no practical alternatives to it as a scholarly and publishing enterprise.⁶ Foremost among the unresolved problems is the question of how to proceed from an

alphabetical inventory of individual concepts to the reconstruction of integrated political and social vocabularies at crucial points of development in German political and social languages. At any given time, concepts were grouped together thus forming a semantic field, or a special language. Thus when such concepts are treated synchronically as constituting the specialized vocabularies of particular semantic fields or political and social languages, a question must be answered. At which periods or intervals ought concepts be brought together? A further question involves the periodization which should serve as the basis for diachronic comparison of concepts. For another part of the *GG*'s program proposes investigation of changes in the sense of concepts.

A further set of issues grows out of questions posed by scholars writing in English. They have inquired into the effects of different political languages upon perceptions and consequent action of those using one or another of the conceptualizations available. Which concepts were restricted to particular groups? Which were held more generally? What was the range of political languages? To what extent was communication facilitated or impeded by conflict over the concepts and conventions of political and social discourse? And in terms of the consequences for action – individual, group, governmental – what difference did it make how structural changes were conceptualized? Serious efforts to answer these questions could utilize the unparalleled materials gathered in the *GG*, and fit them into new patterns, including some adapted from programs developed by Pocock, Skinner, and Baker. It remains to be seen to what extent their work is compatible with that done in *Begriffsgeschichte*. What would be the consequences of trying to combine the resources of these two bodies of work in German and English on the language of political thought?

To pose this question is to ask how has this problem of synchronic synthesis been treated by English-speaking historians of political thought? That is, how do they go about determining what at a given time were the concepts available to those using one or another of the identifiable political vocabularies? Pocock, Skinner, Baker, et al. have been studying the complex interactions among political language, thought, and action, as well as seeking to develop an ad-

equate historiography of these subjects. Their project is in part to discover and analyze the competing political languages, "discourses" (in Pocock's preferred terminology), or "ideologies" (in Skinner's) available from early modern to eighteenth-century Europe.⁷ Their method differs from the German works which emphasize concepts. John Pocock has presented historical accounts of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century political discourses in the English-speaking world. No small part of his achievement has been to identify and trace, to present narrative and analytical accounts of alternative and competing "discourses," each of which combined concepts into a distinctive pattern of meanings. Such integrated modes of analysis and belief as the tradition of the "ancient constitution," classical republicanism or civic humanism, or the various forms taken by whiggism – all defined the meanings of thought and actions, which framed otherwise, would not have been meaningful to their adherents, or comprehensible to us.

Quentin Skinner has emphasized two levels of historical analysis: 1) treating political theories within historical contexts and linguistic conventions which both facilitate and circumscribe legitimations of political arrangements; 2) describing and making intelligible such theories, or "ideologies" as he calls them, as intentional speech acts. At the same time, Skinner, in his influential writing on method, has consistently ruled out the possibility of writing any meaningful history of concepts. Thus the "strictly historical" accounts of political language demanded by Pocock and Skinner have in their actual practices produced distinctive methodological emphases and types of histories. While differing somewhat from one another, nevertheless Pocock and Skinner have not as yet embraced any research program approximating the German project of reconstructing political and social language by charting the histories of the concepts that make up its vocabulary.

In a recent paper, I argue that to add the conceptual histories found in the *GG* to the projects of Pocock and Skinner would provide a more nearly satisfactory historical account of political and social thought and language.⁶ But it is also the case that an adequate linguistic synthesis of the concepts treated separately in the *GG* might necessitate both Pocock's strategy of seeking the overall pat-

terms of the political languages used in given times and places, and Skinner's emphases upon the types of legitimation made possible or restricted by the linguistic conventions and political intentions of writers regarded as active agents or actors. These German and Anglophone styles converge to an extent that justifies dialogue among their practitioners. Out of this might come a meaningful comparative analysis of how different political and social languages in Dutch-, German-, French-, and English-speaking societies have converged and diverged.

Begriffsgeschichte and Comparative Inquiry

In a paper assessing historiography in this century, a leading Dutch cultural historian, Professor Pim Den Boer, has characterized German *Begriffsgeschichte* in the last third of the twentieth century as among the most important developments in the writing of history, and placed the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* high among the greatest achievements by historians anywhere. Nor is this praise purely formal.⁹ Dutch historians are launching a major new undertaking, a history of political, social, and cultural concepts in the Netherlands. The first of its kind outside Germany, this project acknowledges the need for comparative, transnational studies of the languages and conceptual schemes created by Europeans with such enormous consequences for the rest of the world as well. This prospective addition of these specialized Dutch vocabularies to those of German- and French-speaking Europe underlines the further need to fill what will be the greatest remaining *lacuna* in our knowledge of language and culture. This is the absence of any study in depth of the distinctive forms, cultural and linguistic, as well as political and social, of the principal conceptual categories developed in English-speaking societies.

This Dutch initiative, then, is particularly important because it is being undertaken at just the time when in order to prepare its future, a newly united Europe will need to take stock of the ways each of its constituent parts has understood its past. Are such attempts to chart the component parts of a culture in complex detail impossibly

ambitious? In order to reply, we must realize that the Dutch project complements the *GG*'s charting of the political and social vocabularies of German-speaking Europe, as well as another analogous work on France that has been appearing since 1985. This major study, although published in German centers on the history of political and social concepts in France from 1680 to 1820. This is the *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich 1680-1820* [A Handbook of Political and Social Concepts in France, 1680-1820]. The editor is Rolf Reichardt, once an assistant to, and still an occasional collaborator of Koselleck.¹⁰ Analogous Hungarian, Russian, and Scandinavian projects are either being planned or considered. Each of them contributes in different ways to a more detailed understanding of how Europeans have conceptualized their experiences of change since the end of the middle ages and the changes brought since the early modern period. To bring these findings together from a comparative perspective would produce a new field of study.

Still another project offers the prospect of a trans-cultural comparison of European and Chinese concepts of revolution.¹¹ This is a projected study by specialists of the keywords of the Chinese Revolution from 1911 to the present. Thus it may be that in the future, the *GG* will be seen as having made possible an altogether new subject of inquiry, the comparative history of political and social concepts, within and beyond Europe. Without the precedent of the *GG*, any such comparison would be inconceivable, as would be the separate national studies occasioned by it. Here is still another reason for thanking Professor Koselleck for the great work, the completion of which we salute today.

Notes

¹ Previously published in *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts. New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, eds. Harmut Lehmann and Melvin Richter. German Historical Institute, Washington D.C. Occasional Paper No. 15. Washington 1996.

² *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur Politisch-*

sozialen Sprache in Deutschland, [*Basic Concepts in History. A Dictionary on Historical Principles of Political and Social Language in Germany*], eds. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck (7 vols; Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972-93). Although ready for publication, the eighth or index volume, which will greatly facilitate the use of those which preceded it, has not yet been printed.

- ³ See my *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1995). Earlier efforts by me to inaugurate and continue this dialogue are: "Conceptual History (*Begriffsgeschichte*) and Political Theory." In *Political Theory* 14 (1986) pp. 604-37; *Begriffsgeschichte* and the History of Ideas," in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 48 (1987), pp. 247-63. Finnish translation, with preface by Kari Palonen, *Politiikka XXXI* (1989), 76-87."Pocock, Skinner, and the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*." *History and Theory* XIX (1990), 38-70; German version, "Zur Rekonstruktion der Geschichte der Politischen Sprachen: Pocock, Skinner, und die Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe," in *Alteuropa oder frühe Neuzeit? Probleme und Methoden der Forschung*, Hans Erich Bödeker and Ernst Hinrichs, eds. (Stuttgart- Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holboog, 1990), 134-174; "Begriffsgeschichte in Theory and Practice: Reconstructing the History of Political Concepts and Language," in *Main Trends in Cultural History*, Willem Melching and Wyger Velema, eds. (Amsterdam-Atlanta: Rodopi Press, 1994).
- ⁴ "Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte," in Koselleck's collection of essays, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten* (Frankfurt, 1979), 107-129. This has been translated as "Begriffsgeschichte and Social History," in Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past*, tr. Keith Tribe (Cambridge, MA, 1979), 73-91. A more recent paper by Koselleck is "Sozialgeschichte und Begriffsgeschichte," in *Sozialgeschichte in Deutschland*, eds. Wolfgang Schieder and Volker Sellin, (2 vols; Göttingen, 1987), I, 89-109.
- ⁵ "On Koselleck's Intuition of Time in History. In *The Meaning of Historical Terms and Concepts. New Studies on Begriffsgeschichte*, eds. Harmut Lehmann and Melvin Richter.
- ⁶ Koselleck's original proposal was for a single volume dictionary from classical antiquity to the present. This was to be organized in terms of connected subjects rather than alphabetical articles. But as the project expanded from one to eight volumes, it became clear that in order to make progress on the project as a whole, the concepts would have to be published in individual volumes ordered alphabetically. However, once the lexicon is completed, there is a possibility that there will be a

publication in paperback of articles grouped by subject rather than alphabetically. Given the prohibitively high price of the hard cover format, such a step would make the GG much more accessible to scholars. See Keith Tribe, "The *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* Project: From History of Ideas to Conceptual History," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 (1989), 180-184; and "Introduction," in Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past*, tr. Tribe (Cambridge MA, 1985), pp. x-xiii.

⁷ See Anthony Pagden, ed., *The Languages of Political Theory in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 1987). The book was published in the "Ideas in Context" series, edited by Quentin Skinner in collaboration with Richard Rorty, J. B. Schneewind, and Wolf Lepenies.

⁸ *History and Theory* XIX (1990), 38-70; German version, "Zur Rekonstruktion," 134-174;

⁹ In *Main Trends in Cultural History*, Willem Melching and Wyger Velema, eds. (Amsterdam-Atlanta: Rodopi Press, 1994). This paper opened the International Summer School on "Main Trends in Cultural History" sponsored by the Dutch Graduate School for Cultural History in Amsterdam, June 18-27, 1991.

¹⁰ *Handbuch polititisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich 1680-1820*, [A *Handbook of Political and Social Concepts in France, 1680-1820*] (18 Hefte to date; München, 1985), eds. Rolf Reichardt and Eberhard Schmitt, hereafter cited as the *Handbuch*. The new co-editor along with Reichardt, replacing Schmitt, is Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink. The proceedings of a notable conference at Bielefeld has been edited, along with their own contributions and comments by both Koselleck and Reichardt: *Die Französische Revolution als Bruch des gesellschaftlichen Bewusstseins*, Reinhart Koselleck and Rolf Reichardt, eds. (Munich, 1987).

¹¹ The keywords project is led by a team of five scholars: Timothy Cheek, Joshua Fogel, Elizabeth Perry, Michael Schoenhals, and the project director, Jeffrey Wasserstrom. An initial conference organized by Professors Wasserstrom and William B. Cohen, Department of History, Indiana University, took place at Bloomington, Indiana in September, 1992.

An example of the type of work likely to be generated by the project is Michael Schoenhals, *Doing Things with Words in Chinese Politics* (Berkeley CA: Institute of Asian Studies, University of California, 1992).

Kari Palonen

An Application of Conceptual History to Itself

From Method to Theory in Reinhart Koselleck's Begriffsgeschichte

With the exception of some studies of Melvin Richter, the history of the Koselleckian conceptual history has been hardly thematized. Reinhart Koselleck himself has, however, recently made an interesting comment on this, which legitimates a closer historical discussion of the changes in his programme. In his *Reflections*, published in 1994, he writes on the experiences around the publication of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*:

Publication of that lexicon has been going on for two decades by now and, for me at least, its theoretical and methodological presuppositions, first formulated some twenty-five years ago, have grown into an intellectual straightjacket. While it was necessary to maintain these presuppositions in relatively unchanged form in order to be able to proceed with the collaborative project of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, my own

thought on conceptual history has kept changing. It should therefore not surprise you if the positions I shall be defending in this paper are somewhat different from the one that originally inspired the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Indeed, it would be dreadful and depressing if years of reflection had not lead to significant change in my approach to conceptual history (*Reflections*, 7).

Koselleck does not say how his views on conceptual history have changed. His statement challenges me to explicate the changes. Instead of departing, in an anachronistic manner, from Koselleck's present position and looking for its 'roots', I take the early formulations as a starting point and relate the later variants to them.

My discussion of Koselleck's programme is based on a sketch of the layers of meaning implied by his concept of *Begriffsgeschichte*. These layers have at least implicit formulations in the published writings of Koselleck. My intention is to identify the diverse layers and to discuss the relations between them. I begin by discussing the original formulation of the programme in the texts from 1967 to 1972 and the comment, after which I appraise the changes in the programme in the later texts.

The origins of Koselleck's programme are very modest, but during the progression of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* the level of ambitions has, at least implicitly, risen. The set of questions to which conceptual history may contribute has been understood as larger than in the original formulation. However, it may be asked whether Koselleck himself has accepted the more radical consequences of his programme.

The Horizon of Meanings of *Begriffsgeschichte*

Using Koselleck's programmatic articles, the discussion on them, my earlier comments on them, as well as my intuition, I have constructed six different layers of meaning for conceptual history.

They can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Conceptual history as a subfield of historiography
- 2) Conceptual history as a method of historiography
- 3) Conceptual history as a strategy of textual analysis
- 4) Conceptual history as a micro-theory of conceptual change
- 5) Conceptual history as a macro-theory of conceptual change
- 6) Conceptual history as a revolution in the understanding of concepts.

In the first three layers, conceptual history is seen as a kind of method, while in the latter three it rather appears as a theory. My point is that an important aspect of the conceptual changes in Koselleck's programme manifests the shift of interest from method to theory.

For non-specialists, speaking of conceptual history obviously means a historical study on concepts. They assume that it treats the units named concepts as the object of historical analysis, being in this respect analogous to any sort of historical writing on specific object-units. Conceptual history can be differentiated from e.g. the histories of words, metaphors or discourses (cf. e.g. Busse et.al. [ed] 1994).

It is, of course, impossible to write about conceptual history without writing about concepts. However, not every historical treatment of concepts deserves the name of conceptual history in the Koselleckian sense (on the older usages of *Begriffsgeschichte*, cf. Meier 1971). To speak of conceptual history presupposes reflection on how we can speak of 'histories of concepts' and write about them; furthermore, one must ask why precisely concepts appear as units worth special historical analysis. An answer to both questions is programmatically discussed by Koselleck. In his programme, *conceptual history is always more than conceptual history*. It forms a perspective on or a method of approaching the histories of other units as well: "In our method, concepts are treated as more than meanings of terms that can be unambiguously defined", (*Response*, 64).

Today it is obvious that conceptual history has not remained the monopoly of professional historians. The representatives of other

human sciences have not only used the articles of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* as 'historical background material' but have also written about conceptual histories in their own fields. For example, my studies on the history of the concept of politics arose 15 years ago from the problems of the historiography of political science. When I made my first research plan, I did not yet know that there already existed a specific *Begriffsgeschichte*. Even now my practice differs from that of historians, and I would like to characterize my style of using conceptual history as a strategy in textual analysis. In this sense it offers an alternative to semiotics, content analysis, hermeneutics or rhetoric, etc.

Besides these 'methodological' aspects, Koselleckian conceptual history contains a perspective on the practices of using concepts in politics and culture. An obvious layer of discussion concerns the relations between words, concepts and 'the object' (*Sache*). I call this layer a micro-theory of conceptual change. It is mainly around this aspect that the debates on Koselleck's programme between linguists, historians, philosophers, etc. are going on.

The specific profile which distinguishes Koselleck's programme from other related enterprises is provided by his 'macro-theory' of conceptual change. With his famous *Sattelzeit* thesis, Reinhart Koselleck identifies a period during which socio-political concepts underwent a paradigm shift. He relates the changing paradigm of concepts to a wider theory of a "semantic of historical times".

Finally, the paradigm shift from topological to temporal concepts can also be interpreted as a revolution in the very understanding and usage of the units called concepts. One of the famous slogans of Koselleck is that concepts are always ambiguous, *vieldeutig* (*Begriffsgeschichte*, 119). Avoiding this sort of ambiguity has been a major enterprise in both politics and especially the human sciences. Students are still taught in most academic introductory courses that concepts should be as atemporal, univocal and uncontroversial as possible. Against this academic ideology the conceptual history à la Koselleck makes the historical, ambiguous and controversial character of concepts a precondition for studying politics, culture and history. It marks a real revolution.

Conceptual History as a Method

The work of Reinhart Koselleck can be divided into several kinds of texts which have different significance to *Begriffsgeschichte*. Besides the monographs *Kritik und Krise* and *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution*, the anthology *Vergangene Zukunft* and the articles in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, his publications largely consist of articles published in collections, sometimes not easily attainable even in German university libraries. This has led to a situation in which Koselleck often repeats some themes, examples and even formulations, which makes close reading difficult if the texts are read in relation to each other. It is not easy to distinguish 'similarities' from 'differences', and the same holds for deciding on which are just reformulations and where significant conceptual shifts can be identified.

In *Kritik und Krise* Koselleck "verknüpft geistesgeschichtliche Analysen mit soziologischen Bedingungsanalysen" (4), although, especially in the notes, he already thematizes the concepts of critique and crisis, revolution and politics in particular. In *Preußen* he declares the method to be "entsprechend den Fragestellungen, sozialgeschichtlich" (*Preußen*, 17). The social history was completed by histories of words, partially of concepts as well, but in opposition to his previous work: "Verzichtet wird auf die Geistesgeschichte (ibid.)."

Koselleck's first programmatic article, *Richtlinien für das Lexikon politisch-sozialer Begriffe der Neuzeit*, written in 1963 and published in 1967 in *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte*, hardly claims to initiate a new and 'revolutionary' research programme. It is based on the teamwork of the redactional committee of what was to become *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. The purpose is not a general presentation of *Begriffsgeschichte*, but that of the *Lexikon*. The point of the project is presented in the following formulation:

Das Lexikon ist also insofern gegenwartsbezogen, als es die sprachliche Erfassung der modernen Welt, ihre Bewußtwerdung und Bewußtmachung durch Begriffe, die auch die unseren sind, zum Thema hat. (op.cit, 81).

Linguistic conceptualization plays here only an instrumental role. Conceptual history is understood as a 'method' (op. cit., 83-84) or as an auxiliary discipline to 'world history'. It is limited to the understanding of the past: contemporary concepts are taken as if they were 'given' and well-known to the readers. The interest in the concepts after ca. 1900 remains limited and their history is presented as a "more registering" one. They do not need any "translation" (op.cit., 82).

The 'method' of the *Lexikon* was understood as a critique of the older philosophical and philological forms of *Begriffsgeschichte*, dominating in the annual *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* and in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. The editor of *Wörterbuch*, Joachim Ritter, (1967) also acknowledged that a more radical departure from its predecessors was necessary. For Koselleck it was not possible to start by simply writing histories of concepts in terms of their internal history, without placing the whole enterprise into a wider context:

erst ein theoretischer Vorgriff, der einen spezifischen Zeitraum festlegt, öffnet überhaupt die Möglichkeit, bestimmte Lesarten durchzuspielen und unser Lexikon aus der Ebene einer positivistischen Registratur auf die der Begriffsgeschichte zu transponieren. (*Theoriebedürftigkeit*, 22)

In *Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte* (1972) Koselleck emphasizes two crucial points: "Kritik an der unbesehenen Übertragung gegenwärtiger und zeitgebundener Ausdrücke des Verfassungslebens in die Vergangenheit" and "Kritik an der Geschichte von Ideen, sofern diese als konstante Größen eingebracht werden" (op.cit, 115). These points were already central to Otto Brunner's classical work *Land und Herrschaft* (cf. Koselleck's comment on it in *Probleme*).

It appears surprising that contemporary political concepts were treated as more or less 'established'. To understand this, a recourse to *Sachgeschichte* seems to be helpful: the *Lexikon* was sketched in the late fifties and early sixties, which was a high time of the ideas of the 'end of ideology' or 'depoliticization'. If one of the aims of the

Lexikon was "eine semantologische Kontrolle für unseren gegenwärtigen Sprachgebrauch" (*Richtlinien*, 83), the application of conceptual history to the past already meant a questioning of abstract and ahistorical definitions (*ibid.*). To understand the contemporary period as one of interesting conceptual controversies and changes (cf. Ball 1988, 10-11), remained, however, beyond the horizon of the original intentions of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*.

Seeing conceptual history as an auxiliary discipline to social history or as a "variant" of it (cf. *Preußen*, 17) was initially related to Koselleck's Prussian studies, and Koselleck also refers to the hegemonic position of sociology among the contemporary 'critical' academics (Cf. *Historie*). Still, his discussion of the relations between conceptual and social history is different from that of his colleagues in Bielefeld, like Hans-Ulrich Wehler und Jürgen Kocka. This is clearly manifested in the close links to texts, which Koselleck emphasizes already in *Preußen*:

Im Maß also, wie wir Texte zu überschreiten genötigt sind, werden wir wieder auf sie zurückverweisen. Die historisch-philologische Methode kann durch keine Frage nach soziologische Größen allgemeiner Art überholt – wohl aber ergänzt – werden. Daher werden alle Aussagen immer wieder auf Textinterpretationen zurückgeführt, aus ihnen abgeleitet, durch sie erhärtet. (*Preußen*, 17)

According to Koselleck, the significance of conceptual history has three levels: as a method it can conceptualize themes of social history; as an autonomous discipline it is parallel to social history; and it has its own theoretical ambitions (*Begriffsgeschichte*, 108). All of them apply, however, equally well to the relations of conceptual history with political or cultural history.

The autonomous significance of conceptual history is due to a decontextualizing move in which concepts are turned into specific units of study, each of them forming a diachrony of its own.

Indem die Begriffe im zweiten Durchgang einer Untersuchung aus ihrem situationsgebundenen Kontext gelöst werden, und ihre

Bedeutungen durch die Abfolge der Zeiten hindurch verfolgt und dann einander zugeordnet werden, summieren sich die einzelnen historischen Begriffsanalysen zur Geschichte eines Begriffs. Erst auf dieser Ebene wird die historisch-philologische Methode begriffsgeschichtlich überhöht, erst auf dieser Ebene verliert die Begriffsgeschichte ihren subsidiären Charakter für die Sozialhistorie. (op.cit., 115-116)

This decontextualizing move is one of the most important 'methodological' claims of Koselleckian history of concepts. It indicates, for example, a difference to Quentin Skinner, for whom "there can be no histories of concepts as such; there can only be histories of their uses in argument" (Skinner 1988, 283). When Koselleck insists on the significance of the concepts as key units of study, this is not only related to specific lexical purposes. The concentration on single concepts allows diachronic comparisons transcending at least some of the contextual borders, which are treated as otherwise insurmountable. The history of single concepts allows one to avoid a priori classifications of concepts, which easily turn into obstacles to the attempt to sketch the specific historical profile of the concept studied.

A programmatic statement of Koselleck, important for understanding conceptual history as a strategy of textual analysis, links *Begriffsgeschichte* to other forms of 'linguistic turn' in the historical sciences. In the *Einleitung* (1972) he writes:

In gewisser Weise ist die gesamte Quellsprache der jeweils behandelten Zeiträume eine einzige Metapher für die Geschichte, um deren Erkenntnis es geht. (op.cit., xiii)

To understand the "language of the sources" as a metaphor of history emphasizes that precisely in the conscious one-sidedness of the concentration on concepts something of "the world" outside them can be said. The study of the contemporary vocabulary of the sources gives a key to understanding other contemporary subjects, too. It is in this sense that conceptual history becomes "more than itself".

Conceptual history as a strategy of textual analysis is only indicated by Koselleck (cf., e.g., on Bund, *Begriffsgeschichte*, 125).

It is perhaps best 'applied' to a single text (cf. Palonen 1995b or Beck 1993). As a textual interpretation, conceptual history is opposed especially to ahistorical approaches, like Greimasian semiology or Gricean conversational analysis. If "applied to politics", they tend to take politics as something known and more or less the same everywhere. The Koselleckian variant of the "linguistic turn", by contrast, directs attention to the changes in concepts by using the language of sources as "heuristischer Einstieg, die vergangene Wirklichkeit zu erfassen" (*Begriffsgeschichte*, 127).

The value of Koselleck's approach to the textual analysis of politics can be illustrated by the trivial case of an electoral debate of party leaders. A conceptual history of the debate could look for a) the thematization of concepts, b) the interpretation of concepts, c) the nuances on conceptual vocabulary and d) the art by which the concepts are said to be related to 'real' events and processes. These levels give a conceptual matrix, which could be connected with more specific questions about them, like conscious strategic usage of conceptual inventions, returns etc., as opposed to implicit conceptual commitments. In both aspects the thematization of concepts could give rise to unexpected interpretations concerning either the common conceptual horizons or the cleavages between the conceptual horizons among the politicians in question.

The temporality of concepts can be discussed in terms of the horizon of expectations and the space of experience: today it is by no means certain that 'conservative' politicians are more past-oriented and 'radical' ones more future-oriented. The analysis of the concepts could detect the presence of different historical layers in the usages of concepts such as "republic" or "democracy". Again, both the 'innocent' usage and the 'strategic' references, either to tradition or to a break with it, could be evoked e.g. by borrowing slogans originally attributed to opposed political languages. As opposed to 'media studies' appealing to 'non-verbal' elements in the discussion, conceptual history can offer a broad but specific apparatus. It could create some distance to the debates possible, without turning the politicians into instruments of 'higher' and impersonal forces, as the structuralistically oriented approaches tend to do.

The Marginality of 'Methodological' Changes

It seems to me that during the years Koselleck has become less interested in the methodological questions and more interested in the theoretical ones. Still, there are some methodological changes worth noticing. I classify them roughly as a) nuancements, b) shifts of interest, c) de- or recontextualizations and d) by-products of theoretical changes. The last-mentioned refer to theoretical levels to be discussed soon, but I shall first give some remarks on the first three.

A critique of Koselleck by Busse (1987) concerns the sources of conceptual history. In his later writings Koselleck now divides the sources into three types according to the temporal layer: short-term sources (like journals), more long-term ones (like lexica) and those striving for timelessness (like the classics). (*Reflections*)

Koselleck no longer understands conceptual history as an auxiliary to social history, and he even speaks now rather of *Sachgeschichte* or *Ereignisgeschichte* than of social history. In *Sozialgeschichte und Begriffsgeschichte* (1986) he explicitly turns against the idea of a "total history" in the name of the temporal discrepancies between linguistic and social changes. (cf. also *Sprachwandel, Ereignisgeschichte*)

De- or recontextualizations of Koselleck's approach outside its original methodological interests are equally noticeable. I will illustrate this with my favourite subject, the polemic against "die Gesellschaft". In *Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte* there is a formula which sounds astonishing to my Weberian nominalism:

Ohne gemeinsame Begriffe gibt es keine Gesellschaft, vor allem keine politische Handlungseinheit. (op.cit., 108)

When reading Koselleck historically, I think the formula may well have a point, although hardly one intended by the author. My thesis is that when there are today no common concepts in political and social matters any longer, there is no *Gesellschaft* or "society", in a strong sense of the concept, left either. No unitary, total or mo-

nopolizing form of *Vergesellschaftung*, in the Weberian sense, exists. The increasing conflicts and incommensurabilities in the political and social language in the contemporary world are, *pace* Koselleck, both indicators of and factors in the dissolution of such quasi-topological concepts as 'society'.

Hannah Arendt (1960) and Alexander Demandt have stressed that the German *Gesellschaft* has its origin in the word *Saal*. "Mein 'Geselle' ist, wer mit mir im gleichen 'Saal' schläft", writes Demandt (1978, 288). Let us take this point seriously and link it with the interpretation of Koselleck's formula as well as of the *Sachgeschichte*.

Are there, in the contemporary western world, some big collective dormitories left? In the early seventies one still could find them in students' hostels or in Maoist *Wohngemeinschaften*. Today they are experienced as inhuman and intolerable. To me at least, the same holds for speaking about *die Gesellschaft* or society, used either as a collective singular which acts, makes demands, etc. or as a unitary meta-place to which all other places are subordinated.

Similarly, political action is no longer related to some Schmittian 'unities of action'. "The politics in the first person" or the Beckian (1993) sub-politics appear much more relevant. The search for a unity in politics is a nostalgic and repressive vision¹.

The Micro-Theory of Conceptual Change

A starting point for the discussion of Koselleck's micro-theory of conceptual change is offered by "das linguistische Dreieck von Wortkörper (Bezeichnung) – Bedeutung (Begriff) – Sache" (*Begriffsgeschichte*, 119, cf. *Einleitung*, xxii). Conceptual history is not only a history of concepts in the narrow sense, but also a history of the relations of concepts to words and to objects. The point of Koselleck's programme is to include the *external* history into conceptual history and to relate the *internal* to it, and vice versa. Or, we could distinguish *Konzeptionsgeschichte* from *Begriffsgeschichte* in the wider sense (cf. Palonen 1985, 1989).

A key to Koselleck's program is the dual, both semasiological and onomasiological approach. For the lexical purposes of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* semasiology, the history of meaning (*Bedeutung*), is obviously of the primary interest, while onomasiology, the history of naming (*Bezeichnung*), remains complementary (*Richtlinien*, 84-85, *Einleitung*, xxi-xxii). For more specified, monographic studies, the introduction of neologisms or the use of synonymous expressions for some concepts and the politics of naming can, however, be of greater value.

It is problematic to understand conceptual changes as "indicators" of changes in the object (*Sache*, cf. e.g. *Begriffsgeschichte*, 118). Koselleck's programme does, by no means, assume a correspondence between the angles of words, concepts and objects as an ideal. On the contrary, it is precisely their discrepancies that constitute its primary subject matter, and there are no *a priori* commitments as to how to deal with them.

Immer wieder ist ein Hiatus zwischen sozialen Sachverhalten und dem darauf zielenden oder sie übergreifenden Sprachgebrauch zu registrieren. Wortbedeutungswandel und Sachwandel, Situationswechsel und Zwang zu Neubenennungen korrespondieren auf je verschiedene Weise miteinander. (op.cit., 121)

The point of the linguistic triangle lies in the discrepancy thesis. I will not open here the debates on the meanings of concepts, words and objects (cf. the contributions in *Historische Semantik und Begriffsgeschichte*, Busse 1987, Richter 1986, 1990, 1994, Palonen 1995a). The obvious value of the discrepancy thesis is to point to the chances and challenges involved in the hiatus between the angles of the triangle. There is no reason to expect an end to conceptual changes one day, at least if the language and the objects continue to be subject to change.

I would like to interpret *Sachverhalte* nominalistically as products of 'referential languages'. Then the 'object'-side of the triangle, too, would be compatible with Nietzschean-Weberian perspectivism. It considers 'the reality' to be inexhaustible with

words and concepts, but subject to perspectivistic and partial attempts at conceptualization (cf. Weber 1904, 180-181). The referential language consists of expressions of some experiences, for which neither the conventional vocabulary nor the existing forms of conceptualizations appear as adequate. *Fait accompli* -situations or sudden occurrences, like the fall of the Berlin wall, are examples in which both the current language and conceptual apparatus appear as insufficient to understanding the novelty. I would reserve the term *Sache* to the references to the inexhaustible aspects of 'reality'.

If reinterpreted in this manner, the types of conceptual change in Koselleck's early programmatic statements could be classified as follows:

- 1) semasiological changes of meaning in the interpretation of the concept
- 2) onomasiological changes of naming in the vocabulary related to the concept
- 3) referential changes in the relations of the concept to the object.

Conceptual Changes in the Micro-Theory

There are, however, some noticeable conceptual changes in Koselleck's program at the level of micro-theory. His most enigmatic article in this respect is the address before the constitutional historians, *Begriffsgeschichtliche Probleme der Verfassungsgeschichtsschreibung* (published in 1983). While he earlier quotes with approval Nietzsche's dictum "Definierbar ist nur was keine Geschichte hat" (*Begriffsgeschichte*, 120), Koselleck here relativizes the very same thesis, by emphasizing the historicity of the definitions themselves. Some 'definitions' of a concept are always necessary, in order to mark the problem:

Was überhaupt wissenschaftlich begriffen werden kann, hängt von der Definition oder Umschreibung und der Verwendung der Begriffe ab. (*Probleme*, 8)

A 'definition' does not determine a concept but, rather, demarcates or identifies a problem. Another criterion for the need of a 'definition' refers to a critique of Otto Brunner's path-breaking studies of conceptual and constitutional history:

Meine These lautet, daß auch eine stringente, gerade eine stringente Begriffsgeschichte nicht ohne gegenwartsbezogene Definitionen auskommt. Das ergibt sich aus Brunners Werk. Eine quellsprachlich gebundene Darstellung der Verfassungsgeschichte wird stumm, wenn die vergangenen Begriffe nicht übersetzt oder umschrieben werden. Sonst handelt es um eine Textwiedergabe alter Quellen im Verhältnis von 1:1. Übersetze ich aber Begriffe wie Land und Leute, Haus und Herrschaft, Schutz und Schirm, so bin ich genötigt, sie für heute zu definieren. Auch jede umschriebene Interpretation läuft logisch auf eine Definition ex post hinaus. (op.cit.,13-14).

Defining means here a demand of translation related to contemporary problems, concepts and vocabularies. This demand serves to increase the consciousness of the historicity of contemporary concepts. The demarcations of the problem as 'definitions' mark a certain continuity of the problems beyond the limits of specific concepts. Koselleck's proposal to use definitions is valuable for making long-term comparisons possible, as he indicates with the example of connecting the pre- and post-etatist histories of the constitution with the modern etatist ones (op.cit, 11-12). Still, to speak of a "definition" here seems to turn down the ambiguity and controversiality of contemporary concepts, their character as knots of problems, "die Fülle eines politisch-sozialen Bedeutungs- und Erfahrungszusammenhangs" (*Begriffsgeschichte*, 119), which is, to me, one of the main merit of the Koselleckian view on concepts.

Another aspect in the address, which even more seems to make Koselleck "a traitor" to his own ideas, concerns the very concept of *Begriffsgeschichte*:

Was jeweils auf einen Begriff gebracht wird, muß seine Geschichte gehabt haben. Sonst handelt es sich um einen empirie-

freien Vorgriff. Aber einmal auf einen Begriff gebracht, sind die damit von einem Wort gebündelten Phänomene nicht mehr veränderlich. Das jeweils mit einem Begriff gemeinte ist mit dem Akt der Begriffsbildung der geschichtlichen Veränderung entzogen. Der Begriff der Polis des Aristoteles oder der *res publica* des Cicero ist einmalig, auch wenn er etwas Dauerhaftes oder Wiederholbares thematisiert. Ein solcher einmal gebundener Begriff entzieht sich der Veränderung. (*Probleme*, 14)

Koselleck even regards *Begriffsgeschichte* as "eine logische Lästigkeit" (ibid.). This does not, however, mean a rejection but a precision of his programme. My distinction between conceptual and conceptional history gains relevance here: the Aristotelian conception of polis has its singular history, a history of tentatives, formulations, etc., which is closed by the final exposition in the sense of "auf den Begriff bringen" (cf. also *Reflections*, 8). It does not, however, end the history of the concept of the polis, to which another interpretation has been given. The ambiguity of the concepts means that they are subject to different interpretations or conceptions, each of which may be definite and even terminated in its internal history.

Against this background, Koselleck argues that conceptual history is not only a history of conceptions, but one of the whole set of problems related to the linguistic triangle.

Wenn wir also leichtfertig von Begriffsgeschichte sprechen, so meinen wir exakter definiert, daß sich mit dem Sachverhalt auch die Bezeichnungen, Benennungen und Wortbedeutungen ändern, die alle von demselben Wortkörper transponiert werden mögen. Ebenso können natürlich neue Worte gebildet werden, um Neuerungen sprachlich aufzufangen oder gar hervorrufen zu können. Dann mögen neue Begriffsbildungen gelingen wie 'Staat', 'Verfassung', 'Ökonomie', die zwar an überkommenen Worten kleben, aber als Begriffe seit dem 18. Jahrhundert neu sind. (*Probleme*, 15)

In this wider sense Koselleck is still prepared to speak of *Begriffsgeschichte*:

Begriffsgeschichte im strengen Sinne ist eine Geschichte der Begriffsbildungen,-verwendungen und -veränderungen. (ibid.)

An undifferentiated use of *Begriffsgeschichte* consists in viewing in the changes in the *Sachverhalt* or in the vocabulary *automatically* already a change in the conception, or in the art of thematizing the concept, too. This indicates a reason, why an old conception may become obsolete without being 'changed' in itself (cf. op.cit., *Aus-sprache*, 33-34).

I would like to summarize this discussion with distinguishing levels, which more or less all belong to the "history of meanings" (point 1. in my above list):

- a) history of *thematization* of a concept, by conceptualizing some experiences or by turning a word into a concept
- b) history of the *formation* of a definite conception (like Aristotle's 'polis')
- c) history of the *conflicts* on the interpretation of a concept
- d) history of *modification* of a conception by reception.

If the conceptional angle of the linguistic triangle is differentiated, conceptual history becomes more complex. Each of the histories has its own rhythm as well as specific relations to the vocabulary and to the referential languages. The histories of thematization are closer to the questions of naming as well as to the conceptualizing abstraction from new experiences, the questions of formation concern primarily the work of a single author or a specific debate closed by a definite formula, the histories of conflict concern the interpretations of meanings, and the histories of modification are related to linguistic or thematic decontextualizations.

Koselleck's self-interpretation on the relations between the types of histories is contained in the *Vorwort* to the VII volume of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*:

Auch die Geschichte eines Begriffs hängt von der Fragestellung ab, die an die Quellenbelege herangetragen wird. Aber die Grenzen unserer Begriffsgeschichten sind strenger bestimmt.

Grundbegriffe suchen und untersuchen heißt zunächst, Texte und Kontexte der Quellsprache beim Wort nehmen. Die Analyse vollzieht erst einmal nach, worum es sich eigentlich gehandelt haben mag, wenn etwas (wann, wo, wie, warum und von wem) auf einen unverwechselbaren Begriff gebracht worden ist und welche Adressaten damit angesprochen werden sollten. (op.cit, v)

For Koselleck, the history of a concept thus originates with the formation of a definite and singular conception, to which modifications and reinterpretations are joined. I prefer (cf. Palonen 1989) to see the primary movement in the thematization, in the conceptualizing naming of the problem, to which then more or less open controversies are related. This corresponds better to the experience that there are no "contemporary meanings" of a concept, only contemporary controversies.

The object-level is explicated more closely in some of Koselleck's articles in mid-eighties. In *Sozialgeschichte und Begriffsgeschichte* he tries to explicate what is the *Sache* which transcends conceptualization:

Es gibt also außersprachliche, vorsprachliche – und nachsprachliche – Elemente in allen Handlungen, die zu einer Geschichte führen. Sie sind den elementaren, den geographischen, biologischen und zoologischen Bedingungen verhaftet, die über die menschliche Konstitution allesamt in die gesellschaftliche Geschehnisse einwirken. (op.cit., 95)

Koselleck well admits that the objects are "sprachlich eingeholt und ... vermittelt" (ibid.). This mediation consists, at least partly, in the theory names he presents in the quotation. To speak of extralinguistic elements, however, tends to claim that the objects themselves are prior to the classifications applied to them. Weberian perspectivism would leave only the non-conceptualized 'reality' unnamed.

The anthropological thesis that "keine Sprachhandlung ist die Handlung selbst, die sie vorbereitet, auslösen und vollziehen hilft" (op.cit., 94) does not convince me. In a later article Koselleck,

however, seems to admit both the action character and the constitutive role of speech acts and warns only against a linguistic reductionism of actions: "Wenn jedes Sprechen ein Tun ist, so ist lange nicht jede Tat ein Akt des Sprechens" (*Feindbegriffe*, 84).

Koselleck's thematization of the linguistic triangle has a point in the insistence of the significance of thematization and formation of a concept. The first actualizes the links to the macro-level of conceptual changes, the second leads to more detailed histories of single concepts by single authors. They extend both the range of conceptual history into forms better suited to monographs and case studies. In this sense the limits to discourse analysis, rhetoric, etc. in their historical forms become more relative as well (cf. *Vorwort*, vi, viii).

The Macro-Theory of Conceptual Change

Reinhart Koselleck's most original contribution to the theory of conceptual history is, perhaps, his thesis on the conceptual paradigm shift in the *Sattelzeit*. He has given to the thesis different formulations, which thematize more or less independent aspects of it. Again, the origins of his program are modest. In the first programmatic article Koselleck presents *Sattelzeit* still with a triple mark of caution (qualification, quotation marks and division of the word with a hyphen).

Das heuristische Prinzip dabei ist, daß ein solcher Begriffswandel sich vornehmlich zwischen 1750 und 1850 vollzogen hat, derart, daß bei gleichen Worten erst seit der Mitte des vorigen Jahrhunderts der heutige Bedeutungsgehalt soweit feststeht, daß er keiner 'Übersetzung' mehr bedarf. Der heuristische Vorgriff führt sozusagen eine "Sattel-Zeit" ein, in der sich die Herkunft unserer Präsenz wandelt. (*Richtlinien*, 82)

A sketch on temporalization can be found already in the article *Über die Theoriebedürftigkeit der Geschichte* (written in 1969, published in 1972). Koselleck sees in a "theory of historical times" a precondition for conceptual history.

Die Begriffsgeschichte, wie wir sie versuchen, kann ohne eine Theorie der historischen Zeiten auskommen. (op.cit., 21).

Koselleck connects this theory with a variant of the *Sattelzeit* thesis, which sees in it a change of the temporal experience in general:

Der theoretische Vorgriff der sogenannten Sattelzeit zwischen rd. 1750 und rd.1850 ist nun der, daß sich in diesem Zeitraum eine Denaturalisierung der alten Zeiterfahrung abgespielt habe. Der langsame Schwund aristotelischer Bedeutungsgehalte, die noch auf eine naturale, wiederholbare und insofern statische Geschichtszeit verweisen ist der negative Indikator für eine Bewegung, die sich als Beginn der Neuzeit beschreiben läßt. (op.cit., 22)

The *Sattelzeit* signifies a replacement of "topological" concepts by "dynamic" ones, "concepts of movements", which have a temporal structure. The change is made possible by metaphorical reinterpretations of originally spatial concepts into temporal ones.

Wir verwenden nämlich immer Begriffe, die ursprünglich räumlich gedacht waren, aber doch eine temporale Bedeutung haben. So sprechen wir etwa von Brechungen, Friktionen, vom Aufbrechen bestimmter dauerhafter Elemente, die in die Ereigniskette einwirken. (op.cit., 23)

According to Koselleck, the only way to speak of time is metaphorical, because time is not independently observable (*anschaulich*):

...daß sich die Historie, soweit sie es mit der Zeit zu tun hat, grundsätzliche ihre Begriffe aus dem räumlichen Bereich entlehnen muß. Wir leben von einer naturalen Metaphorik, und wir können dieser Metaphorik gar nicht enttrinnen aus dem einfachen Grunde, weil die Zeit nicht anschaulich ist und auch nicht anschaulich gemacht werden kann. Alle historischen Kategorien, bis hin zum Fortschritt, sind ursprünglich räumliche Ausdrücke, von deren Übersetzbarkeit unsere Wissenschaft lebt. (ibid.)

The metaphorical character of historical concepts is a precondition for Koselleck's theory of historical times.

Die Historie als Wissenschaft lebt im Unterschied zu anderen Wissenschaften nur von der Metaphorik. Das ist gleichsam unsere anthropologische Prämisse, da sich alles, was temporal formuliert sein will, an die sinnlichen Substrate der naturalen Anschauung anlehnen muß. Die Anschauungslosigkeit der reinen Zeit führt in das Zentrum der methodischen Schwierigkeit, über eine Theorie historischer Zeiten überhaupt sinnvolle Aussagen machen zu können. (ibid.).

A consequence of the metaphorization of concepts is their de-substantialization. It enables their temporalization and makes the constituted "historical subjects" always relative to those of the opposing agents.

Die Entsubstantialisierung unserer Kategorien führt zu einer Verzeitlichung ihrer Bedeutung. So etwa läßt sich die Skala vergangener oder zukünftiger Möglichkeiten nie von einem einzigen Handlungsträger oder von einer Handlungseinheit her umreißen. Vielmehr verweist die Skala sofort auf die der Kontrahenten, so daß erst die zeitlichen Differenzen, Brechungen oder Spannungen die Tendenz zu einem neuen Realitätsgefüge ausdrücken können. Unversehens kommen so unterschiedliche Zeitverhältnisse, Beschleunigungs- und Verzögerungsfaktoren ins Spiel. (op.cit., 25)

The ambiguity and controversiality of concepts has its political reference both in the decontextualization, denaturalization and desubstantialization of concepts and in the corresponding plurality of agents. In this sense temporalization and politicization of concepts appear to be more closely connected than presented by Koselleck (e.g. in the *Einleitung*).

In Weberian terms, the metaphorical character of temporal concepts signifies a moment of their *Entzauberung*. This means an increased consciousness of the constructed, nominalistic character

of political and social concepts. More precisely: for Koselleck concepts are nominalistic historically, since the *Sattelzeit* (cf. esp. *Geist*). The "indicatory" role of concepts has been more and more replaced by their constructive role as a "factor" in history.

Das Verhältnis des Begriffs zum Begriffenen kehrt sich um, es verschiebt sich zugunsten sprachlicher Vorgriffe, die zukunftsprägend wirken sollen. (*Einleitung*, xviii)

The reverse side of the metaphorical character is the fragility of temporalized concepts, which still are bound to the 'natural time' and to quasi-objective spatial metaphors. All this makes the legitimacy of temporal concepts always contestable. A naturalistic and substantialistic reaction, a reduction of the temporalized meanings to their spatial "origins", is always possible (by neglecting that metaphorical temporalization turns also spatial concepts into constructions, i.e. shows that they also have a metaphorical character). A further internal connection between temporalization and politicization of concepts concerns the contestability of the responses to the chances of temporalization.

The legitimacy of a temporalized language is not simply established or rejected, but it is also an object of struggles over the paradigmatic style of temporalization. A plurality of conceptions, ideologies or strategies of the temporalization of concepts is realizable. Koselleckian conceptual history gives a good starting point for a rewriting of the history of political theories in the post-*Sattelzeit* period as a history of controversies over the politics of time.

Rethematizations of Temporality

The article on *Theoriebedürftigkeit* is a rich source for themes of temporality in Koselleck's work, later taken up in more detailed and nuanced forms especially in the articles *Fortschritt und Beschleunigung* (1985) and *Zeit und Geschichte* (1987). Koselleck also asks about the consequences of temporalization in diverse

contexts, from war memorials (*Kriegerdenkmäler*) via archives (*Archivalien*) to utopias (*Utopie*). I shall only shortly discuss the potential significance of some specific aspects of temporalization for conceptual history.

One of the most important consequences of Koselleck's thesis on the paradigm shift from topological concepts to concepts of movement is the politicization of time in more explicit forms than in the early articles. Which attitudes are adopted towards temporalization of experience and concepts has become a key subject of politics.

Seit der zweiten Hälfte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts häufen sich zahlreiche Indizien, die auf den Begriff einer neuen Zeit in emphatischen Sinn hinweisen. Die Zeit bleibt nicht nur die Form, in der sich alle Geschichten abspielen, sie gewinnt selber eine geschichtliche Qualität. Nicht mehr in der Zeit, sondern durch die Zeit vollzieht sich dann die Geschichte. Die Zeit wird dynamisiert zu einer Kraft der Geschichte selber. ('*Neuzeit*', 321, cf. *Jahrhundert*, 278)

Koselleck's pair "the space of experience" vs. "the horizon of expectation" (*Erfahrungsraum-Erwartungshorizont*) has become a commonplace in contemporary discussion. In *Kritik und Krise* he still speaks of *Erfahrungshorizont* (e.g. 184). In the article of 1976 the concepts are introduced as "metahistorical categories", which, however, together mark the turning point from topological to temporalized concepts:

Meine These lautet, daß in der Neuzeit die Differenz zwischen Erfahrung und Erwartung zunehmend vergrößert, genauer, daß sich die Neuzeit erst als eine neue Zeit begreifen läßt, seitdem sich die Erwartungen immer mehr von allen bis dahin gemachten Erfahrungen entfernt haben. ('*Erfahrungsraum*', 359)

The differentiation of the horizon of expectations from the space of experiences can be seen as a further legitimation of the denaturalization and desubstantialization of concepts. The primacy of

expectations over experiences is presented by Koselleck above all by means of two paradigms: progress and acceleration. The latter in particular signifies a radicalized denaturalization of temporal experience.

The *Sattelzeit* paradigms of progress and acceleration are, of course, not the only alternatives in the politicization of time. Although Koselleck remarks in 1980 that progress has become "altmodisch" ('*Niedergang*', 228), he did not sketch alternative options of temporalization. He, of course, mentions e.g. Walter Benjamin's view on history at the end of the *Fortschritt*-article in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, without discussing it in detail, and he has short critical remarks on postmodernity and posthistoire in *Geleitwort* (11). In a recent paper on Goethe (1993) Koselleck takes up Goethe's untimely view on temporalization: living in midst of the *Sattelzeit*, Goethe also rejects the Aristotelian topology but refuses e.g. to speak of *Geschichte* as a collective singular (on Goethe, cf. also *Zeit.*, 214-215).

On some occasions Koselleck speculates with alternative schemes for temporalization without reflecting on their consequences for the politics of time. In the essay on *Zeitgeschichte* he first rejects as "extreme" a view that "alle Zeit ist Gegenwart" (op.cit., 18). Then he expands the temporal horizon so that "die drei Zeitdimensionen selbst verzeitlicht werden": past, present and future have all of their own past, present and future and we get nine types of temporal dimensions (op.cit., 20). Koselleck does not develop the idea further, but I think this scheme could be valuable in studies on conceptual history and in textual analysis.

Another typology of immediate significance for both conceptual history and politics of time is the triad of history writing: *aufschreiben*, *fortschreiben*, *umschreiben* (in *Erfahrungswandel*). It offers, when its consequences for the politics of time are discussed, a means of questioning the narrative of progress implied by the growing gap between the space of experience and the horizon of expectation.

Let me explicate this idea more closely. Today the experience of contingency appears as so radical that there are hardly any definite expectations for the future. The space of experience, although it is expected not to be valid in the future, however, still appears as a

more definite space, which is not easily accepted as revisable. On the contrary, it is often regarded not only as a background but also as a kind of foundation for one's present actions: if the space of experience is rewritten, the 'foundations' fall like a card house. In the former Communist countries the rewriting of history was an important moment in dethroning the whole order, while nobody believed in the five-year plans any longer. In general, the rewriting of the space of experience seems to me to be important as a subversive "politics of the past", independent of the authorial intentions of the historians. In this perspective conceptual history appears as such a political force against all sorts of 'foundationalism'.

My examples of rethinking the temporality in the later works of Koselleck direct attention to the chances of a radicalization of the temporalization thesis. He himself has, however, also reflections that tend go in the opposite direction. He now stresses the continuities transcending the *Sattelzeit*, like the Aristotelian concept of citizenship (cf. the *Einleitung to Bürgerschaft*, 14-21, and *Reflections*, 10-11).

For me the most irritating novelty of Koselleck's later writings is his 'anthropological turn'. Through a reinterpretation of some Heideggerian categories he introduces a "historical anthropology" (*Historik*, 13), which inquires into the "conditions of possible history", asking especially whether there are extra- or pre-linguistic conditions of this kind (op.cit., 11, cf. also *Sozialgeschichte, Ereignisgeschichte*). In the Gadamer address Koselleck presents five elementary pairs of categories – *Sterbemüssen-Totschlagenkönnen; Freund-Feind; Innen-Außen, Geworfenheit-Generativität, Oben-Unten* (*Historik*, 13-20). Their common point is explained as follows:

Es handelt sich, im Gefolge Heideggers, um existentielle Bestimmungen, d.h. in gewisser Weise um transzendente Kategorien, die die Möglichkeit von Geschichten benennen, ohne deshalb schon konkrete Geschichten hinreichend beschreibbar zumachen. (op.cit., 20).

The interesting idea of the categories is their presentation as pairs of oppositions. They introduce an elementary political dimension into the "possibilities of history". Somewhat analogously to Benjamin's

claim to replace historical categories by political ones (*Das Passagen-Werk*, 495), this seems to mean an appraisal of politics as an experience which is more fundamental than history.

Sie sind geeignet, als Oppositionspaare, Strukturen der Endlichkeit aufzuzeigen, die durch gegenseitige Ausschließlichkeit Zeitspannungen evozieren, die sich zwischen den und innerhalb der Handlungseinheiten notwendigerweise einstellen müssen. Geschichten ereignen sich nur deshalb, weil die in ihnen angelegten Möglichkeiten weiter reichen als sie hinterher eingelöst werden können. Dieser Überschuß von Möglichkeiten muß abgearbeitet werden um etwas "in der Zeit" verwirklichen zu können. (op.cit., 21)

One of Koselleck's points is thus to indicate possibilities which transcend the linguistic horizons of action in the name of its 'existential' horizons, which means an extension of politicizability beyond the 'linguistically possible'. The anthropological categories tend, however, also to mark insurmountable limits for the horizons of action. By them Koselleck tries to indicate spatial limits to temporalization, i.e. limits of historicity and of the politicizability of the human condition.

One possibility to criticize the 'anthropological' categories is to question their universal significance or validity for human action, history and politics. This can be done e.g. by viewing their "elementary" role not as a foundation but rather as a margin, which could be relativized or delimited in the course of temporalization of the categories. This is just what is done with the categories of above – below and inside – outside in the course of politicization and temporalization of the spatial metaphors, and the significance of this is wholly acknowledged by Koselleck in the *Feindbegriffe* (83-85). In some cases the universality of the categories can be questioned. I think especially of that of generativity, from which more and more human beings are liberating themselves. For them, myself included, it becomes e.g. increasingly possible to accept the view that the present is the only real form of temporality.

It is, of course, regrettable that Koselleck never wrote the articles *Raum* and *Zeit/alter* to *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, "wie der

Herausgeber aus Zeitmangel einräumen muß" (*Vorwort* to *GG VII*, vii). Several articles from the seventies to the nineties which perspectivically deal with some themes around time and temporalization partly compensate for this lack. The dual tendency in Koselleck's later writings is also intelligible: he wants to insist both on the chances of radicalization in temporalization and on some general limits to the 'despatialization'. According to my interpretation, the dual perspective can explicate both the common ground for and a possibility of differentiation between temporalization and politicization of concepts. As a specifying horizon both for conceptual history and for studies of the politics of time, which has been actualized not at the least through Koselleck's studies (cf. e.g. Osborne 1995), Koselleck's dual perspective doubtlessly deserves closer examination.

The Revolution of Conceptual History

To speak in the presence of Reinhart Koselleck, the author of the article *Revolution* in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, on "the revolution" of conceptual history, requires an explication, especially as I just talked about the non-revolutionary aspects in his recent work. Maybe it is better to speak à la Skinner of conceptual history as a *revolutionary move* in the understanding and usage of concepts.

Conceptual history signifies, above all, a revolution against two paradigmatic uses of concepts. In analytical philosophy, concepts are equated with definitions and are required to be as unambiguous, ahistorical and uncontroversial as possible. The popular dictionaries try to give to each word a definite 'ordinary' or 'basic meaning'. Both paradigms, still taught to us in schools and universities, are powerful 'enemies' of conceptual history, although some sense of contextualization and historialization has made an intrusion into more qualified versions of both.

In both paradigms the determination of the concepts is seen as a preliminary move, after which 'real' philosophical and scientific problems can be dealt with. One of the points of conceptual history is to turn attention to concepts, as knots of problems from which the

unproblematic or definitory usages of concepts may be 'deconstructed' as strategies of dethematizing the historical, linguistic, philosophical and political problems surrounding them. The ambiguous, controversial and historical character of concepts can then be understood as a sort of resource in the Weberian sense of a *Machtanteil* in approaching the questions and contexts in which the concepts are used.

A third opponent, the conceptual realism in the Hegelian style, with an ontologization of concepts, is no less an enemy of the 'revolution' of conceptual history. Against it Koselleck stresses², with Max Weber (cf. *Geist*, 134), the heuristic value of concepts as keys to thematizing and rethinking problems

Koselleck's theses on the metaphorical character of the temporalization of concepts appears to form a decisive move. Instead of the quasi-naturalness of the spatial metaphors in the topological concepts, the metaphORIZATION in the temporalization is consciously constructive and contains a warning against both the unlimited extension of the metaphORIZATION and against a resubstantialization of the temporalized concepts. The danger of progress and acceleration turning into substantial entities appear to be less relevant today, although there again are some freaks of technology who may be inclined to a new ontologization of progress and acceleration.

The point of understanding temporal metaphors as constructions is that both the temporal and the linguistic aspect of the concepts appear as highly contingent: the constructions could always be otherwise. If contingency is understood as a resource of the temporalized concepts, both time and language are turned into a specific playground of action. The temporalizing *Entzauberung* of concepts opens new chances for politicization of the human situation.

Perhaps it would be hard to imagine a world in which the consciousness of the historical, metaphorical and constructive character of the concepts used would be part of our everyday lives. As opposed to the conventional apologies of information and communication, it would signify a more critical, subversive and playful world.

Notes

- ¹ This is, in a sense, acknowledged in Koselleck's recent comments on federalism (cf. *Nationalstaat, Europa*), which hardly demand 'common concepts' but rather are based on the use of the diversities in the political and natural languages (cf. also *Feindbegriffe*).
- ² Emphasizing the closeness of his position to Skinner's Koselleck writes: "Such a rigorous historicism views all concepts as speech acts within a context that cannot be replicated. As such, concepts occur only once; they are not substances, quasi-ideas capable of leading a diachronic life of their own", (*Response*, 62).

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(Quotations underlined)

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Sisko Haikala

Criticism in the Enlightenment

Perspectives on Koselleck's Kritik und Krise Study

Professor Reinhart Koselleck's early work *Kritik und Krise* ranks among the classics in the history of Western thought. This study, first published in 1959, is based on his dissertation presented at Heidelberg (1954), and several German editions have later been issued. It has been translated into Spanish, Italian, French, and finally, in 1988, into English. How can interest in the study be explained? Does this shortly 40-year-old study still have something to offer to modern research on the Enlightenment, or is it primarily interesting purely from the point of view of the historiography of history?

Kritik und Krise is a study concerning the European Enlightenment and its origins. It essentially concentrates only on the time from the end of the religious wars to the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789 and analyses the ideas of key figures and lesser-known German, English, and French thinkers of the time. Its main themes are the emergence of the great innovation of the "century of critique", the public sphere maintained by private citizens and the explicit and implicit functions of public opinion. Yet as the subtitle *Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt (Enlighten-*

ment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society) and the Introduction indicate, the specific perspective in the study centres around the relationship between the past and present. The author seems to regard both the inability of men and societies to resolve the contradiction between morality and politics and the inability of people to transform their crisis-consciousness into rational political action, instead of escaping their difficulties to a Utopia, as the ‘malady’ of the modern world. The inability to face realities and the competition between sharply differing Utopian philosophies of history weaken the chances of dealing with problems in a peaceful manner and pave the way to catastrophes. In the first editions of *Kritik und Krise* Koselleck linked his dark insights into the status of the modern world to the Cold War, the seemingly irreconcilable ideological conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States, the threat of nuclear war, and the tensions following emancipation development in the Third World (Koselleck 1973, ix ff., 1f.). Later, the author has admitted that a great German dilemma motivated his research by announcing that one of the initial purposes was to research the historical pre-conditions of National Socialism (Koselleck 1988, 1). He thus traces the roots of modern ‘sickness’ to the Enlightenment. Due to this, and despite the fact that it is mainly the reader’s responsibility to draw conclusions regarding the impact of the Enlightenment on the present, this study can be characterized along the same lines as Horkheimer’s and Adorno’s *Dialektik der Aufklärung*; i.e. as a work, which studies the limitations and weaknesses of Enlightenment thought and which, from a larger perspective, can be considered a pessimistic critique of Western rationality and its belief in progress.

“Put in a nutshell, this book attempts to offer a genetic theory of the modern world”; these were Koselleck’s own words in the 1988 preface of *Kritik und Krise*. At that time he himself considered that the book’s chief strength was that he had been attempting to find the roots of 20th century Utopianism in the Enlightenment and to create an ideal-typical framework for the development of world history from the French Revolution onwards as the most significant aspects of his work (Koselleck 1988, 1ff.; citation p. 4). This way of posing questions based on the problems of the present has been among the major reasons why *Kritik und Krise* has attracted a

great deal of attention, although this has given cause for criticism as well. Doubts have even circulated around the issue of whether this book can be considered actual historiography. According to an early cutting review it does not deal with the Enlightenment but is rather an assessment of the present through the philosophy of history, which relies on its author's learning in the field of history.¹ This type of evaluation is, of course, unreasonably one-sided and does not comply with Koselleck's intentions, yet it most likely includes hidden doubts shared by many historians that research essentially dominated by present interests, or of which the primary starting point is disappointment with the results of modernization, often reduce the view of the past and rarely do justice to their subject. Therefore, when considering the significance of Koselleck's study on the origins of the modern world's malady, a key issue is how relevant we can consider his interpretation of the Enlightenment on the basis of current research.

Koselleck's understanding of the Enlightenment is based on his theory concerning the origins of Absolutism, which takes Hobbes' Leviathan as its starting point. Carl Schmitt, a former critic of Liberalism and Parliamentarism, has also influenced this theory with his interpretations of Hobbes and the genesis of the modern state.² Absolutism, as interpreted by Koselleck, became the means by which society was pacified in the historical situation of the religious civil wars. A precondition for this was the firm separation of politics from morality and the subordination of morality to politics: politics was separated off as the sovereign's own sphere, which existed outside religious and confessional quarrels and in which norms greatly differing from private morals, the demands of the *raison d'état*, were applied. In order to achieve societal peace, ordinary citizens were pushed out of the sphere of politics. They were left with the private sphere, in which the individual had a free conscience in issues of religion and morals. This separation also meant that the individual was on the one hand a subject lacking political power and the right to criticize the sovereign, while on the other he was a human being with free will and power to make decisions in the sphere of morality. The dualism of politics and morals created by Absolutism is, according to Koselleck, a precondition for the Enlightenment and its criticism and, as a matter of fact, included the seeds of destruction for

Absolutism. As secularization progressed, the subjects – especially the new bourgeois elite – shifted their focus away from religious questions of conscience and turned to presenting moral evaluations, i.e. criticism of earthly matters (Koselleck 1973, 11ff., 41ff.).

When analysing the development of the concept of criticism and the gradual broadening of the targets of this criticism in the “Republic of Letters” in the 18th century and the organizations of the Enlightenment, the author provides interesting perspectives on much discussed problems, which concern the birth processes of a civic society, especially the origins of public opinion, new types of civic organizations, and hidden politicization during the Enlightenment. According to Koselleck, the essential feature of the Enlightenment is the development that enabled the enlargement of the private inner sphere left for the subjects and extended itself into the sphere of politics dominated by the government. This situation was at hand when critics began to express their opinions of laws. Criticism and its “tribunal of reason” developed into an indirect, cloaked political power within the state, for which the Enlightenment philosophers demanded sovereignty and which eventually also developed into an actual authority, “the Fourth Estate”.(Koselleck 1973, 41ff., 94f.)

Unlike Jürgen Habermas, for example, who has described the origins of a “bourgeois public sphere” in the 18th century from a neo-Marxist perspective in a rather positive manner as an emancipating and progressive force destroying the structures of late feudalistic society (see Habermas 1962/1974), and many scholars who have considered the public opinion of the Enlightenment as the beginning of the democratization processes of the modern world (e.g. Jacob 1994, 108f.), Koselleck raises pronouncedly issues which he regards as the dangerous and self-deceiving sides of bourgeois emancipation in the Enlightenment. According to his central thesis, criticism had a built-in mechanism of crisis provocation, even though eighteenth-century people failed to recognize it. In the Enlightenment, criticism was understood as a process, continuous dialogue, in which an essential part of a subject was the argumentation for and against in order to discover the incontrovertible truth in the future. This seemingly innocent starting point made critics believe unrealistically in their own neutrality and provided all of them with an absolute

freedom to present their opinions in public. In Koselleck's opinion, this was a way of smuggling the *bellum omnium contra omnes* back into the society – although in the form of a spiritual battle at this time (Koselleck 1973, 81ff., 90ff.). During the generation of Enlighteners following Voltaire's criticism – for reasons, which the author does not explain very thoroughly – lost its process nature, attained a demand for supremacy with tyrannical features, and attempts were made to monopolize the truth as the property of only one side, that of the Enlightenment philosophers (Koselleck 1973, 98ff.).

In Koselleck's interpretation criticism in the Enlightenment, despite all the appeals to morals, reason and nature, was fundamentally political criticism turning particularly against absolute government. He considers as essential and relating to the pathogenesis of the modern world the fact that the proponents of the Enlightenment could not or did not want to be aware of the political nature of the Enlightenment process. They regarded themselves as apolitical and wanted to avoid all conflicts with the Absolutist system. This changed criticism into hypocrisy, drove the Enlightenment into Utopia, and more and more certainly into crises. One essential means of cloaking with which eighteenth-century actors, according to Koselleck, tried intellectually to avoid confrontation with Absolutism, was connected with the philosophy of progress and orientation for the future. This was seen not only in the numerous predictions of revolutions and crises in the latter half of the 18th century, but especially in the fact that the Enlightenment thinkers themselves engaged in planning the future by developing Utopian philosophies of history. According to these thought constructions firmly anchored in the belief in progress, the faults at hand did not necessarily demand the subjects' concrete involvement in the present since the problems would inevitably be resolved in the future positively and without violence – and just like the creators of these philosophies had anticipated them being resolved. Philosophies of history on the one hand act as tools of self-deception; on the other hand they act as indirect political powers, because they, of course, invertedly include a judgement upon the existing political and social conditions (Koselleck 1973, 105ff.).

In fact Koselleck builds the Enlightenment into a process, which

– in spite of the intentions of contemporaries – leads to the French Revolution, and he wants to offer an answer to the classic question discussed even by Tocqueville of why the Enlighteners, who had engaged in severe criticism of the political and societal system, do not seem to have understood the potentially revolutionary conclusions of their own ideals. According to Tocqueville’s famous reply, the tendency to engage in abstract radical thinking was caused by the inexperience of Enlightenment philosophers and the high nobility in practical politics during the Absolutist system (Tocqueville 1856/1988, 229ff.). Koselleck, on the other hand, constructs his explanation on the lack of political consciousness described above: remaining attached to this very nonpolitical self-image was fatal for self-understanding and understanding of reality for the Enlighteners, because it only broadened the conflict between morals and politics, between society and state, prevented rational political action, and deprived the people of the Enlightenment of the ability to put their own certainties of faith into relative terms. The more the political nature of problems was concealed or was covered up intentionally, the deeper the crisis. Koselleck perceives this mechanism as leading to the destruction of Absolutism in the French Revolution and to the permanent state of crises predicted by Rousseau and to the era of revolutions; that is, to the modern world. Koselleck links the road to terror during the French Revolution to those demands for truth and supremacy, which he believes have dominated the criticism of the Enlightenment and public opinion at the end of the 18th century, and which he largely seems to substitute with Rousseau’s idea of *volonté générale*. He gives the Genevan in other respects as well a significant role in his theory on the genesis of the modern world by joining with those exegetes, in whose opinion the ideals of “total democracy” in *Contrat social* and the general will include the basis for later ideas of dictatorship and totalitarianism (Cf. Koselleck 1973, 132ff., 137, 138).

Critique and Crises is a fascinating interpretation. Its aspect relating to the malady of the modern world is unlikely to have lost significance at the end of the 20th century, in an atmosphere influenced considerably by the citizens’ programmatic “non-politicality” due to their weariness of politics. Furthermore, Koselleck’s work may interest postmodernists, who have long

discussed the failure of the “Enlightenment project” and the weaknesses of Western rationalism. Yet, as a description of its actual topic, 18th-century ideas, the study is somewhat problematic in some respects. Above all, the understanding of the Enlightenment forming the basis of the research is controversial. It is clearly based upon the old conception of France as the ideal-typical model nation for the European Enlightenment and on the radicalization of the Enlightenment from one generation to another with the French Revolution at the end of this continuation. The foundations of this type of understanding of the Enlightenment were, as a matter of fact, created during the French Revolution, when, on the one hand, the revolutionaries declared themselves the executors of the will of the Enlightenment, on the other hand, Augustin Barruel and many other anti-revolutionaries bothered by conspiracy hysteria started to accuse the Enlightenment of beginning the Revolution and its terror. In more rational versions, the idea of the development of France as a crystallization of the Enlightenment and of the Enlightenment as the cause of the Revolution has long existed in historiography. However, it is evident that this type of idea includes the supposition of unity in the Enlightenment, is easily susceptible to criticism and is clearly too narrow and deterministic to describe the Enlightenment and its significance for modernization.

According to the pluralistic views nowadays increasingly gaining support, the Enlightenment should be viewed as a far-embracing complex of ideas, for which the common multinational fundamental tendencies were rationality, criticality, secularization, and reformism evident in all areas of life but which obtained original features in each country’s special circumstances. The Enlightenment was, without a doubt, an ideology of changes, but its goals were reforms, not a revolution. France, the only country to have a revolution in the 18th century, is thus more of an exception than a model of the potential effects of the Enlightenment. The gradual radicalization of the Enlightenment was merely one, and not even the most dominant, feature of it. The gradual politicization of the Enlightenment is more essential in this respect, of which – as Koselleck emphasizes – most of the enlightened men were not really distinctly conscious. Other crucial features were the easily noticeable expansion of Enlighten-

ment culture that, in the last decades of the 18th century, within the Central European countries embraced already quite large portions of society's middle and upper strata, and the division of the Enlightenment into numerous unpolitical and political, moderate, radical, and even more or less conservative movements drawing its main explanation from the strong growth in the support for the Enlightenment (e.g. Möller 1986, esp. 19ff., 36ff., 298ff. Gumbrecht/Reichardt/Schleich 1981, 3ff.).

The diversity of opinions makes the old interpretation of the universal, naive belief in progress in the Enlightenment vulnerable, on which Koselleck seems to base his thesis of the Enlighteners escaping into Utopian philosophies of history. In reality, many of the Enlighteners perceived history as a continuous struggle between the Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment, in which even small progress achieved was always seen to be in danger and in need of protection (e.g. Hinske 1981, lviii ff.). The pluralistic understanding of the Enlightenment forces us also to put Koselleck's view that the key issue in the Enlightenment had been hidden and partly open opposition to Absolutism into relative terms. Analysing the issue objectively, it seems self-evident that the Enlightenment and Absolutism were in their essential goals in contrast with one another. As is well known, particularly in the French Enlightenment the criticism of Absolutism started to emerge rather visibly from the mid-18th century onwards, as the problems of state finances and tax reform quarrels worsened. There is also no denying the fact that public criticism and public opinion were perhaps even unintentionally, phenomena which called Absolutism into question, since, according to the old theory of Absolutism, only the sovereign was a public figure and a representative of common good, whereas the subjects were understood to be merely supporting particular interests (Baker 1990, 169). It is also clear that both the monarchs as well as other rulers often felt public opinion to be a threat to them, which is why criticism in the Enlightenment often had to resort to different detours or became shallow due to self-censorship.

On the other hand, the eighteenth-century consciousness – which, of course, cannot be freely dismissed when studying the functions of Enlightenment thought – also reveals features favourable

to Absolutism and sides, which merit the conclusion that a considerable number of the Enlighteners failed to consider Absolutism the most urgent problem of the time. They rather understood as their real enemies many other phenomena upholding traditionalism; such as the Church, religious orthodoxy, the privileges of the nobility, the faults of the judicial system, outdated educational systems, or old-fashioned mentalities. When discussing the relationship between criticism in the Enlightenment and Absolutism, the fact that the new “bourgeois publicity” was not seeking battle rather than dialogue with the rulers ought to be considered. Public opinion wanted to appeal to and persuade the rulers and thus influence the handling of common matters. Especially in the countries of Absolutism, public citizens’ discourse became a sort of a substitute for missing political rights. Even the social history of the Enlightenment casts doubt on the view of the Enlightenment as a real counterforce to Absolutism. Not only on the periphery of Europe but also at the core, the supporters of the Enlightenment were mainly officials, teachers, and others employed by the State, or intelligentsia dependent on the rulers’ favour. Therefore, they were more likely to identify themselves as partners of the State than as its opponents.

Absolutism also gained advocates of various degrees of activity in the Enlightenment. In France many of the physiocrats supported Enlightened Absolutism, and, for the German Enlightenment, it was outright typical to be willing to compromise with Absolutism and to possess great optimism at least until the 1780s for the chances of Enlightened Absolutism and “the princely revolution”. The Enlightenment aimed on a wide front at demolishing the old structures that were felt to be irrational, yet Absolutism, at least its Enlightened version, could not necessarily be equated with traditionalism. Reform programs of enlightened Absolutism facilitated in many Enlighteners’ opinion and partly in practice the general reform goals of the Enlightenment were able to promote a certain degree of modernization. Thanks to this, belief in the gradual reformation of Absolutism was not impossible.

It is also rather uncertain whether the numerous debates of the Enlightenment on the natural and inalienable rights of people, freedom, or the mutual superiority of the form of government can be reduced

primarily to an opposition to Absolutism in the continental Enlightenment before the year 1789, as we have traditionally become used to think. It is worth considering whether these include more essentially demands for – not political but – greater civil rights and so-called equality of opportunities. For example on the Continent, anglophilia, which many researchers have perceived as an expression of anti-Absolutism and concealed Constitutionalism, turns out at least in the case of Germany after a closer look to be mainly admiration for the British freedom of expression, protection of law, and the possibilities of social ascendancy, and the whole discussion of “British freedom” begins to accentuate towards evaluations of the political system only in the politicized atmosphere created by the French Revolution. Even then, the subject in the comparisons did not primarily centre around Absolutism but the new Constitution of France (Haikala 1985; cf. Maurer 1987).

Kritik und Krise contains such methodological statements and interesting conceptual analysis which anticipate Koselleck’s later orientation towards the development of methodology for conceptual history. Especially in the footnotes to the study, the author deals with the history of several concepts and their content in a way which is familiar to the readers of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*.³ Furthermore, the study is linked with later conceptual history, for example, through the view that in the framing of research questions known philosophers and anonymous pamphlets are considered of equal value as sources, and in the intention expressed in the *Introduction* to link the methods of *Geistesgeschichte* to analysis of sociological conditions (Koselleck 1973, 4, 5). Due to its practical solutions, however, the study still represents rather traditional history of ideas. The deductions on what is dominant and typical in Enlightenment thinking mostly rest on a few known Enlightenment thinkers. This, of course, is problematic from the point of view of generalizations on the results, although the notes do include quite a few examples of such statements of lesser-known writers which are almost parallel to the quoted thoughts of the great philosophers.

Kritik und Krise has also been criticized of ignoring the social and political context of the thought. The work has thus been viewed as describing more the Enlightenment thinking’s potential than the

actual social and political functions. (Voges 1987, 15ff.) The justification of this criticism cannot wholly be denied, since the criticism of the Enlightenment and such phenomena indicating crisis, which started to strengthen during the last quarter century in European centres, is hardly possible to explain thoroughly by ignoring the concrete situations or by not placing the thinking in the relevant framework of socio-economic change, political development, growth in counter-Enlightenment forces, and a deepening crisis in norms.

One obvious shortcoming in Koselleck's study is the little attention directed towards the fact that also the counterforces influenced the problems of the Enlightenment and its failures, and that, due to mutually competing ideologies, these attempts at monopolizing the truth remained mere attempts in the public sphere. An approach centring around the dialogue or a conscious aspiration to research the differences in thinking, conflicts, and controversy – characteristics of later conceptual history – could have perhaps even in this case perceived the differences in the societal meanings and confrontations in Enlightenment thought better than the methods of the traditional history of ideas. At the same time, they could possibly have decreased the danger of being excessively abstract in the study of the history of ideas.

The great theory in *Kritik und Krise* on the dead-ends of Enlightenment thought remains somewhat inadequately justified, and the study cannot without reservations be considered a universal description of the nature of the Enlightenment, of its hidden meanings, or its consequences. However, the merits of the book are indisputable. These include, among other things, inspiring analysis of the thinking of European Enlightenment thinkers, including many new perspectives, and perhaps above all the thematization of many interesting research issues.

Koselleck has problematised in particular the question of public and secret sphere dialectics, as well as the significance of the new "sociability" and Freemasonry in *Kritik und Krise* in a way that has been influential in later research. Intensive research into Enlightenment organizations has been taking place in historiography for quite a while. In it, a great deal of attention has been directed towards secret societies and especially to Freemasonry, the most popular

organization. A considerable problem is still the question discussed by Koselleck: why did secrets and secret societies become popular in a culture which otherwise fought for the freedom of the press and the principle of publicity and in which public debate became a new important way of influencing politics.

Koselleck is not interested in the esoteric teachings of the Freemasons, Illuminates, and other secret societies apart from the social functions within the arcanum sphere created by them, which he perceives as crystallizing the dialectics of morals and politics in the Enlightenment. Freemasonry he interprets as being a civic society formed in the internal emigration within a state. Within this civic society different laws to those existing in a state or the official society of *ancien régime* applied, because in the Masonic ideology principles typical of rational Enlightenment, such as the mutual equality of the members and freedom, the aspiration to moral self-improvement, and tolerance were emphasized. Masonic secrets he regards as protection against the State and also the established Church. According to Koselleck, Freemasons explicitly rejected politics – political and religious debates were even forbidden in the rules, yet despite this, or maybe more correctly because of it, Freemasonry was an indirect political power turning against Absolutism. This was for the very reason that the separation from the state and stress on virtue indirectly emphasized the fact that the State and the existing hierarchy within the society were suffering a deficiency in morals (Koselleck 1973, 49ff., 61ff., 68ff.).

When it comes to the remarkably persistent allegations even in research from the end of the 18th century to the Second World War of the Freemasons' revolutionary character and secret influence on the beginning of the French Revolution, it should be stressed that Koselleck is not of one of these conspiracy theoreticians, even though some of his secondary sources are of this nature. Freemasonry is for him, like the public sphere, an institution of indirect political power. In his evaluations of the connections between French Freemasonry, the Revolution and Jacobinism, he seems to be cautiously nearing Augustin Cochin, who was recently 'rehabilitated' by François Furet. Cochin also considered the Enlightenment organizations as secret ideological forces undermining the legitimacy of the *ancien régime*.

To him, Freemasonry, although the members were not conspirators, was part of the mechanism of politicization leading to the Revolution (Furet 1978/1988, 257ff.; cf. Koselleck 1973, 64f., 187f.).

Especially in German research into Freemasonry, the questions posed by Koselleck have been repeatedly utilized directly or indirectly, and he has rightly been credited with the fact that the history of Freemasonry cannot any longer be characterized as being pre-occupied with curiosities rather than as an essential part of research on the culture of the Enlightenment. The work of the last decades has produced an abundance of new, more reliable information on the lodges and their members, but we have become less certain than before of, for example, the ideological aspects of Freemasonry, which is why in recent research the emphasis differs somewhat from the interpretations in *Kritik und Krise*. Koselleck's thesis of the indirect political significance of the Freemasons and Illuminates has not been disproved, but his views on the anti-Absolutism of Freemasonry – that, in many countries, found support even among the princes and the court – need revision. Newer research also does not present the German Illuminates, a secret society representing radical Enlightenment, as political or dangerous to the *ancien régime* as was common in the 1950s research situation (see especially Agethen 1984). All in all, the researchers' focus has shifted from questioning Absolutism towards another direction indicated by Koselleck; that is, the sociability of the Enlightenment and the phenomena anticipating the creation of a new political culture as well as questions relating to the significance of the secret societies in the formation of a new societal mentality, new elite, and a civic society. On the other hand, more and more attention has been paid to the fact that 18th-century Freemasonry cannot without residuals be substituted with the rational Enlightenment: its esoteric teachings right from the start included not only rational but irrational elements, and many kinds of mystical, newly religious, and alchemistic ideas found their home in the Masonic and Paramasonic organizations.

As concerns research on public opinion during the Enlightenment, *Kritik und Krise*, in addition to Jürgen Habermas' slightly more recent piece of research *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit (Transformation of the Public Sphere)*, is one of the basic works on the

subject. Of particular value in it is bringing the theme of non-politicality and “non-political politicization” into the foreground. In the publicity of the Enlightenment, the naive and uncritical beliefs of the contemporaries, that they were the mouthpieces of truth and disinterested caretakers of humanity as a whole, were undoubtedly conspicuous. The reasons for these delusions of neutrality can probably be found in many sources. Partly this must have been influenced by the traditional dislike for “politicking” of all kinds, and towards both confessional and political party groups which were substituted in the eighteenth-century understanding usually with fanaticism and egoistic, particular interest-seeking (cf. e.g. Sellin 1974, esp. 827f., 842; Beyme 1974, 687ff.). The overt optimism typical of the Enlightenment as to the ability of human reason to reach objective truths, and the understanding of public opinion as indicating the will of the people (or more likely of its most Enlightened part) and representing the common good also had a similar influence (e.g. Baker 1990, 196ff.). Recent research into the rise of professionalism has also opened up interesting perspectives on the matter. One reason for the belief in impartiality was probably the fact that the Enlighteners, who were mostly the educated bourgeois or academically educated nobles, regarded themselves as the meritocratic elite of the society and considered that education had made them experts and bearers of objective knowledge (La Vopa 1992, 110ff.). However, Koselleck’s explanation linking criticism to the sphere of morality may actually have considerable relevance. Also, it is hard to dispute the justification of Koselleck’s interpretation that the criticism of the Enlightenment often displayed the tendencies to monopolize the truth and show intolerance towards those holding different opinions.

As a matter of fact, Koselleck’s theory of the key role of moral argumentation, unrealistic thinking and the difficulty of allowing the right of existence to competing trains of thought may offer at least partial explanations for many of the special features of the Enlightenment era. One of these could be to explain the political problems by means of the conspiracy theses, which became more common in the 18th century. The most famous of the conspiracy theories is the thesis developed by counter-revolutionary alarmists during the French Revolution claiming that the Enlightenment Philosophers, Freemasons,

Illuminates, and the Jacobins were joining forces in a conspiracy aimed at a world revolution. One could argue that this thought structure has changed into the malady of the modern world, because the same basic logic has been repeated in numerous later conspiracy theories; the groups labelled as the enemies of society changed to include among others Jews, Liberals, Socialists and Communists (Bieberstein 1976). However it is to be noted that during the 18th century also the revolutionaries and the sworn proponents of the Enlightenment both in Europe and in America developed their own conspiracy theses. One example of this are the claims of a crypto-Catholic conspiracy which aroused great controversy in Germany in the 1780s; claims which were first presented in public by the well-known advocates of the Enlightenment in Berlin: J. E. Biester, Friedrich Gedike, and Friedrich Nicolai. Basically, the matter relates to the Enlighteners' inability to process problems politically, that is, to understand the strengthening of different counter-Enlightenment movements. The dispute quickly developed into a propaganda war between the supporters of the Enlightenment and its critics, in which the opposing side also resorted to the conspiracy thesis by accusing the Enlighteners of a deist conspiracy.⁴ Conspiracy theories, in which the explanation for the misfortunes of the world are always reduced to a person's will and intentional actions, benefited from the secularized ideas of the Enlightenment that history can be made by men and that events in the world can be explained by men. Their logic was of course substantially entangled with moral questions and they, in the words of Gordon S. Wood, "represented an effort, perhaps in retrospect a last desperate effort, to hold men personally and morally responsible for their actions" (Wood 1982, 411).

As a whole, *Kritik und Krise* has not attained the status of a classic due to the fact that its author has later become a famous developer and greatly respected researcher of conceptual history, and its significance is not limited to the study being an interesting example of Cold War historiography. The seemingly durable contribution to research of this almost 40-year-old book can be found in the extremely fruitful research questions and fascinating interpretations which, in spite of the criticism raised, have offered plenty of stimuli and challenges for later research.

Notes

- ¹ This was Helmut Kohn's review of *Kritik und Krise*, in *Historische Zeitschrift* 1961, vol. 192, p. 666.
- ² See Koselleck 1973, 18ff., 166 (notes 65,68,70), cf. p. xii; Schmitt 1938/1982, esp. 85ff.. For Schmitt's influence on Koselleck see also Popkin 1991, 82f..
- ³ See for example in: Koselleck 1988 the words 'politics' p. 42 fn. 5; 'critique' and 'crisis' p. 103f. fn. 15; 'revolution' p. 160f. fn. 6.
- ⁴ Haikala 1996, 54 ff.. – Koselleck as a matter of fact analyses one of the key works surrounding this controversy, E. A.A. von Göchhausen's *Ent-hüllung des Systems der Weltbürger-Republik*, but links it, exposing himself to criticism, to Illuminates: see Koselleck 1973, 113f..

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Tuija Pulkkinen

The Postmodern Moment in Political Thought¹

Since the late 1970's the term "postmodern" has established itself in the vocabulary of cultural analysis. For the postmodern turn political thought has appeared as a crisis area because it is here that the postmodern challenge has been contested for both its meaning and its signification. Some critics claim that the concept has no bearing on political thought and some contend that it has outright negative implications in this area. The criticism is usually targeted at the Nietzschean undercurrent in the work of such authors as Michel Foucault and Jean-Francois Lyotard. Foucault's ideas of constructedness of individuality and all-pervasiveness of power as well as Lyotard's idea of politics as a permanently agonistic space without the horizon of agreement have attracted a lot of critical attention. Ideas such as these are deemed dubious for purportedly erasing the possibility of moral-political judgement.

My contention is that the postmodern is highly relevant for political thought, to the degree that the term "The postmodern moment" is justified. More specifically, I claim that the postmodern challenge implies a rejection of both the liberal and Hegelian-Marxian political ontologies which are the two powerful traditions of modern political

thought. These political ontologies both build on a foundationally conceived subjectivity, agency or self which the postmodern effectively calls into question.

I will begin by specifying what I mean by the postmodern, and by the two distinct political ontologies, and then continue by exploring their common denominators.

The modern/postmodern distinction, for me, is a distinction of two modes of thought and as such is not to be confused with sociological notions of postmodern society or postmodern culture. Also, I do not apply these terms as referring to periods of history or historical epochs and I entirely refuse questions of timing. In general, I think the meaning of the terms "the modern" and "the postmodern" is a product of discourse and I reject questions of referential nature in this respect. My way of defining the two concepts is not unrelated to the recent discussion around them, yet I do not try to sum up this discussion in order to arrive at an overall meaning of the postmodern, much less to determine its referent. I rather venture into defining them in a way which my analysis appears to warrant.

As modes of thought the modern and the postmodern differ in their relationship to foundations. The modern is characterized by the search for a foundation, a basis or a core of whatever is the subject of study. The modern purifies. Moreover, this search in the modern is conducted so that the emphasis is not on establishing these foundations, but on constantly contesting them in order to find a more basic core. The postmodern, on the other hand, is characterized by the recognition of the repetitive gesture in the modern, and of a refusal to carry on with it. In other words, the modern strips off layers in the belief that there is a naked core to be revealed, whereas the postmodern does not believe in the core: you can peel one layer after another without discovering a hard core, just new layers. The postmodern interest focuses on the layers instead of pursuing foundations.

The two models of thought offer very different approaches to any conceivable subject matter, including the highly prominent question of self, agency or subject which I will come back to later after taking up an idea central to my understanding of the postmodern. This is the principle of genealogy, which Michel Foucault adopts

from Nietzsche, and which other postmodern thinkers such as Judith Butler also apply.

In his article "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History"² Foucault contrasts genealogy with history. History studies a phenomenon and its past by looking for its origin. It goes further and further in order to reveal the origin of the phenomenon under study and it then studies what has happened to this object of study during the course of history, how power in different ways has modified it.

Genealogy, instead, does not look for an original, unpolluted form of the phenomenon which is supposed to remain there as its essence in the course of its modifications over time, but instead conceives the phenomenon under study as always, at any point in its past, an effect of some kind of powers. When Nietzsche studied morality in "Genealogy of Morals"³ he did not assume a morality (the original morality) which then would have taken different forms in the course of history. He did not assume that core which is subjected to the history of morality. Instead he assumed that morality is produced through different powers – and it is these powers that become the focal point of his analysis. This, at least, is Foucault's interpretation of what Nietzsche is doing, and Foucault himself follows the same pattern when he studies history of sexuality. He does not assume that there is such a thing as sexuality per se, an original form which then undergoes different modifications in different periods of time, but instead he assumes that sexuality only comes into being as a result of various powers. He also takes these powers under scrutiny. Put short, in genealogy the emphasis is not on searching for the core, but on the layers, and this is what in my view marks it as a postmodern way of thinking.

To move on to explaining my understanding of political ontology, it is common to differentiate between two powerful traditions of political thought, the liberal Anglo-American tradition of Hobbes, Locke and Mill, and the tradition of nationalism and socialism based on Hegel and Marx who both wrote in German. I build on this distinction too, but for me it appears as a distinction between political ontologies. This is because of the profound difference that I see in the way these traditions construct political space, in the elements they use in this construction and in the logical order of the elements.

The Anglo-American liberal ontology constructs its political space out of basic elements which I characterize as transcendently singular individual agents. They are transcendental because they do not have the wealth of characteristics of a real individual but are abstract entities stripped of all other attributes but those belonging to their abstract core. The abstraction process leaves them in possession of a singular interest, and a capacity to choose. Everything else theorized within the liberal framework, concepts like community, society, civil society, the state, are built out of the elements of transcendently singular individuals, which are logically prior to any of the others in the conceptual network. Consequently, in contract theories, for example, the society emerges out of a contract between transcendental individuals that exist logically prior to it.

In the Hegelian-Marxian political ontology the logical order of elements is different. The community, culture or society – in Hegel's terms *Geist* – is logically prior to any other notions, including that of the individual. An individual is not intelligible outside a socio-cultural context. The most interesting feature in the Hegelian-Marxian political ontology is, however, that in this political tradition community is conceived of as an individual, a mind, a knowing and willing subject. More specifically, it is conceived of as a Kantian self-reflective, self-legislative and self-governing subject. This kind of thought is present already in Rousseau's idea of *volonté générale*, and it informs Hegel's idea of state as a consciousness in search of self-consciousness, and reappears prominently in the Marxist idea of a totally self-governed social subject.

The two traditions differ significantly as to their conceptions of freedom. Liberty in liberal tradition is characterized by the Hobbesian metaphor of free motion of bodies in space. A free man, according to Hobbes, is someone who is able to make his decisions and to act according to his interest and will without external obstruction. Just as free bodies continue a steady motion in Newtonian space if nothing obstructs them, so, analogically, free individuals make choices according to their interest if nothing obstructs them. Freedom is basically the absence of obstacles.

In the German tradition the concept of freedom is based on Immanuel Kant's moral philosophy. Freedom has nothing to do with

the metaphor of free motion, instead it has a lot to do with morality. Kant conceives humans as inhabiting two empires: they are, on the one hand, creatures of nature and as such necessarily subject to the laws of nature just as other natural creatures. As natural creatures they follow their inclinations, drives, and natural impulses. On the other hand, humans differ from other creatures in that they are also capable of acting on other than natural motivations. They can deliberate their actions and are capable of moral decisions against their natural drives. Because of this capacity, Kant says, humans also inhabit another empire, the empire of freedom. Thus, in Kant's thought freedom is tightly connected with moral capacity, the capacity to legislate on oneself, to reflect on oneself, to control one's own actions morally. Freedom, in the tradition of German idealism, is not a capacity to follow one's will unobstructed but almost the opposite: the ability to control oneself morally.

A profound difference between the two traditions becomes evident in other central concepts too. Civil society in the Lockean tradition is characterized by liberty and it serves as the location of free moral-political initiative. It is defined against the state or government, which is always conceived of as a possible obstacle for liberty. The Hegelian-Marxian concept of civil society has been inspired by political economy and is defined in terms of necessity and lack of freedom. Moral and political action is not connected with the concept of civil society but instead with the concept of state. The state is conceived of as a self-commanding subject (thus by definition free) which also enables individuals to interactively control the culture (*Geist*) which constructs their individuality.

As profoundly different as the two traditions are in their conceptual framework and in their implications, they do have something in common: the conception of subject, self or agency as an autonomous, closed entity. In the liberal tradition this is the figure of a transcendently singular individual with interest and a capacity to choose, in the Hegelian-Marxian tradition the autonomous self-controlling communal subject. The idea of moral capacity residing in a core self is the common denominator in these two frameworks.

It is my contention that as an antifoundational mode of thought the postmodern entails genealogical questioning of this notion of the

core self. This has far-reaching implications for both traditions of modern political theory because both of them privilege the figure of the subject. The postmodern problematizes the notional freely choosing individual and it problematizes the ideal of a self-determined autonomous community.

What would then be a genealogical way of understanding agency? It perceives a subject constructed entirely and constantly through power and without a core self. The main effect of this thought is that it destabilizes the determined/undetermined distinction.

As I mentioned, a common theme in the criticisms of postmodern thought in politics has been the fear of losing individually responsible moral capacity when the judging human being is understood as an effect of various powers and moral judgements are no longer explained as emanating from the basic core. This fear derives from a pointed juxtaposition of being autonomous and being determined or influenced from "outside".

But is it really possible to distinguish the human core from influences from "outside"? All through our lives we are drawn in to various power relationships which are supposed to build up our personality, parenting and schooling provides the most obvious examples. The differentiation between an individual core personality and "influences" gets at its most problematic on ethnicity and gender. How do you separate the "person" from the "influences" of being raised as a Navajo, a Frenchman, or a woman? These regimes of power, as Foucault would say, are constitutive to the person. And is not the moral capacity itself, in an individual, also constructed through power? The postmodern deconstructs both the individualized and the universalized "man" or "human" which is supposed to reside underneath the ethnic or gender differences and concentrates instead on effects of such powers as the colonizing power or the gendering power.

The idea of an essential human core has at least three problematic consequences. Firstly, is accountable for the universalizing gestures of the liberal tradition which are increasingly questioned in feminist and neocolonial theory. Secondly, it downplays the role of the powers connected with the construction of individuality. Thirdly, as Foucault's idea of all-pervasiveness of powers makes us aware

of, it produces as an ideal of a powerfree situation which functions as a horizon in political thought. This unattainable state of total liberation, a complete absence of the contaminating touch of power appears both as an original starting point and as an utopic endpoint.

In the Hegelian-Marxian tradition the thought of an autonomous self produces the ideal of a society's total self-control which is related to the idea of there being a possibility of knowing the real will of the communal subject. The real core self of a society having achieved complete consciousness and knowledge of itself and therefore the ability to self-govern is the ideal shared by both the nationalist and socialist thought.

Jean-Francois Lyotard has worked on the Hegelian-Marxian ideal of self-governance. He is very apprehensive of the problematics imbedded in the Hegelian-Marxian tradition, that it induces the ones, who think that they know the correct will of the community also to think that they have the right to force others into it. Lyotard calls this phenomena, in the revolutionary tradition, with the metonymic name "terror".

Lyotard's suggestion is to deny the passage from knowledge to judgement in politics. In his view it is essential to renounce the existence of a core in the community-individual. He stresses that there is no core-self in the society to be revealed or to be known, and thus, a judgement in a political situation cannot be based on knowledge and analysis of it. A political judgement is always necessarily a judgement without definite criteria.

Both Foucault and Lyotard question the core of agency. Foucault's genealogy is relevant for rethinking the limits of liberal ontology and Lyotard's analysis for critically assessing the Hegelian-Marxian ontology without assuming the liberal one. Out of this questioning emerges an approach in political theory, which I call postmodern: one which refuses to believe in foundation. It looks for ways of understanding society and politics without the basic assumption of intrinsic freedom of individuals (since politics is always involved in the constitution of individuality) and of community as a subject.

The change in attitude may be described as a move away from modern utopias: the liberal utopia of complete freedom of power and the Hegelian-Marxian utopia of totally just self-governing soci-

ety. The postmodern means detachment from both of these utopias. It means a conception of politics divested of the thought of an endpoint that would provide all the right solutions. It means a conception of political space as a constantly agonistic situation with no definite right and wrong and no one right direction to go. It means a situation where there is awareness of power and where judgements are constantly made about what, here and now, is just and what is unjust. So it definitely is a conception of politics as a moral issue, but one without anybody knowing the right answers.

In conclusion, I see that the postmodern does have a meaning in political thought: it unsettles the ontological presuppositions of modern political traditions. Moreover, I believe that it is not incompatible with the possibility of moral-political judgement as feared, but on the contrary provokes political attitude, consciousness of power, and an alert mind to acknowledge difference in one's judgement. By the same token it avoids falling in the trap of either overlooking power or harbouring a fantasy of total control.

Notes

- ¹ This text is based on a presentation given at Reinhart Koselleck Seminar (University of Helsinki, November 24th 1995) on the central themes of my PhD thesis "The Postmodern and Political Agency".
- ² Published in English in the volume *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice. Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1988.
- ³ Tr. Walter Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage Books 1989.

Erik Lagerspetz

The Philosophy of Democracy and the Paradoxes of Majority Rule

Introduction

After forty years of intensive theoretical research, the relationship between social choice and traditional political philosophy is still unclear. For some theorists of democracy, the Arrow theorem and the related results are conclusive proofs that our democratic institutions are deeply defective. Thus, R.P. Wolff uses the results in his *A Defence of Anarchism* as a part of his general attack on the legitimacy of democratic institutions and as a part of his defence of anarchic consensualism (Wolff 1976, 58-67), while Daniel Bell, in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, tries to derive a justification for technocratic elitism from the same results (Bell 1974, 305-13). Such dramatic conclusions are, however, uncommon. Like many welfare economists (cf. Johansen 1987, 439), most normative theorists of democracy have, while perhaps mentioning the results in a footnote, simply ignored them (cf. Dummett 1984, 295-6).

Some theorists of democracy have claimed that the Arrow impossibility theorem and its relatives (among which the most important are the Gibbard-Satterthwaite theorem on the universality of strategic possibilities and the McKelvey theorem on agenda-setters' power) are just mathematical curiosities. This claim has been made several times (see Dahl & Lindblom 1953, 422; Plamenatz 1973, 183-4; Tullock 1967; Spitz 1984, 24-5). However, such a rebuttal implies that some of the postulates used in the theorems are false or meaningless when applied to real democratic procedures. An outright rejection of the relevance of the theorems should be based on a criticism of some specific, identifiable suppositions¹.

The milder version of this criticism is that we do not exactly know the relevance of the theorems, and that empirical evidence for their relevance is missing (on these empirically-grounded doubts, see Chamberlin et al. 1984; Feld and Grofman 1992; Radcliff 1994; Green and Shapiro 1994, ch. 6). Here, the sceptics certainly have a point. Apart from the path-breaking studies of William Riker (1982), there are very few empirical studies on majority cycles or strategic voting in actual, politically important situations. It is an obvious weakness of social choice studies that the examples used are almost invariably hypothetical, simulated, or produced in laboratory conditions. The few examples taken from real life tend to be either politically insignificant or merely anecdotal. The standard answer to this criticism is that actually used decision mechanisms tend to conceal the underlying anomalies. However, if majority cycles and significant strategic voting are common in the real life, it should not be impossible to infer their presence at least in some important cases.

In a series of articles (Lagerspetz 1993a, Lagerspetz 1993b, Lagerspetz 1996b) I have tried to find some real life examples. I have studied one particular example: how cycles and strategic voting have influenced the Finnish presidential elections. If my results are correct, cycles sometimes do appear in real life, in cyclical situations the strategic calculations of politicians play the decisive role, and even majority winners are sometimes rejected because of the strategies adopted by the decision-makers. In the light of this evidence, the problems dealt with the social choice theory are, in this particular context, of extreme importance. Given the crucial

position of the President in the Finnish politics, one cannot understand the recent political history of Finland without grasping at least such basic concepts of social choice as majority cycle or strategic voting. The question is, of course, how far these results can be generalized to apply to other situations. However, after these findings, it is not possible to say that the phenomena discussed in the social choice theories are simply non-existent or irrelevant.

But what it actually is that makes the results of social choice potentially disturbing? Consider the oldest and best known result: the possibility of a majority cycle. In a cyclical situation there exists majorities preferring an alternative A to B, B to C and C to A. This has at least the following consequences:

- (1) In a cyclical situation, there is, for every possible political outcome, some coalition of actors who jointly prefer some other outcome and have a power to get it. Thus, we can have endless cycling over political outcomes, unless it is halted by some external factor.
- (2) Electoral competition between power oriented political parties or candidates cannot lead into equilibrium, for any selected platform can be defeated by some other – and the outcome of electoral competition is intrinsically unpredictable and arbitrary.
- (3) Collective decisions depend on (a) the choice of the voting procedure, (b) the strategies adapted by the voters and (c) the order in which the alternatives are voted on. An interplay of institutional and strategic factors may determine the outcome, even when the cycles are absent.
- (4) Social choices from varying agendas vary in an erratic and unreasonable fashion. The outcomes can be affected by adding or removing alternatives. In principle, those responsible for formulating the agenda may produce whatever outcome they like. In practice, they inevitably have a decisive power in at least some situations.

These consequences are bound to be important for any democratic theorist who wants to defend democracy on the basis that it connects political decisions, and the opinions, interests, values, or choices

of the electorate in some systematic way. It does not matter whether democracy is approved because it reveals the general will (Rousseau), or satisfies individual interests in an optimal way (Bentham), or maximizes freedom (Kelsen), or individual autonomy (Graham 1982), or represents a fair compromise (Singer 1973). If the decisions produced by democratic procedures are arbitrary, or highly sensitive to strategic calculations, or dependent on the details of the chosen procedure, all these justifications are problematic.

Riker's Challenge: Liberalism vs. Populism

William Riker's *Liberalism Against Populism* (1982) is certainly the most important attempt to combine the social-choice approach with a normative study of democracy. Most of the work on the subject done after 1982 consists of reactions arising by Riker's pioneering study. In his work, Riker tries to show that because of the logical properties revealed by the social choice theories, the democratic procedures tend to produce results which are arbitrary in the sense defined above. The fundamental normative implication of his work is this:

Outcomes of voting cannot, in general, be regarded as accurate amalgamations of voters' values. Sometimes they may be accurate, sometimes not; but since we seldom know which situation exists, we cannot, in general, expect accuracy. Hence we cannot expect fairness either. (Riker 1982, 236)

Thus, the lack of *fairness* is the central problem. Riker believes that his conclusion has important consequences for our normative theories of democracy. He claims that there are two influential and fundamentally incompatible justifications for democratic institutions. Both are based on certain interpretations of current democratic practices; both also formulate certain ideals of democratic society. One is the *populist justification*. According to it, democracy is fundamentally a matter of finding and implementing the will of the people. All deviations from this norm are, at least *prima facie*, undemo-

cratic and unjust. The most reliable way of finding the will of the people is to use the simple and unlimited majority rule. This omnipotence of majorities can be justified in different ways: it can be based on metaphysical and collectivistic notions of self-government, or on an epistemic belief that majorities are generally right in moral issues. It can also be based on a relativistic background supposition that in the world of conflicting opinions there is no guide on matters of social morality except the opinion of the majority, or, finally, on the (fallacious) inference that the maximization of individual interests, freedom, or autonomy leads to majoritarian conclusions. (Riker 1982, 11-16; Riker 1992, 102-3)

The liberal justification, according to Riker, is that democratic institutions are simply the most reliable means for modern societies to prevent tyranny and to protect the most important social value, individual freedom. The results produced by democratic institutions do not have any deeper meaning or justification; it is the long-run consequences of the general system which provides the justification for individual decisions. The democratic institutions have made permanent use of tyrannical power impossible precisely *because*, as the Arrow theorem and related results show, they tend to work in a random and arbitrary way. (Riker 1982, 241-6) His example is the fate of the late Mrs. Gandhi. During the Emergency Rule, she tried to extend her (and the Congress') power far over the limits allowed by liberal democracy. She was, however, ousted by a coalition of enemies united only in their opposition against her. The coalition was unable to govern, and Congress returned to power, but Mrs. Gandhi's attempt to establish a form of elected dictatorship was defeated. (Riker 1982, 244) Thus, the importance of the results produced by the social choice theories is that they demonstrate the superiority of the liberal conception of democratic institutions.

There are several problems in Riker's presentation of democratic theories. Some critics have challenged Riker's notion of "populism". It has been claimed that the notion is actually a straw man. This critique parallels an earlier discussion raised by Joseph Schumpeter's great work *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. In Schumpeter's case, many critics of his elitist interpretation of democracy claimed that its target, the "classical theory of democracy"

was an arbitrary construct (Pateman 1970, 17-18).

There is some truth in both accusations. Neither Schumpeter's "classical theory" nor Riker's "populism" exist as well defined theories. Nevertheless, both contain some elements common to many important theories, and both make explicit some suppositions generally shared by politicians, journalists, and citizens in democratic countries. Everyday political rhetoric is full of "populist" and "classical" claims, and not only in the Western democracies. The individual decisions and general policies of the State authorities are said to respect or not to respect the Will of the People. Elections and referenda are taken as expressions of that will. Oceans of ink are spilled in discussing whether certain particular institutions (direct vs. indirect elections of Presidents, proportional vs. non-proportional representation, representative institutions vs. referenda) genuinely allow the expression of the popular will. All this discussion and propaganda is meaningless, if Riker's account of democracy is correct. At least in this sense, Riker's "populism" is an important viewpoint, a more influential one than the sophisticated formulations of political philosophers.

However, in constructing his notion of populism, Riker confuses two theses. According to the *moderate thesis*, the will of the people exists at least in some situations and can be discovered by democratic procedures. Furthermore, when it exists, it has a normative significance. The will of the people has a *prima facie* force which has to be weighed against other considerations such as moral rights, the rule of law, the international commitments of the state and so on. Thus, such constitutional limitations of majority rule as supra-majoritarian requirements, bicameralism, constitutional review, or executive veto, are justifiable and even necessary. The moderate thesis is compatible with the traditional liberal-democratic position - the position adopted by, say, the Federalist authors, Benjamin Constant, or Kant. Consider the following formulation of both democratic and liberal principles taken from Constant's *Principes de politique*:

Our present constitution formally recognizes the principles of the sovereignty of the people, that is the supremacy of the general will over any particular will. Indeed this principle cannot be contested. (...) But it is not true that society as a whole has

unlimited authority over its members. (...) The assent of the majority is not enough, in any case, to legitimate its acts: there are acts that nothing could possibly sanction. (Constant 1815/1988, 175-7)

The traditional liberal-democratic doctrine was a compromise between populist principles and the principle of individual liberty, not an outright rejection of the former. According to the tradition, the meaningful will of the people exists at least in some cases; when it exists, it should be implemented, unless it is incompatible with other basic values.

The more *extremist* version of the popular will thesis is simply that an unambiguous expression of the will of the people should always be decisive; consequently, the best political system is a system which always realizes the popular will. Direct majoritarian democracy is the ideal; its limitations are inherently undemocratic, and justifiable only by practical necessities. In every important issue, the popular will exists, and is accurately revealed by the correct voting method. This is populism in its pure form².

Riker claims to be loyal to the traditional liberal theory, and up to a point, he follows the tradition. Like traditional liberals, Riker sees the various restrictions on majority rule – checks and balances like federalism, bicameralism, supra-majoritarian decision rules, executive vetoes or judicial review – as important, and instrumentally as valuable, as the democratic institutions themselves. The difference between the traditional liberal justification and Riker's version is that traditional liberals nevertheless believe that majoritarian institutions have a disposition to punish bad rulers and reward good ones, that democratic institutions make rulers *accountable* to the public. Therefore, the will of the people still has a role in traditional liberal theories. The notion of accountability is meaningful only if elections can be interpreted as reliable expressions of public opinion. Riker, however, believes that majoritarian institutions treat all rulers with equal arbitrariness. This difference is an important one. The claim that democratic decisions have no deeper meaning is almost as disturbing for a traditional liberal as for a radical democrat. Indeed, it seems that the recent position of Riker (see Riker 1992) is less radical (and, I shall argue, less coherent) than the position adopted in his

earlier work.

Actually, the limitations on majority rule favoured by Riker do not, as such, protect individual liberty. Such devices as the executive veto, bicameralism or supramajoritarian decision rules have one thing in common. They are *non-neutral* – they all favour the *status quo*, whatever that happens to be. In a basically liberal state, they tend to uphold the liberal *status quo*. In earlier centuries, they worked for the basically illiberal ruling classes – e.g. for the slave-owners of the antebellum South³.

The early "liberals", e.g. Locke, Paine or Jefferson, saw limitations on popular sovereignty as the last defences of the aristocracy. After the French Revolution, liberals began to see the tyranny of the majority as the main danger to individual liberty.

An anti-majoritarian constitution, however, is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for a (reasonably) stable liberal regime. Great Britain has, in any international comparison, a good liberal record, but it has no written constitution at all, and the majority in the Lower House of the Parliament is legally omnipotent. In contrast, most Latin American countries adopted their basic political institutions from the USA; the executive veto, bicameralism, constitutional review and federalism are often included in their constitutions. Their history, however, has not been very liberal nor very stable. I am not claiming that formal constitutions do not matter but only that their effect on political processes is much more complicated than constitutional theorists in general, or Riker and his followers in particular, seem to suppose. Probably the most important factor is the degree of consensus on the constitution itself. The Weimar constitution and the Lebanese agreement in 1943 were both rather explicit "social contracts", and, originally, were seen as major steps toward stable liberal systems in countries with an illiberal past. *Ex post facto*, it is easy to point out the inherent defects of those constitutions, but less easy to show that some other constitutional formula would have saved the countries from catastrophe. In the German case, many have argued that a less majoritarian constitution might have prevented the collapse of the Weimar Republic, in the Lebanese case it seems obvious that the veto power possessed by the political groups blocked all roads to peaceful reform.

The fundamental normative problem with anti-majoritarian devices is not that they are anti-majoritarian but that, due to their non-neutral character, they seem to be *unfair*. They do not treat all participants of a democratic process in an equal way⁴. The arbitrary nature of majoritarian methods is replaced by an in-built bias for conservative minorities. Riker's more recent contribution (Riker 1992) makes the problem obvious. After discussing the traditional problem of majority tyranny, Riker labels as "tyrannical" all situations in which there is no obvious majority supporting the decisions – i.e., when the preferences form a majority cycle (Riker 1992, 104-5). The non-tyrannical alternative is to select the *status quo* in such cases (110-13). This rhetoric is potentially inconsistent with the position adopted in *Liberalism Against Populism*. In the latter work, his point was that in cyclical situations *no* deep moral meaning could be attached to the aggregated results. We cannot say that the right thing to do is always to respect the will of the majority, for there is no unambiguous way to construct the will. If cycles are common, the populist requirement always to respect the will of the majority becomes useless. But neither is it reasonable to say that if a particular alternative included in the top majority cycle is selected, the decision is a morally wrong one unless it is the *status quo* solution. According to Riker's original (1982) theory, a *status quo* solution is as much or as little tyrannical as any other solution when it is included in a top cycle. Political decisions should be judged as tyrannical or non-tyrannical, not in terms of the popular will, but in terms of how well they respect individual liberty.

However, when the *status quo* alternative is *not* in the top (simple majority) cycle, there is some reason to call a decision which nevertheless selects this alternative as "tyrannical". At least some anti-majoritarian devices, e.g. supra-majoritarian decision rules, have such an effect. But even a method which selects the *status quo* alternative only when it is in the top cycle may look tyrannical if cycles are common and if the *status quo* is usually supported by the same groups. The idea that there is something inherently liberal or antityrannical in antimajoritarian devices is dependent on two suppositions, namely (1) that the *status quo* is in accordance with the liberal principles, and (2) that the decisions determined by the

antimajoritarian rules are on issues central to the liberals. The liberal defence of rules which favour the *status quo* is not dependent on the problem posed by the possibility of cycles.

The contrast made by Riker between American and British politics is revealing this context. Riker condemns the instability resulting from the combination of parliamentary omnipotence and the disciplined two-party system characteristic of British politics (Riker 1992, 114). We may or may not agree with him on this, but the instability he discusses need not be an instance of the cyclical instability analysed in the social choice theories – it may well result from the existence of clear legislative majorities, not from their absence. The British government may have switched back and forth on nationalization issues not because the majorities were cyclical, but because there have been unambiguous legislative majorities for and against nationalization in different periods. Hence, the changes in the British politics may accurately reflect changes in the opinions of the voters. The existence of "instabilities" of this type may be an argument against simple majority rule, but not for the reasons emphasized by Riker.

In the United States, Riker says, it is much more difficult to change general policy than in Britain, but when the change is made, it is likely to be irreversible. He provides two examples. One major change was the New Deal, another was "in civil rights in the period 1957-65" (Riker 1992, 115). The latter example is a surprising one. Should we really see it as evidence of the anti-tyrannical and pro-liberal nature of the American political institutions that, after the Civil War, it took almost a hundred years to secure full political rights for the black population? On the contrary, the example can be used to illustrate how such anti-majoritarian institutions like federalism may effectively work for local tyranny – a point made by Riker himself in an earlier work (Riker 1964, 152-55)⁵.

Finally, we may add that Riker's recommendation – that at least in cyclical cases, the right thing to do is to choose the *status quo* – creates new incentives for strategic voting. For under such rule, those wanting to defend the *status quo* are tempted to misrepresent their preferences as if there were a majority cycle.

My conclusion is that different institutional ways of solving the coherence problems of majoritarian institutions *are* potentially prob-

lematical for all democrats, not just for "populists". Either they exclude alternatives from discussion and decision, as two-party systems and yes-no-referenda do, or they treat alternatives in an unfair way by favouring the status quo, as supra-majoritarian rules and multicameralism do. In different ways, both methods are likely to produce "non-decisions" which favour certain groups in society by excluding potential alternatives. The fundamental normative problem created by the impossibility results is not the incoherence of the notion of popular will; it is rather that all institutional solutions for solving or limiting the actual incoherence of political decisions seem to violate our intuitions of fairness or equality. *Prima facie*, this is a problem for traditional liberals as well as for populists and egalitarians. A liberal, unlike a populist, is willing to remove certain issues from the normal majoritarian procedures. But as far as a liberal is also committed to political fairness, he or she has to see this as a compromise between two partially incompatible sets of values. The liberals share with the populists the fundamental presumption that the will of the people should have a decisive role in politics; consequently, there has to be a reliable and normatively acceptable means of finding out what the will is. Thus, both the populists and the liberals are eager to explain the problem away.

A Populist Answer to Riker

In his recent book, Torbjörn Tännsjö (1992) explicitly challenges Riker's critique of populism. Tännsjö performs a useful task by showing that a "populist" defence of majoritarian institutions need not be built on collectivistic metaphysics or on the belief of the moral omniscience of majorities. His definition of a majoritarian system is built on two requirements:

- Suppose that there is a set of policy alternatives: X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n .
In a majoritarian democracy
- (1) if it is the will of the majority that X_i is implemented, then X_i is implemented *because* it is the will of the majority, and

(2) if (counterfactually), some other alternative X_j were to be the will of the majority, then X_j would be implemented because it is the will of the majority. (Tännsjö 1992, 16-17)

These requirements are needed to establish that the majority really has the power; that its will is not implemented because it happens to correspond to the will of a ruler. There is no need to suppose that the alternative selected by the majority is always the best one. Nor is it required that the will of the majority always picks a unique alternative. It may well be that the will of the majority only limits the set of acceptable alternatives to some subset of alternatives. Tännsjö compares the problems of cyclical majorities to that created by a tied vote (Tännsjö 1992, 21). In both situations, there is no obvious solution derivable from the majority principle itself, but this fact need not disturb us. For Tännsjö, it is enough that whenever the will of the people exists, it is implemented, and that the method used in cases where no such will exists determines the outcome *only* in those cases. For example, if the chairperson has the power to break the tie, the outcome is not determined by the will of the people in tied situations, but there is nothing inherently undemocratic in that. The situation is not different in cases where a majority cycle is broken by some institutional method.

One might remark that even a method of breaking ties may sometimes be an important source of power. Its importance depends on the empirical question of how common the tie situations are. (Consider the power of the Centrist parties in multi-party systems as tie-breakers.) Similarly, the importance of the question of how our decision procedures behave during the presence of cycles depends on the frequency of the cycles and on the importance of the issues decided on. If cycles are omnipresent, and if there is an institutional cycle-breaker, the latter becomes a dictator.

Tännsjö seems to claim that it does not really matter how the cycles are broken. He has, however, a formal criterion for voting systems:

It should be noted that majoritarian democracy, as here defined, is consistent with the use of many different voting methods. Some-

thing all voting methods consistent with majoritarian democracy have in common, however, is that, if, in a situation, there exists a unique 'Condorcet winner', that is a unique alternative that can beat all the other alternatives in a simple majority vote, then this alternative is selected as the winner. (Tännsjö 1992, 28)

Thus "the will of the majority" is equated with the existence of a *Condorcet winner*. Tännsjö seems to be unaware of the consequences of his position. Several procedures actually in use in democratic countries do not satisfy this criterion – neither the succession procedure used in many parliaments, nor the plurality, the plurality run off, the alternative vote, the approval and the Borda methods used in elections (see Nurmi 1987, ch. 5.). The standard systems of proportional representation are equally defective in this respect (see van Deemen 1993). Unlike Riker, Tännsjö clearly selects one possible normative requirement as the decisive one. After making this move, however, he seems to be willing to consider the unanimity rule as an acceptable alternative to majoritarian democracy (Tännsjö 1992, 41-3, 63-71, 93-4), although it does not satisfy his favourite criterion. If both majority and unanimity rules may be compatible with Tännsjö's version of populism, what is wrong with systems which are in some sense "between" them – e.g., the liberal institutions favoured by Riker? Ultimately, Tännsjö supports majoritarian institutions, not because they are fair, but because they provide a 'natural' solution to many conflicts (Tännsjö 1992, 35). This is not very helpful.

A Liberal Answer to Riker

Charles Beitz' work *Political Equality* probably contains the most sophisticated treatment of the notion of political fairness found in contemporary literature. In his book, Beitz devotes a whole chapter to the Arrow-Riker problems (Beitz 1989, ch.3). Beitz is a committed liberal. He accepts the basic points made by Riker against the populist (or, as Beitz says, the "popular will") theories. He agrees

with Riker that "the appearance that social decisions lack 'meaning' is simply an artifact of adopting a conception of 'meaning' that is inapposite in the social realm" (Beitz 1989, 71). The apparent absence of meaning in some situations does not constitute a problem, because social decisions do not have meanings derivable from individual preferences.

Indeed, Beitz' conclusions seem to be even stronger than those of Riker. In his book, Riker still gives certain normative standards for methods of decision-making, and rejects some methods actually used because they give too perverse a response in some situations (Riker 1982, 111-13). We can still say that, in terms of individual preferences, some methods give normatively wrong results. Beitz, however, seems to reject the whole notion of the fair treatment of political preferences:

in the weak sense, the resolution of a matter of social policy might be said to be 'based on' individual preferences just in case there is *some institutional connection* between the expressed political preferences of the people and the policies carried out by the government. (...) As a definitional matter, the concept of democracy, or 'rule by the people' embodies only the weak view. (Beitz 1989, 55-6; emphasis here)

...it appears that the choice among procedures must be based on considerations other than the procedure's tendency to yield outcomes that accord with the popular will. (p. 72)

In general, the defense of majority rule need not claim more than that, suitably constrained, it enables citizens to reach political decisions on the basis of adequately informed deliberation and in a way that avoids predictable forms of injustice. (p. 66)

It is plausible to accept the view that in the selection of a decision procedure different moral and prudential considerations can be relevant. These considerations are necessarily bound to contexts. For example, the problem of choosing a decision-procedure is not relevant in democratic contexts only. Private firms, public organiza-

tions and international associations need decision-procedures, but, in these cases, a procedure's ability to realize the "popular will" is not even a potentially relevant selection criterion. "Adequately informed deliberation" and the exclusion of "predictable forms of injustice" are nevertheless relevant even in these contexts.

However, in municipal political contexts we do have intuitions concerning the fairness of alternative procedures which are stronger than Beitz' "weak sense". In some actual cases the "institutional connection" between preferences and decisions is such that we do not hesitate to call the used methods as *unfair*. For example, aristocratic upper chambers with significant power, unequal distributions of voting power, and gerrymandered constituencies have generally been seen as unfair. They are seen as unfair because, while there is an "institutional connection", even a "predictable and consistent relationship" between the expressed political preferences and the policies carried out, that relationship is an inadequate one. To take a specific example, the electoral laws of Mussolini's Italy, which gave a two-thirds share of all parliamentary seats to the plurality winner, might "enable people to reach political decisions on the basis of adequate information". If the government, unlike that of Mussolini, is willing to respect the constraints of such a procedure, "predictable forms of injustice" could be avoided even in this system. Nevertheless, most people would consider Mussolini's procedure unfair. They have these intuitions because, even if the "will of the people" is a vague and ambiguous notion, some procedures are likely to connect individual votes and collective outcomes in way which violates even the vague and uncertain limits drawn by the concept.

Thus, when accepting Riker's criticism of popular will theories, Beitz carries the criticism too far. Riker himself is quite willing to criticize some decision procedures for their unfair treatment of preferences (1982, 99-113). He does not say that we cannot evaluate the fairness of different methods, but only that, in the presence of three or more policy alternatives, there is no *uniquely* fair method. For example, the ability of a procedure to select a "Condorcet winner" is only one among many possible criteria. This allows for the existence of many procedures which are easily classifiable as unfair. (On different criteria, see also Nurmi 1987.)

Beitz, the liberal, and Tännsjö, the populist, are in agreement that Riker's problem is not a serious one. Tännsjö avoids it by making one possible principle of fairness – the Condorcet criterion – decisive, while Beitz takes the opposite route and claims that the fairness of the decision-procedures employed is not a meaningful problem at all. Both responses are related to ideological arguments. Tännsjö wants to defend a Utopian form of socialism; Beitz tries to show the fundamental fairness of the American political institutions.

However, Beitz recognizes that many other principles we use in evaluating decision procedures do presuppose a general *belief* in the existence of a "predictable and consistent relationship" between expressed preferences and decisions (1989, 74). We can add that they may also presuppose a general belief in the *fairness* of the procedures. For example, people generally think that power should be equally distributed, and they support existing democratic procedures partly for this reason. This is relevant for the various defences of democracy. We may, for example, believe that participation in democratic politics educates citizens and maintains civil virtues (Mill 1861/1977, ch. 3.; Pateman 1970, 42-3); in his more recent article, even Riker accepts a version of this defence (Riker 1992, 110). Democratic institutions may make both the people and the culture better, more civilized, more reflective and more tolerant. But these indirect beneficial effects are likely to be dependent on the general and shared belief that democracy is *directly* in the interests of citizens, that it *really* gives them power to influence decisions and distributes this power in a fair way. People do not participate in politics in order to become more virtuous but in order to realize their ideals and interests. It is easy to find analogies: a novelist may write better books if she falls in love, but she cannot decide to fall in love in order to become a better novelist. She writes better books simply because her life has acquired a meaning other than writing books. Similarly, the good effects of democracy emphasized by the participation theorists are produced only because citizens' do believe that democratic participation is meaningful for other reasons. If the outcomes of democratic processes are bound to be meaningless from the participating citizens' point of view, there is no alternative to cynicism. Surprisingly, Tännsjö seems to be willing to accept this conclusion:

In the final analysis what speaks in favour of majoritarian democracy is not that it engenders political authority (probably there does not exist any such thing as political authority) but the fact that, in many situations where this is a good thing to have, it engenders a *belief* in political authority. (Tännsjö 1992, 61; emphasis in original)

Thus, for Tännsjö, majoritarian democracy is ultimately a Noble Lie. My conclusion is that the results proved in the theories of social choice are relevant for both liberal and populist theories of democracy. Neither Riker nor his liberal and populist opponents have been able to accommodate the results in a satisfying way. The problem remains.

Rationality Reformulated: Deliberative Democracy

The idea of "deliberative democracy" is an appealing alternative to "economic" theories of democracy in general and to Riker's interpretation in particular. At least some versions of it are clearly influenced by the discourse ethics of Jürgen Habermas, but the basic idea can also be found in the works of such English Idealists as Sir Ernest Barker. Thus, it does not easily fit Riker's division between "populist" and "liberal" theories. According to the deliberative conception, democracy is not, or at least it should not be, just a method of aggregating pre-existing preferences. Rather, it is a specific way of forming and revising opinions (which may or may not be expressed as rankings over alternatives). It is discussion, not voting, that is central in democracy. Consequently, it is the Habermasian communicative rationality, not the instrumental rationality of economists and of utilitarians, which should govern democratic processes.

For some authors, this is enough to show that Riker's and Arrow's considerations are normatively irrelevant. It may well be that politicians in the actual world see themselves as just strategic players trying to maximize given interests. This only shows that actual

democratic practices are morally imperfect, but, then, they should be improved – and the social choice models are a part of the problem, not of the solution. At worst, the strategic modelling of political processes may itself maintain and encourage instrumentalist thinking in politics. The deliberative conception of democracy, while being empirically inadequate, shows us a way out of this predicament. Moreover, even in the real world, the instrumentalist picture never tells the full truth about politics.

How is communicative rationality supposed to solve the problem in an ideal world? In a simplified form, the answer is something like this. In the real world, discussion is always limited by ideological distortions, particular interests, social inequality, and even by naked repression of opinions. In the ideal world governed by the rules of communicative rationality, the participants in discussion would have only a single aim, namely to find a rational solution to the practical and theoretical problems. Hence, they would use only the force of argument, and accept statements and policy prescriptions only for rational reasons. The Habermasian supposition is that ideally rational individuals, discussing in an ideal communication situation, would reach a rational agreement on any given issue. Moreover, this is not just a utopia; for we all, as sincere participants in discussion, have implicitly accepted the norms of communicative rationality and the commitment to the search for a rational consensus. In our everyday disputes we often violate these requirements, but they are binding on us nevertheless.

This theory is an appealing one. It possesses the charming simplicity of all great rationalistic programmes. However, its implications for democratic theory are far from clear. Like "populist" theories, it sees the existing democratic institutions as imperfect compromise solutions. Like many liberal theories, it sees unanimity as the ideal. What we usually have in the real world is a majority consensus based on a less than rational acceptance. The first problem in the theory is why should we suppose that, lacking a rational unanimity, majoritarian democracy is the second best? There are important differences inside the theory of deliberative democracy. James F. Bohman (1990, 99, 107-8) seems to believe that the deliberative conception solves the Arrow-Riker problem of the coherency of

majority rule. Joshua Cohen (1989, 28) and David Miller (1992) make more modest claims. Their basic point was already made by Kenneth Arrow himself: "If voters acted like Kantian judges, they might still differ, but the chances of coming to an agreement by majority decision would be much greater than if voters consulted egoistic values only". The deliberative conception, when generally accepted, creates such a situation. The stronger version of the conception is aptly formulated by Jon Elster:

The core of the theory, then, is that rather than aggregating or filtering preferences, the political system should be set up with a view to them by public debate and confrontation. The input to the social choice mechanism would then not be the raw, quite possibly selfish or irrational, preferences that operate in the market, but informed or other-regarding preferences. Or rather, there would not be any need for an aggregating mechanism, since a rational discussion would tend to produce unanimous preferences. (Elster 1989, 112)

As Elster himself admits, this sounds rather Utopian. But the problem is a deeper one. The belief behind this view is that ideally rational human beings in an ideal situation are bound to agree on facts *and* values. This, as I said, is a very strong version of rationalist optimism. The usual criticism of this is directed against supposed agreement on values. As Bohman remarks, many political scientists tend to be moral non-cognitivists. They believe that values are ultimately subjective, based on personal choices or emotions. In such theories, rational agreements on values and ends become impossible.

We need not accept such a view on human values. We may admit that morality is potentially a subject of rational discussion and agreement. Morally and politically relevant disagreements among people are not, however, always due to their different moral viewpoints. Consider a disagreement on energy policy. Suppose that all decision makers agree on the most important values relevant to the decision: a certain amount of energy has to be produced, fatal risks should be avoided, the protection of the environment is important, costs should be distributed according to some just scheme, etc. Sup-

pose that the decision-makers are communicatively rational. Nevertheless, they remain as human beings, with limited knowledge and a limited capacity to process knowledge. Is there any inherent necessity that, when faced with the same empirical evidence and the same arguments, they would agree on the possible risks of a major nuclear accident, the probability of the greenhouse effect, or the feasibility of alternative ways of producing energy in the future? If not, if even perfectly benevolent and communicatively rational human beings may end up making different judgements, then the rational consensus does not solve the riddle of politics, not even in the ideal case. To put it more picturesquely: if there were several Gods, all benevolent and omniscient, they would necessarily agree between themselves on every issue. In a society of mere angels, however, its benevolent but not omniscient members have to take vote or use some other "aggregating mechanism". There is still room for disagreement and the results of social choice theories are, in principle, still relevant. Of course, as Albert Weale says, "the paradoxes would not be seen as the proof that the popular will was a meaningless concept, but as revealing the as yet unresolved imperfections of a process of discussion that characterized an adequate concept of collective choice" (Weale 1992, 215). But in a society of imperfect beings there may be no way of solving these imperfections⁶.

Other theorists of deliberative democracy (e.g. David Miller and Joshua Cohen) are more modest in their claims. If democratic politics is a moral dispute in which participants are bound to honour certain standards in their argumentation, and are ready to revise their opinions when faced with reasonable arguments, the aggregation problem does not disappear, but it becomes less threatening. In a deliberative democracy, there are endogenous forces which pull towards agreement, and they are related to public discussion:

- (1) Public discussion removes misunderstandings and provides new information available for all. This make factual disagreements less probable.
- (2) Public discussion tends to eliminate narrowly self-regarding preferences which cannot be formulated in universalizable moral terms.

(3) "Discussion has the effect of turning a collection of separate individuals into a group who see one another as cooperators".

(Miller, 1992, 62)

(4) During the discussion, it is often revealed that there are several underlying policy dimensions. At least in some cases, these dimensions can then be treated separately, not as "political packages".

Reason (1) is a clear, and traditional, argument for democratic discussion; as my example on energy choices indicates, it is not always enough. Reason (3) is equally important. Its actual operation, however, depends on the nature of the political culture, and, ultimately, on the nature of the underlying political conflicts in a society. Quite often, binding agreements can be made only in closed rooms, not in public debates. Open, public discussion may actually aggravate the conflicts by forcing people to take a stand and to commit themselves to irrevocable positions⁷.

Reasons (2) and (4) deserve a separate treatment. All deliberative theorists emphasize reason (2) and claim that, when respected, it makes democratic agreements more likely. In this, they are opposing a long "realistic" tradition which begins from Hume and from the Federalists, perhaps even from Hobbes; in our times, it has been supported by Schumpeter and by other "revisionist" theorist of democracy (cf. Pateman 1970; Barber 1984 on the critique of these theories). According to this tradition, a certain selfishness is virtue in politics as well as on the market. To put it simply, when decision makers are quarrelling on money or power, one may find a satisfying compromise formula and reach something like an agreement. But people making strong moral claims are bound to disagree, because they see their values as absolutes and compromises as dishonourable. Thus, a certain amount of egoism and opportunism in politics may make peaceful solutions more likely.

In spite of the obvious connections between this "realist" tradition and the views of, e.g., Riker, the social choice theories do not generally support the "realist" conclusion. For decision-makers who are guided by rational self- (or group-)interest only, and who, consequently, see politics as a pure game of redistribution, are more likely

to produce cyclical majorities. If decision makers are just maximizing their own shares of some divisible good (e.g., money) they are bound to produce endless cycles which are solved only by some external (e.g., institutional) factor. In a quarrel between parties A, B and C, any agreement reached by two of the parties can be upset by a third. It is a major result of social choice theories that in politics there is no counterpart of Adam Smith's invisible hand. Arrow's own opinion was that moral politics, by filtering out purely self-regarding preferences, produces single-peaked preference profiles and makes cycles less likely – for example, by making the Right-Left - dimension all-important. If the existence of cycles is seen as an evil, there is a case for principled politics. But the traditional "realist" theory may still have a point: moral politics also makes serious conflicts more likely. As Riker says, single-peakedness does not prevent a civil war, but at least it guarantees that the war makes sense. (The reason why many civil wars do not make much sense is that the preferences of the parties are not single-peaked.)

Moreover, public debate does not automatically filter out all self-regarding preferences. It does not even compel politicians to mask self-serving demands as universal principles. Political bargains can also be made openly and publicly. Public discussion forces politicians to rely on moral justifications only if their general audience, their voters and supporters, expect that. If people in general see politics as a redistributive game played by rational (group) egoists, the publicity requirement does not change the basic situation. It may well be that the theories of social choice tend to maintain such a strategic view on politics – but from history we know that people, from the times of the ancient Athenians, are quite capable of accepting this kind of view without the aid of any "scientific" social theory.

Even Miller's point (4) goes against some received wisdoms. The "realist" tradition in politics stresses logrolling (combining several issues or dimensions in decisions) and unprincipled compromising as means of reaching stable agreements. Some authors (Tullock 1967) have tried to show that logrolling makes Arrow's theorem irrelevant in actual politics. Against this, social choice theorists have proved that methods like logrolling often tend to *produce* cyclical situations. Thus, if deliberative discussion discourages political pork-

barrel, it may indeed diminish the number of potentially paradoxical situations. Point (4), however, has its extra complications. The decision-makers need not agree on the separability of issues in a given situation. To take an example: for a supporter of the technocratic ideology, the energy issue may be just a matter of efficiency. For a supporter of the Greens, it is essentially linked with a comprehensive social programme. Or, to take another example, the Finnish Centre party is an agrarian movement which is notorious for its ability to create political packages which always contain some economic benefits for farmers. Its opponents usually regard this as extreme opportunism. A Centrist politician may, however, (sincerely or not) claim that for him or her these bargains are matters of principle: the most important ethical goal of the Centre is to protect the agrarian way of life and its ideals in an urban and market-dominated society, and the only way to do it is to ensure that the agrarian class gets its cut from every important economic decision. Political issues are separable or non-separable *from some point of view*, and there is no more reason to expect a consensus on the "meta-question" of which issues are separable than on the issues themselves.

The moderate case for deliberative democracy is dependent on contingent factors (see Knight & Johnson 1994). Public discussion, more intensive participation and more principled politics may lead to a consensus, or make the existing conflicts even deeper. This is not inconsistent with the claim that it may diminish the probability of paradoxical situations: the polarization of the political field removes the cycles, too. There may be other reasons for supporting the moderate ideal of deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy may, for example, improve the substantive quality of decisions.

Cycles Welcomed: Pluralist Democracy

Deliberative democrats are attracted by the idea of consensus. Unlike some economic liberals (see Buchanan and Tullock 1962), Conservatives (Calhoun) and anarchists (see Wolff 1976), they do not generally propose that majoritarian institutions should be replaced

by consensual institutions. Instead, they suppose that majoritarian institutions have, under suitable conditions, an inherent tendency towards greater agreement.

Deliberative democracy is not only partly incompatible with traditional liberalism; it is also partly incompatible with the modern version of democratic *pluralism* which has dominated empirically oriented political science, especially in the USA. Like traditional normative theorists, the empirically minded pluralists have largely neglected the results of social choice theory. However, in his path-breaking article, Nicholas Miller (1983) shows how some central issues discussed by the pluralist theorists are related to the results of the social choice theories. Both the social choice theorists and the pluralists are worried about the stability of politics. But, as Miller shows, they mean almost opposite things by "stability". For a social choice-theorist, "stability" is the absence of cycles in a given set of alternatives. For a pluralist, "stability" is a dynamic property of the system, essentially resulting from a peaceful competition of different groups. This competition prevents the rule of permanent majorities and creates temporary alliances just *because political preferences are often cyclical*. Those preference distributions which, in the social choice approach, are seen as the preconditions for the stability of decisions are precisely the conditions which make the systemic stability discussed in pluralist theories less likely. The most obvious case is the existence of a large and permanent majority. Its existence prevents bargaining and, according to the pluralists, is likely to alienate the minorities from the system. Single-peakedness is also seen as harmful. If all political decisions are made on one (say, the Right-Left) dimension only, there is much less room for compromises. The essential thing in a working pluralist system is that there should be no permanent losers and permanent winners. This can be ensured if preference profiles do not generally create transitive results. To quote Nicholas Miller:

precisely because social choice is *not* stable, i.e. not uniquely determined by the distribution of preferences, there is some range for autonomous politics to hold sway, and pluralist politics offers almost everybodys hope of victory. (Miller 1983, 743)

In my study on the Finnish presidential elections (Lagerspetz 1993b) I have tried to show how this mechanics worked in Finnish society in the thirties. In presidential elections, both in 1931 and in 1937, no clear Condorcet winner could be found in the electoral college. Indeed, in both cases there was probably a full Condorcet cycle in the set of the three main candidates (the set consisted of a Conservative, an Agrarian and a Liberal candidate). The cycle resulted from the fact that there were at least three partly independent political dimensions on which the candidates could be compared: the traditional Right-Left dimension, the constitutional dimension, and the dimension related to linguistic nationalism. In 1931 the Social Democrats, the largest group in the electoral college, supported the Liberal candidate. However, the Conservative candidate was elected; his election was the result of the interplay of the decision procedure (the plurality run-off) and the strategies adopted by the parties. After the election, the Social Democrats were excluded from the governing coalition for six years. Their permanent exclusion might have led to a dangerous polarization of society and to a situation comparable to, e.g., that in Austria in the early thirties. There, the polarization between the Right and the Left created civil unrest which first contributed to the emergence of an authoritarian government and then to the Nazi takeover.

In the Finnish presidential elections in 1937, the candidates were the same as in 1931, and even the distribution of seats in the electoral college was not radically different. This time, however, the Social Democrats made a compromise with the Agrarian Party and supported the Agrarian candidate (who was ideologically quite distant from the Social Democrats, and from their point of view, definitely worse than the Liberal candidate). With the help of the Social Democrats, the Agrarian candidate was elected. Thus, the Social Democrats became acceptable coalition partners for the Agrarians. In the long run, the result was the integration of the Social Democrats into Finnish society.

Some theorists of democracy – especially those with left-wing sympathies – have seen the pluralist theories just as one version of the "economic" interpretations of politics. For example, Benjamin Barber in his *Strong Democracy* claims that

pluralist democracy resolves public conflict in the absence of an independent ground through bargaining and exchange among free and equal individuals and groups, which pursue their private interests in a market setting governed by the social contract. (Barber 1984, 143)

In a footnote, Dahl, Downs, Arrow and Riker are all lumped together as "pluralists".

As a general description of the theory of, e. g., Dahl, Barber's statement is quite inaccurate. It is true that in the pluralist theories of democracy bargaining is a central element in the resolution of conflicts over public policy. It is also true that the bargainers are considered to be free, but not necessarily equal, groups. But there is no general supposition that the groups are pursuing their private interests only. What is assumed is that mutually beneficial compromises are possible, and this requires that the bargainers can compare the alternatives. There are not just good and bad, but also relatively good and relatively bad alternatives. Thus, the Finnish Social Democrats, in deciding to support the Agrarian candidate in the 1937 elections, could justify the bargain to themselves in ideological and moral terms. The Agrarian candidate was only their third-best alternative; nevertheless, his election at least ensured that the working-class was not permanently excluded from Finnish politics, and that at least some socially important reforms could be implemented.

This type of pluralism has several normative consequences. First, it provides an answer to the traditional liberal problem of majority tyranny. In a pluralist system majorities cannot tyrannize the minorities, for majorities are only coalitions of different minorities, and those minorities which are at the moment excluded from the ruling coalitions have a possibility of being included in the ruling coalition in the future. Thus, there is less need for supramajoritarian rules and for "checks and balances". In this sense, Riker is not a pluralist. Second, for the same reason, pluralism counteracts minority frustration. In a majoritarian democracy, minorities may become alienated not only because their basic rights are violated in a tyrannical way, but because all routine policy decisions are made against their will. The most obvious case is a system in which the majority party has an

ethnic or religious basis. In an ideally working pluralism this does not happen; there are cross-cutting loyalties. Finally, pluralism provides a partial solution to the problem of *intense preferences*. In a pluralist system, the fact that minorities having intense preferences in certain specific issues may be essential coalition partners for other groups ensures that intensity is at least sometimes taken into account in decisions. Thus, pluralist democracy is more fair than majoritarian democracy because it ensures some equality in outcomes.

The message of Miller's interpretation of pluralism is, then, that "the paradox" should be welcomed. The instability of individual decisions is important for the long-run stability of the democratic system. It also means that in pluralist conditions too strong anti-majoritarian constraints may be harmful. If collective preferences are generally intransitive, and if we follow Riker's advice and solve intransitivities by adopting methods of making decisions which favour the *status quo*, we may alienate anti-*status quo* minorities. This is the core of the old wisdom that constitutions should allow a certain flexibility. Supra-majoritarian rules (e.g. the *de facto* veto-right of the constitutional minorities in the former Yugoslavia and in Lebanon) make decisions "stable" in the sense of social choice theories. In the long run, however, they may make the entire system unstable by blocking all roads of peaceful reform.

The pluralist interpretation of intransitivities produces a form of defence for majoritarian institutions. Majoritarian institutions combine two virtues. If a very large majority supports some alternative, that alternative is usually selected. There is no reason to deny that a meaningful "will of the people" in the form of *near unanimity* may exist, at least under some conditions. When one exists, any democratic theory implies that it is at least *prima facie* binding. For example, at the moment there is no general consensus in former Socialist countries on basic policy issues. However, the will to change the system was a general one. There was no doubt that there existed a genuine will of the people on a significant political issue. Only majoritarian institutions can simultaneously guarantee that (1) whenever a clear will of the majority exists, it determines the outcome of social choice, and (2) when such a will does not exist, the decisions are not *systematically* biased against some groups. Minority rule

fails on both counts, supramajoritarian rules fail on the second count.

In effect, the acceptance of Miller's argument means that transitivity, as a normative requirement of social choice is rejected. There are two possible criticisms of this rejection. The first, presented by Peter H. Aranson (1989, 122-123) is this:

The problem with Miller's formulation is that he does not recognize... that as each (small) group receives its benefit in turn, all other groups will suffer. That is, if our description of rent seeking, a feature of pluralist politics, is essentially right, then the pluralist system gains the support of its citizens and maintains its stability by impoverishing them.

Aranson's argument can be understood by relating it to the general problem of intransitive preferences. The traditional argument for the irrationality of such preferences is, that a decision-maker preferring A to B, B to C, and C to A, becomes a "money pump". He can be exploited by giving him an opportunity to exchange C to B, B to A, A to C, etc. If he really acts according to his preferences, so runs the argument, he should be willing to pay some compensation in every exchange, and to go on endlessly. Some authors have rejected this "money-pump" argument in the individual case. An individual may foresee the consequences of the successive deals and refuse to accept them, even if his preferences are intransitive. (Schwartz 1986, 128-131) The argument made by Aranson is, in effect, that a collective decision-maker may actually work as a money-pump. In Miller's model, the general preference profile is often intransitive, and politics is a process of making and remaking alliances. In this process, money and power are continually redistributed among the political groups. This differs from the individual intransitivity case in two fundamental ways. Firstly: politicians do not pay from their own pockets. It is the taxpayers' money which is pumped out in the process. Secondly: even if they understand the situation and actually want to limit the extraction of private benefits from the public purse, they are in a collective action dilemma (Aranson 1989, 115-6). Everybody may benefit if the political redistribution process is constrained; at the same time, one group benefits

even more if it alone can use its negotiating power to get an extra share. Thus, the collective money-pump may well run forever unless there are external (e.g., constitutional) factors which can halt it.

There is another possible objection, which may force Miller at least to qualify his praise of intransitivities. Pluralist theories do not consider constitutional structures as important as they are traditionally considered in liberal theories, and also in Riker's theory. Instead of external checks – e.g. the separation of powers – they emphasize internal checks, social motivations. Ultimately, it is the shared will of most political groups to uphold the system, not the paper walls of a Constitution, which prevents modern democracies from degenerating into tyranny.

This theory is directly related to Miller's interpretation of the possibility of political cycles as a factor maintaining systemic stability. The cyclical movement in everyday politics ensures that most groups have some chances of being included in the winning majority coalitions. This, however, presupposes that there exists a "will of the people" *at the constitutional level*. A large majority has to support the democratic constitution and to agree that decisions made according to its provisions are binding. To quote R. A. Dahl, the leading pluralist:

The extent of consensus on the polyarchal norms, social training in the norms, consensus on policy alternatives, and political activity: the extent to which these and other conditions are present determines the viability of a polyarchy [Dahl's term for pluralist systems] itself and provides protections for minorities. The evidence seems to me overwhelming that in the various polyarchies of the contemporary world, the extent to which minorities are bedeviled by means of government action is dependent almost entirely upon non-constitutional factors... (Dahl 1956, 135)

Hence, we should distinguish normal political cycles from *cycles over constitutional or systemic alternatives*. The former type of "instability" may be a normal and healthy phenomenon in a pluralist society. The latter, however, may be lethal for democratic institutions. The most dramatic example of a constitutional cycle is the

politics of the ill-fated Weimar Republic in the late twenties and early thirties. Most historians of the era have implicitly recognized the existence of a cycle. In the Weimar politics, there were two important political dimensions. One was the traditional Right-Left dimension, the other consisted of the attitudes towards the legitimacy of the Republic itself. The German Nationalists on the Right, the Communists on the Left, and the National Socialists, who, in a sense, stood outside the traditional political division, all vehemently opposed the Republic. At the same time, the social and economic programmes of these groups had a very little in common. The other groups were joined in their support of the Republic, but equally divided in other political matters. This two-dimensionality produced the famous "negative majorities" – coalitions of mutually hostile elements who were able to bring down the ruling cabinet coalitions but unable to form new ones. Thus, the Communists, for example, were sometimes willing to join their forces with the National Socialists against the Centrist and Social Democratic parties. This fundamental instability, combined with the defects of the Constitution, brought down the Weimar system. (cf. Lepsius 1978)

The German example shows that (*pace* Tännsjö, Beitz and the pluralists) the question of *how* the cycles are actually broken is important for the stability of a political system. In the Weimar Republic in the early thirties, the parliamentary deadlocks produced by the "negative majorities" were solved by the intervention of the President. When no coalition could win the confidence Parliament, the President nominated "presidential cabinets" which often governed by using emergency powers. This practice probably saved the Republic on some occasions, but it may be argued that ultimately it destroyed the system by weakening its democratic legitimacy. By giving full responsibility to the President, it absolved the parties from responsibility.

In post-war Germany, the outside intervention of the President is replaced by the rule of "constructive confidence". This means that a cabinet can be dismissed only by replacing it by another cabinet. In effect, the constructive confidence rule works like the *status-quo* rule in the parliamentary amendment procedure: the *status-quo* remains in force until it is replaced by some definite alternative

accepted by the majority. (Lijphart 1984, 75) Both the Weimarian rule and the post-war rule are designed to produce a government even where no majority support can be found in Parliament. They guarantee that the method of making decisions is *decisive*, i.e. it produces *some* outcome in every possible case. The political consequences, however, differ radically. Under the Weimar system, when cycles were endemic, the cycle-breaking power of the President made the outcome dependent on the will of a single individual.

Thus, Miller's argument on the beneficial nature of the cycles requires a qualification. *At the constitutional level*, cycles are dangerous for stability. Cycles tend to appear at the constitutional level, when there are strong groups opposing the existing system so intensely that they are not willing to defend it against each other. There is some evidence that preference patterns of this type contributed to the rise of undemocratic governments in the twenties and thirties, and not only in Germany.

Ultimately, constitutional and other institutional factors affect preferences and *vice versa*. Political actors create and maintain political institutions according to their interests and values; but their preferences over various institutional solutions are partly dependent on the expected ability of the institutions to produce outcomes which satisfy their other preferences. The institutions may shape preferences, interests and values in different ways; a plurality system, for example, usually produces a two-party system by creating incentives to vote strategically, but it may also train the citizens to think of politics in terms of choices between two alternatives. In the long run, neither preferences nor institutions can be treated as fully exogenous. This creates not only methodological but also normative problems. By choosing their institutions, people involved in a constitutional choice partly choose their own future interests and values. This problem emphasizes John Rawls' important insight that the institutions of a just society should create motivations for its citizens to support it. In the long run, this may be the most important stability problem in democratic politics. For example, do the liberal institutions create anomic individuals who may become a prey for totalitarian movements? This is the claim made by some communitarian theorists as well as the theorists of the "mass society". These prob-

lems, however, are outside the scope of this essay. Certainly they show one important limitation of social choice analysis.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have argued that the problems found in the theories of social choice are relevant for normative justifications of democratic procedures. They are relevant because the postulates used in the derivation of the problems can be interpreted in terms of political ethics, and because the problematical situations do appear in real life (although they are not easy to detect). Thus, the problems cannot be wished away.

I have reviewed different attempts to answer the challenge posed by social choice results as interpreted by William Riker and his followers. None of the answers is entirely satisfying. In real life, these problems are solved by various institutional and non-institutional means, all these solutions are problematic for the normative point of view. This is equally true of William Riker's own proposals; they are also problematical, even in his own terms.

Nevertheless, we may agree with Hannu Nurmi: while "there does not seem to be any perfect voting procedure, there definitely are differences in degree between the procedures" (Nurmi 1984, 332). What is needed is a theory of democracy which would, among other things, help us to see the strengths and shortcomings of different methods of making decisions.

To take one example: many people believe that the methods of direct democracy are, at least sometimes, superior to the representative methods. For theorists of social choice, however, referenda are problematical devices. Either the alternatives voted on are reduced into two, or, then, we may get an ambiguous result (Lagerspetz 1996a). If we see referenda as a serious alternative, we should be able to answer to the following questions: (1) What would be the most appropriate voting procedure? (2) Which issues should be submitted to referenda? (3) Under what conditions is the result of a referendum morally binding? In order to find satisfactory answers,

we have to consider the normative, the logical, and the empirical aspects of the problems. The relevant theory can be created only by the joint efforts of philosophers and political scientists. Thus, we need more cooperation over the conventional borderlines of intellectual disciplines.

Notes

- ¹ For example, if we have reason to believe that in the politics of real life preference profiles are almost always *single-peaked* – roughly, it is not true that every alternative is considered as the worst one by some decision-makers – then the Arrow theorem has no bite.
- ² Nevertheless, this is *not* the version of populism supported by Rousseau or the Marxists, nor does it presuppose the illiberal conception of liberty criticized by Riker (1982, 12-13).
- ³ The antimajoritarian theory of John Calhoun (1953/1853) is, in this context, especially illuminating. Compare also with the proposal made in the South African constitutional discussions of using a 3/4 majority requirement in the Parliament in order to protect the priviledges of the white minority.
- ⁴ Consider a somewhat analogous problem: Suppose that a decision-making body almost always produces tied results. There is no majoritarian way of solving the problem. If the rule is that in tied situations the *status quo* should always win, the more conservative party has an unfair advantage. Tossing coins would be equally non-majoritarian but not unfair in the same way.
- ⁵ At least for free-market liberals, the example of Finland is also worthy of consideration. The Finnish constitution has contained stronger supra-majoritarian requirements than any other constitution in the Western world – for example the most important economic decisions had to be made only by 2/3 (or 5/6) majorities. These rules have certainly prevented the Left from implementing any nationalization programme of the British style. Arguable, the rules have also worked against the growth of the public sector. But they have not prevented its growth; and after the decision have been made, the new *status quo* has *also* been protected by the same rules. Thus the limitations of the power of simple majorities have worked on both directions. For this reason the Conservatives, who, since the original enactment of the constitution, have firmly defended the supra-majoritarian rules, finally agreed on the need to amend the system in 1991.

- ⁶ The idea that in ideal conditions, rational decision-makers are bound to reach a consensus, is actually a variation of the general rationalistic theme. Another variation of the same theme is the supposition made by many economists and game theorists: if decision makers have common prior probabilities and they share the same information, they are bound to make the same judgements.
- ⁷ Cf. the following comment: "Critics of 'secret diplomacy' have demanded public sessions on the assumption that full publicity is 'democratic' and promotes honesty, understanding and agreement. In reality, the reverse is more nearly true(...). Whatever the other evils of private sessions may be, they unquestionably facilitate compromise among divergent views – which is the *sine qua non* of success in every conference." (Schuman 1958, 192)

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Book Reviews

Moral Theories and the Concept of a Person

Jaana Hallamaa: The prisms of moral personhood. The concept of a person in contemporary Anglo-American ethics. Luther-Agricola-Society (= Schriften der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft 33), Helsinki 1994, 267 p.

Hallamaa asks in her study “how different kinds of moral theories imply the concept of a person, which kinds of concept of a person are included in such theories and finally, what significance the concept has for understanding the nature of moral theories” (5). The author’s *first* premise is moral language and the institution of morality cannot be explicated “without referring to human beings as moral persons” (5). In her eyes “ethical theories could, thus, be characterized as attempts to express what it is to live as a human being in a moral realm” (13) – or, as she says, “in other words, what it is to be a *moral person*” (13). Hallamaa’s *second* premise is “that we could clarify the nature of ethical theories by studying the concept of a person in them” (13). A *third* premise guiding her thought concerns the ‘nature’ of morality: “morality is a normative system of principles, rules, etc., the purpose of which is to direct people’s behaviour” (13 f.). Moral or ethical

theories can be examined from two “different perspectives” (14): as theoretical models they explain the institution of morality, and, from the second *normative* perspective, the theoretical model can be “developed into an auxiliary for moral reasoning” (14). With regard to this distinction Hallamaa refines her first and second premises and says that “the concept of a person is of relevance from both these points of view” (14). So, for her thinking, “the concept of a person occupies a central position as a theoretical and as a normative notion in the sense that there is some connection between the theoretical definition of the morally relevant, the model for moral reasoning and the concept of a person” (15). Hallamaa’s assumption is that “we can establish this link between the concept of a person and the basic theoretical and normative formulations of any moral theory if we can show that the concepts of a person explicable in moral theories corresponds with the manifest differences between different kinds of moral theories” (15). Her basic idea is that “we should find, to take an example, a utilitarian concept of a person, common to utilitarian moral theories, but different from the concept of a person which is manifest in contractarian models of moral thinking” (15). This, so she argues, “would show that ‘person’ is a central moral concept which is closely connected to the way different ethical theories understand the institution of morality” (15).

To realize her aim Hallamaa initiates an analysis of three different types of normative moral theory: utilitarian, contractarian and (modern) virtue theories. In the work at hand she discusses the utilitarian theories of Richard Brandt, Richard M. Hare and Derek Parfit (Part I), the contractarian theories of John Rawls, David Gauthier and Alan Gewirth (Part II), and the modern virtue theories of Philippa Foot, James Wallace, Martha Nussbaum, Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor (Part III). In the fourth and final part she makes some concluding remarks in regard to the concept of a moral person.

In what follows I won’t discuss in any detail Hallamaa’s analysis of these different ethical theories. In studying her book the reader might initially be worried in one particular respect: is it not a very ambitious, and *prima facie*, an overdrawn task to give an adequate analysis of so many complicated and sophisticated theories in one

single study? All of her target authors have been subject to many previous studies: the amount of literature devoted to discussing Rawls, Parfit, Hare or Taylor for example would fill an ordinary sized library. In stark contrast the bibliography of Hallamaa's study is extremely short. Thus one might suppose then that the reader could not hope to find an informed discussion in this respect. Indeed, reading her analysis one is unfortunately confirmed in this surmise: Hallamaa merely gives a kind of summary of the main features of the theories under study, whereby the reader finds no indepth analysis of more specific elements. Thus the strength of the present study doesn't lie here – it must instead, be found, if at all, in the perspective from which the author has chosen to analyse the above-named theories. In the face of these shortcomings I will limit my interest (and criticism) to discussing Hallamaa's three fundamental premises: (1) her concept of the institution of morality, (2) her concept of a person and (3) her understanding of the relation between moral theory and the concept of a person, which she concedes is central to her methodological approach. It should be clear from the outset, that these three topics are interconnected in various ways.

(1) *The institution of morality.* For Hallamaa the institution of morality has the concept of a moral person at its core. She defines morality as an action-guiding set of principles and rules. This ascribed "purpose" (13) of the institution of morality implies, for her, the explicit reference to "human beings as moral persons" (5). That is as such correct. But I think that one nevertheless has to make two qualifying critical remarks. The first one being, that a reduction of the institution of morality to norms and principles guiding personal action is far too restrictive. There is more to ethical life than that! In any case, it is far from evident that rules and principles are the most basic elements in ethical life, or must at all be considered in that way. My second critical qualification to Hallamaa's view of morality is that even if persons are the recipients of moral theories it simply doesn't follow that moral personhood is basic for having moral worth. And as far as moral theories tell us which aspects are morally relevant, it might be that the concept of a person turns out in fact not to be the core notion at all. If one begins with a Benthamian notion of suffering, it isn't obvious that "being a person" has in principle any

moral relevance. I am not denying that many moral theories, especially those of the contractarian tradition, are characterized adequately by Hallamaa's concept of morality. Clearly in these theories the concept of a person has a central status. But I can't find any explicit argument in her study which says that it is impossible to give an analysis of the institution of morality where norms of action and rules for the regulation of interpersonal conflicts have to be taken as the core of morality.

(2) *The concept of a person*. In Hallamaa's study the concept of a person is a central element. In analytical philosophy there are, ordinarily, some other concepts which belong together with the concept of a person: personhood, moral personhood, personal identity or narrative identity of persons, are obvious examples. Undoubtedly, there are many complex connections between these notions which have to be examined carefully if we are to grasp the function of this family of concepts in moral theories (cf. my "Meine Organe und Ich". Personale Identität als ethisches Prinzip im Kontext der Transplantationsmedizin." In: *Zeitschrift für medizinische Ethik* 42 (1996), S.103-118). Unfortunately though, Hallamaa doesn't distinguish them in her arguments. Indeed there are problems right from the start – title and subtitle of her book, for example, pose two immediate problems: the first is whether there is a distinction between nonmoral and moral personhood, as her title suggests: without the possibility of nonmoral personhood it would be useless to talk about "moral personhood" (why that is important, I will discuss briefly in the next section, as a key methodological problem arises here). In the subtitle of her book Hallamaa also speaks about the concept of a person. Here it would be essential to know how the concepts "person" and "personhood" are interconnected. Sometimes "person" is, for example, used as a predicate – "being a person". And in this way it comes close to "personhood". Sometimes "person" is used to designate an individual. This use is important if it comes to questions about the diachronic identity of persons as understood by Parfit. Unluckily Hallamaa's discussion of Parfit's theory is not convincing, because she conflates "personhood" and "person" without noticing that Parfit doesn't analyse the former (cf. my "Die Identität der Person: Facetten eines Problems. Neuere Beiträge zur Diskussion um personale

Identität". In: *Philosophische Rundschau* 42 (1995), S.35-59). One further source of problems is her use of the concept of personal identity. She conflates the diachronic identity of an individual, as Parfit analyses it, with the model of narrative identity which is enfolded in MacIntyre's or Taylor's philosophy. In doing this she once more misses the point of Parfit's arguments (cf. 234-237). I would agree that the morally relevant sense of personal identity must be analysed in terms of biographical or narrative models, where "identity" means something like a normative self-conception (I have called this "practical identity"). But this notion of identity has to be distinguished strictly from those questions which are discussed under the topic of personal identity, where conditions are looked for which determine when *a* at one point in time is identical to *b* at another point in time. This – as I have labelled it – "ontological identity" can also be important in ethical reasoning, especially in bioethical contexts (cf. my "Wann ist ein Mensch tot?" Zum Streit um den menschlichen Tod". In: *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 49 (1995), S.167-193). But this concept of identity functions in a very different way than the one particular to moral discourse.

(3) *Hallamaa's methodological approach.* Hallamaa's basic idea is quite convincing. Because personhood is central to the institution of morality, each moral theory has to say something about the concept of a person. Analysing the different theories in this respect we may find that in different theories different aspects of personhood are regarded as important. And so we may understand the different theories's concepts of morality by analysing the differences between their concepts of a person. Perhaps we will find some similarities between all theories belonging to one type and differences between the differing types of moral theories. Analysing the "utilitarian person" (100), the "contractarian person" (170) and the "person in virtue theories" (248) will allow us to understand – and explain – the differences between these types of moral theories. There is no doubt, that personhood is an important element in our moral life, and it is surely right, that the theories under consideration differ with respect to their respective understanding of personhood. Thus far Hallamaa's strategy seems to be quite attractive and convincing. But I think there is a hidden difficulty here which is apparent in the view implied

in the book's title: "The prisms of moral personhood". Speaking of "moral personhood" by means of the metaphor of a "prism" forces Hallamaa to presuppose that there is one basic, theory-neutral concept of moral personhood, which – like the light in a prism – enters the different moral theories. But do we really have such a concept?

Without presuming such a basic concept of moral personhood she would have had to say – as she does in fact – that there are only theory-indexed concepts: the utilitarian concept of moral personhood for example. Going about the matter in this way her methodological approach would lose all its force. All we would get were different theory-dependent concepts without a basic conceptual position against which to compare and evaluate the *adequateness* of the different theories. Avoiding this relativism of the concept of moral personhood Hallamaa must define what the basic concept of moral personhood is which as such would enter into the different theories. But this reader can't find any such normative concept in her book. Therefore it is impossible to decide the intended strength of her comparison. In her work as it stands, she can certainly show some of the basic differences between the models of moral personhood which can be found in virtue ethics, contractarian or utilitarian theories. But that is nothing particularly new. One way out of this dilemma, i.e., theory-dependence on the one hand and a missing basic notion on the other, would be to distinguish between a nonmoral concept of personhood and a moral one. In this way the first concept could be used as the basic notion and one could then go on to ask which features of personhood become morally relevant for different theories. But given *this* differentiation, the concept of moral personhood wouldn't remain the fundamental ground for moral theories; it would instead become a result, not the starting point of moral theory. Besides it remains unclear throughout Hallamaa's study whether there really is a morally neutral notion of personhood. Hallamaa herself touches on this difficult question at the end of her study: "Our conclusion brings us to a further question, beyond the scope of this study: does the concept of a person used in other than moral contexts have these characteristics? Is "person" always an equivocal, implicitly normative concept? Can we, as persons, ever speak about being a person without attaching some evaluative aspect to our speech?"

(257 f.) With respect to these questions of Hallamaa I would like to make three concluding remarks: firstly, there are other evaluative and normative aspects than moral ones; secondly, the description of a given moral practice isn't by itself a moral argument. And finally, these questions really are "beyond the scope of this study" (257). That is the case because they need to be addressed *before* Hallamaa's project can legitimately begin in the first place.

Michael Quante

Postmodern and Political Theory in a New Context

Tuija Pulkkinen: The Postmodern and Political Agency. University of Helsinki. Department of Philosophy, Helsinki 1996.

T*he Postmodern and Political Agency* deals with the complex crossing of some of the main issues of contemporary philosophy. First, the dispute between the modern and the postmodern as different and opposite modes of thought. Second, the search for a new conceptual web that is able to define politics in reference to the evident crisis of the classical model of democracy. And last but not least, the contribution of feminist theory to a radical reassembling of the theoretical and political categories involved in both questions.

The analysis is developed by Tuija Pulkkinen with a completeness which is rare in the critical literature. In fact, these different issues are usually discussed by authors from a specialistic and specific perspective. There are, namely, works on the modern and postmodern that ignore both political research and feminist theory. On the other hand, there are works on political theory that ignore feminism and postmodernity, or works on feminist theory that consider postmodernity but neglect the complexity of modern political

tradition. The result of these specialistic views is not only limitation typical of every specialism, but most of all it consists in an unavoidable misunderstanding of the different conceptual frameworks that, silently or explicitly, break the boundaries of the analysis.

The completeness of Tuija Pulkkinen's book is constituted therefore of an overview and critical discussion of the relevant literature related to each issue, and, most of all, of a remarkable effort to reconstruct in a coherent map the different paths of these discussions, by focusing on where they cross and by clarifying their misunderstandings. The coherence of this map is nevertheless based on a biased assumption, that is, an evident privilege exclusive, on one hand, to the Anglo-American tradition of "political science", and on the other, to the postmodern point of view.

As far as the first issue is concerned, the authoress correctly depicts the well known distinction between the liberal and the Hegelian-Marxist political tradition. Nevertheless as her analysis proceeds she does not pay sufficient attention to the epistemic perspective of "political theory", which represents the most direct inheritance of the Hegelian-Marxist matrix. In fact, the perspective of "political theory", typical of continental debates, is interesting most of all because it deals with philosophy rather than with sociology and introduces juridical and constitutional questions to the political horizon. For example, thinkers such as Carl Schmitt develop a complex concept of power, as important as Foucault's, in order to analyse contemporary political models.

As far as the second issue is concerned, namely a strong privilege for the postmodern, the authoress is able to discuss the matter with a sharp theoretical intensity but fails to recognize the complexity of thinkers such as Nancy and Arendt whose collocation fits into neither the modern nor the postmodern framework. In other words, the prejudicial and irrevocable distinction between the modern and the postmodern hinders an adequate understanding of those thinkers who overcome this strict and inflexible dichotomy.

The main praise for the book is due to the method through which the mapping of contemporary thought is constructed by the authoress. First of all she takes responsibility for defining the significant meaning of modern and postmodern as modes of thought, in refer-

ence to how contemporary debates produce this meaning by using it. Three authors – Michel Foucault, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Judith Butler – are in special focus in Pulkkinen's work, but she stresses her assumption of the modern and the postmodern as terms she uses in a different and innovative way.

In this context, modern is characterized by various figures of dichotomy that reproduce the basic dichotomy of truth/appearance as the opposition basis/surface in a hierarchical order where there functions a valorization of the foundation over the surface's phenomena. According to Pulkkinen, the postmodern escapes this dichotomical game not by a simple inversion of it (that is, a valorization of surface over basis), but by refusing dichotomy itself. By assuming a postmodern perspective, Pulkkinen declares her specific location in the debate as the first step towards exposing and deconstructing the complex language of modernity.

Tuija Pulkkinen, faithful to the method by which the meaning of concepts consists in their usage, explicitly chooses the postmoderns' side and applies it to the context of the analysis. She focuses on the line that proceeds from Foucault to Lyotard, to Butler, gaining an increasingly radical perspective. In fact, as she approaches Judith Butler's thought, her enquiry gets hold of the critical instruments of feminist theory and radical politics. In other words, she achieves a mode of thought that recasts both, the postmodern and politics, in a new context of significance.

The postmodern and politics, as they are rethought in radical feminism, present themselves as two-faced problems that Pulkkinen analyzes and considers in their complexity. Having defined the basic meaning of the modern from the postmodern perspective, she proceeds towards a more detailed approach to the modern itself as a political theory characterized by a transcendental assumption of the subject. Pulkkinen is at her most innovative and original all when she considers the two main traditions that are at work in modern political thought (the Hegelian-Marxist and the liberal) and when she analyzes the recent developments of these traditions, as they find interesting and diverse solutions in the works of contemporary authors. The most outstanding aspect of this proceeding consists of clarifying a terminology, the specificity of which cannot be neglected without a

serious risk of misunderstanding the conceptual frame to which it belongs. The distinction between terms such as “civil society”, “community”, “nation”, “identity” etc., as terms that support different models of political thought, is a good example of the methodological accuracy of this work.

By criticizing modern politics from a postmodern point of view, Pulkkinen is capable of facing the complexity of the matter and of recognizing the specific matrix of some terms – such as “identity” – that the authoress herself recasts in a new signification. It is precisely here that a detailed enquiry into “political theory” could have provided the analysis with further potential for speculative remarks.

The method is coherent, clear, easy to follow but not systematic. Even though it neglects to take into account some theoretical lines that escape the dichotomy of modern/postmodern, it is not enclosed in a univocal perspective. Some words such as “power” cross the text and testify to their Foucauldian source by connecting the various issues of the research and by radicalizing the notion of individual agency and identity as the main problems of contemporary politics. This approach succeeds in showing how the body and sexuality are strictly connected to political matters and constructed by power. This assumption, already made clear by many Foucauldian scholars, is here brilliantly interwoven with the feminist issue of an embodied self that deals with a contingent identity constructed in power.

As far as the propositional content is concerned, the aim of the book consists in stating a strong notion of individual agency as the subject of judgement in politics. On one hand, Pulkkinen’s critical discussion of the concept of individual agency present in the liberal tradition allows her to reject the abstract universality that classically belongs to the transcendental subject of modernity. On the other hand, the critical discussion she conducts on the Hegelian-Marxist tradition allows her to assume the individual agency as based on a contingent identity that, because of its mobile contingency, does not share the modern notion of transcendental identity. This is undoubtedly the most effective section of the work and a definitive step forward in the field of political debate.

Feminist theory, and most of all the American philosopher Judith Butler, are extremely important for supporting this theoretical achieve-

ment. Decisive, in this context, is the strategic positioning of a mobile and contingent identity within an agonistic conception of political subjectivity. Nevertheless, a certain prejudice towards European and French feminism works against a more attentive reading of Luce Irigaray's thought which could have widened the whole rethinking of political subjectivity and thereby offered an interesting recasting of Hegelian categories.

The section on "lesbian identity" is the point at which the analysis condenses its speculative efforts and verifies its intentions. It also exemplifies the completeness of the work mentioned before. Pulkkinen's intellectual and political insight enables her to both utilize the work of important thinkers within the interacting domains of poststructuralist, feminist, and lesbian theory while at the same time establishing her own critical distance from them in order to enforce their transgressive gestures. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to find postmodern feminist works on politics that analyze, as Tuija Pulkkinen does in detail and with competence, the modern political tradition that postmoderns usually reject. It is common, on the other hand, to find modern and postmodern male philosophers that completely ignore feminist thought on politics.

A deep knowledge of the postmodern perspective and a perfect command of American feminist debates allow Pulkkinen to show identity as a narrative entity. Her detailed reconstruction of the narrative of lesbian identity is extremely sharp and innovative in this context. It deals with theoretical issues that break the traditional border both of philosophy and politics, by involving literary matter in the performative effects of power.

Through convincing argumentation and precise analysis, through discussion on relevant literature and correct methodology, the book reaches its goal in an excellent way. This goal is, after all, a question that contemporary political thinkers can all share: could it be possible to think of politics as an agonistic process of judgement by agents conceived as constructed by power? Pulkkinen's answer is positive. It springs coherently from a wide analysis where she investigates the vocabulary of the question – that is, the meaning of each word and each concept – from three different perspectives: the modern, the postmodern and the feminist.

In spite of the objections above, the book constitutes an important contribution to contemporary debates on the matter. It develops an analysis of an intense speculative level and opens up new perspectives on theorizing the political.

Adriana Cavarero

Introducing the German Genre of Conceptual History to an Anglo-American Audience

Melvin Richter: The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. 204 pp. Appendices, notes, and index.

In his book *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction*, Melvin Richter sets out to offer English-speaking audiences the possibility to acquaint themselves with history of concepts as written by German historians. He advocates that Anglo-American historians can learn much from the approaches, systematic methods and variety of sources of the German genre. He himself states that the purpose of his book is to provoke methodological debate between Anglo-American and German historians who may not be as familiar with each others' work as they ought to be.

The compatibility of the German and Anglo-American approaches forms the central theme of Richter's book. He stresses the common background of the two traditions in that both have derived from the "linguistic turn" of historical research and the growing interest in the study of meaning. Referring to research that *Begriffsgeschichte* has motivated in The Netherlands, Hungary and the Nordic countries, Richter argues that the methodology developed by linguistically oriented German historians can be applied to the history of any country and any language. He also contends that such an application would enable comparative studies between dif-

ferent language areas.

Much of the book summarizes current discussions on the history of concepts. We are told that the points of focus in conceptual history include continuities, shifts and innovations in major political and social concepts, particularly in times of crises such as during the French Revolution. For Richter, few doubts remain as to the innovativeness of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, the most eminent product of German conceptual history. He argues that this massive dictionary of historical semantics “sets the standard for rigorous historical study of the specialized vocabularies of political and social theory [p. 5]”. He further states that semantic definitions of historical terminology in the *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* can be helpful for historians in spite of their lack of reference to political and social contexts.

Richter also contributes some interesting insight into differences between the research projects of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* and that of the *Handbuch politisch-sozialer Grundbegriffe in Frankreich, 1680-1820 (Handbuch)*. According to him, the projects differ in their conceptions of social history and in their interpretations of the role of politics in history in that the contributors to the *Handbuch* focus on popular mentalities rather than on structural social history and they study popular rather than canonical writers. Thus Richter introduces the variety of approaches used by conceptual historians and illustrates the continuous methodological debate in which they participate.

Indeed, Richter offers the clearest introduction to the research strategy of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* available in English. His manner of reviewing its historiographical background should be welcomed by those unfamiliar with recent developments in the works of German historians. His account points to the German historians’ interest in groups rather than in individuals, to the effects of their reception theory on the emphasis on audience rather than on authorial intentions only, and to their focus on the question of modernity. While keeping in mind the potential criticisms of Anglo-American readers, Richter argues that both the author and the intended audience should be included in studies on the history of concepts. He

also finds innovative use of linguistic techniques, historical contexts, and combinations of synchronic and diachronic analyses in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* and calls attention to its way of studying both conceptual and structural change. This combination should reveal the intentions of a particular text and illustrate contested conceptualizations of contemporary experience. Richter does his best to make type of conceptual history presented by the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* acceptable when viewed according to the conventional standards used for the history of political thought in the Anglo-American countries. He even endeavours to supplement the programme of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* by Anglo-American methodological contributions. However, when introducing the main hypotheses of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, he is careful not to comment on the implications of their application to British history. In this respect it might have been helpful to discuss some English concepts, such as *patriot* and *party*, on which research already exists. The effects of what the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* has called historicization, democratization and politicization of concepts and the increasing incorporation of concepts into ideologies certainly require closer illustration in future work on English history.

Aware of the doubts that easily arise about conceptual history as structuralism that ignores historical contexts, Richter is anxious to underscore the prominent position held by the social history of structures or mentalities in conceptual research. He repeatedly and rather abstractly emphasizes the need for simultaneous study of both conceptual change and transformations in political, social and economic structures. I would have welcomed a more sceptical approach to the actual possibilities of studying all the assumed "relevant" contexts of the great variety of sources typically consulted by conceptual historians. Richter argument would have been more convincing if he had given more concrete illustrations from English history by combining the research on structural social history with that on conceptual history. Instead, he is forced to concede that universal studies on relationships between conceptual usages and the social and political groups of language users have not been included in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* either. He is more convincing when pointing out that the great variety of sources studied by German

conceptual historians should make English-speaking intellectual historians appreciate a broader basis for sources, including the systematic study of dictionaries in English. A strong point that Richter could have made is that Anglophone historians studying concepts currently possess a unique tool for searching pre-1800 printed material of all kinds in that the computerised *English Short Title Catalogue* is now available. I share Richter's awareness of the problems which rise when such a variety of sources is consulted, for example, the levels of abstraction differ, as does potential of authors to innovate in language, and it is therefore difficult to draw conclusions on the relative weight of particular usages. Richter's conclusion that both familiar canonical authors and forgotten anonymous writers should be consulted appears to be a plausible solution to these problems.

After discussing the German concept of *Herrschaft* on the lines of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Richter develops a stimulating analysis on more recent conceptual history as influenced by the French *Annales* school and its critics. He raises the question of the proper emphasis on the social history of mentalities in conceptual history. For the editors of the *Handbuch*, who study transformations in traditional concepts caused by the French Revolution, it is the mentalities as conveyed by popular political texts that deserve attention, rather than the abstract contemplations of canonized elitist thinkers who dominate many of the articles of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Richter also uses the *Handbuch* to illustrate the fact that historians should pay particular attention to disagreements on the proper use of language among participants in past discourses. Furthermore, he explores its systematic and occasionally quantitative method of analysing series of uniform sources to avoid impressionistic interpretations. His discussion of the possibilities of advancing this methodology forms one of the most valuable sections of his book. He points to the limitations of studying single concepts, as changes in one concept affect other concepts, and suggests that historians should construct networks of key concepts within a genre in periods of accelerating conceptual change in order to reveal which concepts remain unchanged, which disappear, and which replace earlier concepts. Particularly interesting is the section on Rolf Reichardt's work on French political catechisms after the 1760s.

Political catechisms combined the resources of authoritative religious language with the language of secular politics in order to create political persuasion suitable for all orders. What could have been added is that an analogous genre already flourished in early 18th-century England. This fascinating combination of ecclesiastical form and political content illustrates the importance of studying the role of religion in 18th-century English political discourse and thus deserves further research.

Richter writes very positively on the *Handbuch's* manner of studying the self-understanding of past actors by focusing on their conceptualizations of historical change, on the history of semantics, and on theories about the nature of language and lexicography. However, not all English-speaking scholars will agree that this method adds much to the history of political thought. Some, like Richter himself, reject the dominance of the history of mentalities and the tendency to play down canonical authors. Considering both extremes, Richter returns to the conclusion that both great philosophers and minor writers should be read, and he adds that the influence of the varieties of political language on each other should also be studied. It should be easy for most historians to agree with Richter's assertion on page 120 that "it is a mistake to present as intellectual history, as the history of political thought, or as that of political language, any account based only upon major thinkers, or upon those thinkers who have been bundled together to comprise a canon".

Richter next focuses on more-detailed comparisons between the methods of Skinner and Pocock on one hand and those of *Begriffsgeschichte* on the other. He maintains that "there are no major obstacles to bringing them together [p. 138]". However, given the diverse traditions of philosophy and historical research in the English- and German-speaking countries, combining the two is far from easy and the task remains open to objections. The assumed common interests of the history of political languages and the study of political vocabularies in contexts may not be enough to overcome the resistance to mixing their methodologies. As Richter points out, Anglo-American researchers have paid little attention to the emergence of modernity. Neither is social history, whether that of mentalities or structures, generally employed as a major explanatory component in

Anglophone studies of past political thought, even though there are excellent studies on English history – ignored by Richter – in which changing social circumstances are used to explain shifts in political attitudes.¹ Richter elegantly summarizes the major methodological points and criticisms of Pocock and Skinner. But he writes somewhat undiplomatically when he calls Pocock’s study of political languages “eclectic, unsystematic, and not always consistently applied [p. 129]” and when he offers “nonreductionist types of social history [p. 136]” as a solution to failings in Skinner’s study of linguistic utterances as actions. In anticipation of opposition from the Cambridge school, Richter discusses Skinner’s earlier methodological writings that seem to question the foundations of conceptual history² and finds evidence for Skinner having modified his critical attitude towards conceptual research. It must be conceded that, because of the lack of concrete examples from English history, Richter may not be able to convince all his readers of the essentiality of studying the language used to characterize structural change.

Richter’s book raises at least three additional issues worth the attention of its readers. The first concerns the problem of the English *Sattelzeit*, the second is the status of the *Oxford English Dictionary* as the sole authority of semantic change in English, and the third relates to the possibilities of applying modern information technology to the study of conceptual history.

As regards the English *Sattelzeit*, a period of fast conceptual and structural transition to modernity, Richter does not really supply an answer. He touches upon the issue in several places, asking whether it was connected with the 17th-century revolutions, as Reinhart Koselleck has suggested, or to the Industrial Revolution, but he does not problematicize the question because of what he calls, the lack of “adequate history of political and social concepts in English [pp. 141 and 146]”. Further research is needed on the timing of the English period of rapid conceptual change – if there was such a period at all. Early 18th-century primary sources indicate that England was unlikely to have experienced an irreversible conceptual transition to modernity by the end of the 17th century. In the 1700s and 1710s, much of the political discourse in England experienced a reversion to the political languages predating the 17th-century revo-

lutions. The early 18th century as a whole then involved a very slow transformation of political structures and of political language during which some interesting changes in meaning and usage occurred even though few neologisms emerged. These shifts are visible in the popularization of the vocabulary of classical republicanism and also in some of the novel usages and changing meanings of inherited religious and politico-medical vocabularies. The influence of religious discourse on the language of politics seems also to have been gradually declining.

Richter's criticism of the *Oxford English Dictionary* can be considered well-founded. Many Anglo-American researchers depend on frequent references to this source; yet many agree that its emphasis on literary sources make numerous entries on political and social terminology inadequate. In particular, 18th-century usages and the language of politics have been neglected by earlier compilers of the dictionary. Richter questions the reliability of the current version as the only source of information on the senses and on the first appearances of political vocabulary, but he correctly sees the existing corpus of historical semantics as a good starting point for a computerized history of concepts in English, once it is supplemented by previously neglected genres. Occasionally Richter touches the interesting question of constructing textbases for research in conceptual history, but he does not carry the point as far as could be expected. We are told that, thus far, most historians studying concepts have excluded databases consisting of historical documents and criticized previous attempts in computer-based political lexicology. However, the opportunities for at least a partly computerized analysis of political concepts may be increasing with the rapid growth of electronic text corpora and developments in text analysis programs.³

In conclusion, *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction* is based on the author's broad knowledge of the recent debate on the methodology of conceptual history and on his contacts with major historians specializing in political thought and intellectual history in Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States, and it is characterized by a lively sense of the most recent approaches to the subject. There has been a need for a general introduction in English to the work of continental conceptual his-

tory, and this volume fills this need. On the whole, it is scholarly, controversial and thought-provoking and thus reaches its declared goals.

However, instead of being particularly critical, the author may have occasionally been carried away by his admiration of German projects as having “set standards of excellence for the historical study of the concepts and semantic fields that constitute vocabularies [p. 21]”. Though the author introduces some problems encountered in writing conceptual history, his own contribution is limited to reviewing previous work, questioning established orthodoxies of Anglo-American history of political thought, and advocating continental methodologies as a solution to these shortcomings. While the book is theoretically stimulating, it would have been helpful if it had demonstrated the practice of writing conceptual history in English by means of a case-study.

Another weakness of the book is related to its organization. Although the major points are presented with clarity, they are sometimes repeated excessively. This tautology is probably due to the extent to which the book consists of previously published review articles.⁴ Notwithstanding these reservations, Richter provides a highly useful introduction to an interesting topic for advanced students in intellectual history. Furthermore, the volume is essential reading to anyone interested in the methodological development of conceptual history. Not only has Richter provided the first English-language version of a comprehensive introduction to conceptual history, he has also argued in favour of rethinking the methodology used in the history of political thought as practised in the English-speaking world.

It remains to be seen how the Anglo-American audience will receive Richter’s provocative suggestion to combine German conceptual history and the Cambridge history of political thought. This book, like previous attempts to introduce conceptual history to Anglophone audiences, may meet with limited success in convincing its readers.⁵ It is true that many Anglo-American researchers lament the tendency to study British history in isolation from Europe, but, as Richter himself suggests, few may be prepared to apply a “German” methodology to British history. Therefore the job of fitting British history into the European context, which is undoubtedly

a worthwhile project, may remain for non-native English-speakers to attempt.⁶ The wish for a history of political and social concepts in English has already been fulfilled – though only on a modest scale – by individual researchers engaged in empirical research on early modern English history. However, an international project that both based its study on English materials and extended its work to comparisons between Anglo-American and continental societies, as suggested by Richter, would be welcomed in conceptual history.

Pasi Ihalainen

Notes

- ¹ See Gary Stuart De Krey, *A Fractured Society: The Politics of London in the First Age of Party 1688-1715*, Oxford 1985, and Tim Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1660-1715*, London and New York 1993.
- ² Jeremy Rayner among others, has not been enthusiastic about adopting the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* as a model for future historiography in English. Finding it particularly difficult to accept the idea that the history of concepts is as significant as the history of political argument or political ideologies, he has referred to Skinner's methodological writings predating the start of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* project in an attempt to demonstrate that any history of concepts is based on a senseless picture of language. Jeremy Rayner, 'On *Begriffsgeschichte*', *Political Theory*, Vol. 16, No. 3, August 1988, pp. 496-8; Compare with Richter's reply in Melvin Richter, 'Understanding *Begriffsgeschichte*. A Rejoinder', *Political Theory*, Vol. 17, No. 2, May 1989, pp. 297-8.
- ³ See Mark Olsen and Louis-Georges Harvey, 'Computers in Intellectual History: Lexical Statistics and the Analysis of Political Discourse', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 1988, pp. 449-452, Evan Mawdsley and Thomas Munck, *Computing for Historians: An Introductory Guide* (Manchester and New York 1993), pp. 168-72, and Daniel I. Greenstein, *A Historian's Guide to Computing* (Oxford and New York 1994), pp. 183-99.
- ⁴ These include Melvin Richter, 'Conceptual History (*Begriffsgeschichte*) and Political Theory', *Political Theory*, Vol. 14, No. 4, November 1986,

- pp. 604-37, Melvin Richter, 'Begriffsgeschichte and the History of Ideas', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 48, No. 2, April-June 1987, pp. 247-63, and Melvin Richter, 'Reconstructing the History of Political Languages: Pocock, Skinner, and the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*', *History and Theory*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 1990, pp. 38-70.
- ⁵ Favourable comments on conceptual history include those of Keith Tribe, the translator of Koselleck's *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*. He has presented the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* as "an undertaking of such length and detail" that it would be "hard to imagine in the theoretical and historical traditions of Britain and North America". He regards *Begriffsgeschichte* as "'conceptual history' of a sort unfamiliar to the Anglo-American reader". Keith Tribe, 'The *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* Project: From History of Ideas to Conceptual History. A Review Article', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 1989, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 180, 182, 184. Other commentators on conceptual history in English include Irmeline Veit-Brause in her 'A Note on *Begriffsgeschichte*', *History and Theory*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1981, pp. 63, 66-7, Tracy B. Strong in a review article in the *American Political Science Review*, 1991, Vol. 85, Iss. 4, pp. 1437-8, and Peter T. Manicas in his review essay in the *Philosophy of Social Sciences*, 1992, Vol. 22, Iss. 3, pp. 402-3. Of the few concrete examples of writing conceptual history in English that of Terence Ball should be mentioned, *Transforming Political Discourse: Political Theory and Critical Conceptual History*, Oxford and New York 1988, pp. 9-10. Conal Condren's *The Language of Politics in Seventeenth-Century England*, New York 1994, also resembles conceptual history due to its focus on semantic fields of 17th-century politics. The major difference when compared with *Begriffsgeschichte* is that Condren regards the words themselves rather than the past social reality as the major explainers in the study of political thought.
- ⁶ The *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* frequently refers to developments in English conceptual history but its handling is restricted to major thinkers. This German interest in Anglo-American history has also been illustrated by Willibald Steinmetz, who has recently discussed English political discourse during the early 19th-century debate on parliamentary reform in his book *Das Sagbare und das Machbare. Zum Wandel politischer Handlungsspielräume England 1780-1867*, Stuttgart 1993. What he has claimed to have done is, however, neither the writing of a history of ideas nor conceptual history but an "analysis of elementary sentences".

"1956" and Post-communism

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Reform, Revolt and Repression 1953-1963. Edited by György Litván. English version edited and translated by János M. Bak and Lyman H. Legters. New York and London: Longman 1996.

The collapse of communism left a burden for historians. Not only did history writing have to find new perspectives and methods, it had to deal with recent memories. Often these current events belong to a "space of experience" rather than proper history.

In Hungary the most important "white spot" has been the interpretation of the uprising in 1956. As one of the largest conflicts in Cold War Europe, the Hungarian Uprising not only had immense implications but also played an important role during the change in the system. First, during the Kádár era, the events were viewed as a counter-revolution. However, in 1990 a new name officially emerged: the first law enacted by freely elected parliament canonised the events as a revolution and a fight for freedom.

The first book written by Hungarians in Hungary after the collapse of communism is now available and in English as well. Although it is a translation, it is an enlarged version of the school text published 5 years ago and containing considerable detail and current research results.

According to the cover the text is "the first complete and unbiased history of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in its full national and international contexts. All previous accounts have been limited by incomplete and unreliable evidence, especially in Hungary itself". Subsequent to this statement it is argued that following the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Hungary's own 'velvet revolution' (a concept usually associated with Czechoslovakia) once inaccessible material is now available. Can a book dealing with history ever be complete or unbiased? Is this at all possible?

The first chapter is written by György Schöpflin, a professor of Hungarian origin at the London School of Economics. The chapter

examines Hungary after the Second World War and deals with the democratic experiment conducted between 1944-1948 when enthusiastic acceptance of limited independence seemed possible. In fact, the German occupation did not turn directly into Soviet totalitarianism as has often been argued.

However, after the takeover some details of the communists' aims became apparent according to Schöpflin. For example, in 1951 a target which raised industrial plan output by 204% and eventually by 380% was adopted! Hungarian leaders tried to transform an agricultural country into "a land of iron and steel" in a few years. At the same time almost half the middle and lower level party officials were excluded from the party, the total number of those purged eventually reaching around 350,000. In addition to this, deportations of "class enemies" also began, difficulties for the peasants, etc.

Researchers János M Bak, Csaba Békés, Gyula Kozák, György Litván and János M Rainer coauthor the rest of the book. According to them the "New Course" initiated by the Soviets after Stalin's death already went deeper in Hungary than in the neighbouring countries. However, this policy, led by Imre Nagy, did not last long because Stalin's "most apt pupil", Mátyás Rákosi, and his supporters were strong enough to supersede Nagy. First, in April 1955, Nagy had to give up his post as prime minister and at the end of the year he was even thrown out of the party. However, little by little Rákosi himself became a burden to the Soviet leaders, who were trying to inject some warmth into relations with Yugoslavia. In June, 1956, the tables were turned and Rákosi was the one forced to leave and go to the Soviet Union. Indeed, this departure was publicly ascribed to health problems! Rákosi's close ally, Ernő Gerő, replaced him.

Nagy also had supporters and the formation of the anti-Stalinist opposition, which rallied around him from 1955, is introduced. Writers' activity is regarded as significant already before the 20th congress of the CPSU as are the discussions of the Youth Organisation Petöfi Circle several months later. All these are seen as a path leading to a revolution – not as a more contingent metaphor jungle into which a path is cut afterwards.

Finally the uprising is seen through the theory of spontaneity, breaking out via a peaceful demonstration and show of solidarity

with Poland, where Gomulka had been elected against Soviet wishes. The rest shows the events in October from the mass student protest on 23rd October to the armed uprising. Events which followed the demonstration happened in the manner of a “thriller”: Stalin’s statue was pulled down, Soviet troops came in, Nagy became prime minister. The Government changed several times and finally the multiparty system was restored on 30th October. Imre Nagy’s withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact on 1st November is seen as a heroic last-ditch effort at rescuing the revolution. Later it is known that in the Kremlin the critical decision regarding the second intervention was taken already on the 31st of October, before Nagy’s speech. However, it does not become evident whether the declaration worsened Nagy’s position or how it did so.

One chapter is dedicated to world politics, in which for example the belief in Western help (held right up until today in Hungary) remained an illusion. In fact, the status quo born at Yalta was realized in Hungary in 1956, in other words eleven years later. The decision of the West to invade Suez on 29th October was made a week earlier, not in the shadow of Hungarian events as had been thought. However, the operation gave the Soviets a free hand to intervene on 4th November.

The number of deaths and punishments has been quite contradictory. It is now estimated that from the end of 1956 to 1959 at least 35,000 people were investigated by the police for political crimes, 22,000 received sentences, 13,000 were sent to the newly developed internment camps and some 350 people were executed. An analogy, common in Hungary, is made in the book to the years 1848-1849, their consequences and reprisals, which are “retained permanently in the national memory”. Whether or not there is such a concept as national memory, “1956” could, however, be found in the Hungarian space of experience.

Already in the preface, the analogy between 1848 and 1956 is mentioned by the editor, György Litván. He quotes the first declaration enacted by the Parliament in 1990. According to the decision of the Parliament the memory of the 1956 Revolution and Fight for Freedom, mentioned already at the beginning, was codified by law as were the events of 1848-1849. At the same time, the outbreak of

the revolution, 23rd October, was declared a national holiday. A conclusion made by Litván, himself an active participant in “1956” and later a member of the opposition movement, was that the moral foundation of the new Hungarian Republic developed over a long period, starting with a revival of the memory of “1956”. Litván argues that virtually all the opposition tendencies which emerged in the mid-1980s eventually found their intellectual roots in the tradition of the revolution.

According to a popular view the events were taboo during the Kádár regime. However, some material, not discussed here, was already published during the first three decades by the “winners”. Kádárist considered that the second Soviet intervention saved the country from an open counter-revolution. During the historical post mortem there is the question of what would have happened if the Soviets had not intervened for the second time. In Hungary right wing tendencies were to be found and the present power positions were legitimized by only seeing the dangers, when emigrants and many western scholars, like Hannah Arendt, noticed the positive, but not wholly realised horizon of expectation: workers’ councils, anticapitalism, democratic parties, etc.

Péter Kende, also a participant in the events, goes far in his afterword when he analyses, carefully even, the alternatives and possibilities: if the endgame had been played differently (letting the Hungarians go), a changed Soviet system could have joined the world powers as a much more viable partner. Even the Prague Spring could have been ten years earlier and the end of the Cold War and German reunification could have preceded Gorbachev by twenty or twenty-five years... However, according to Kende, the political development of post-1989 Hungary has fulfilled the anti-totalitarian programme of “1956” and led to western-type democratic organisations. If this is true, history seems to be universal, continuous and the “same” even if political development was different in the 1980s than three decades earlier.

However, if these beliefs are taken seriously, they would be important in gaining an understanding of the watershed of political experience, which encouraged people to political action. For example, the majority of *samizdat* material distributed during the 1980s dealt

with “1956” and even the first unofficial conference had to be organised illegally on the 30th anniversary. Thus, a linear and a cyclical concept of history, forgetting and remembering, became directly political ones (the ruling party, for example, published a thesis in 1959 that 1848 and 1956 could not be analogised). Memory, flowers and symbols for death became a part of political activity.

During the uprising itself there was no time to create far-reaching political programmes. The consensus was rather concerned, as researchers have written, with the fact that people did not want the present situation: the regime’s watchful eye on daily life, the anxieties and boredom of daily existence and foreign troops in the country. The expectations, however, were already significantly different: a reformed socialist order, a “national-democratic” direction represented by the peasant parties, conservative groups centred around Cardinal Mindszenty and finally partly extreme right-wing anti-communism. Thus the plurality of aims, in addition to the international impact, was one of the reasons why “1956” has become so interesting in European intellectual history.

I would like to argue that in 1989 history did not repeat itself. Rather, an attempt was made to reenact the best parts of political experience and memory. It seems clear that different actors had learnt the lessons of “1956”. Second, many of the demands made in 1956, like free elections, were not realized until 1989. In many ways the same phenomena emerged as in 1956: a multiparty system, a new republican coat of arms (in the end it remained only as an alternative to the present “crown” found in the Parliament), national days and a demand for the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

The political activity of the opposition was “rewarded” and many participants hold important posts in post-communist Hungary: the president of the republic, several ministers, the mayor of Budapest and several members of Parliament. During the first years after 1989 “1956” had its value in political legitimation. During the change of the system a need for public continuation emerged; this was found in the past and first and foremost from “1956”. However, after 1989 former “losers” dominated the discussion, part of them ruling the country and the rest in opposition.

The most important problems have dealt with the three central

questions: who started the revolution, who continued it and what were the aims. There are at least three different interpretations, which at the same time have been a part of the political narratives dealing with the new parties and their identities. The “leftist” or “liberal” interpretations lay stress on Imre Nagy and his followers and argue that the “revisionists” already criticized the party in the first phase. The supporters of the more “conservative” interpretation, strengthened after the collapse of communism, believe that in the long run the people wanted to get rid of every kind of socialism and that it was only a question of time. The third interpretation, a “populist” one, concentrates on the streets and on the young armed rebels, who had nothing to do with the parties.

The discussion described above was not dealt with in the book but was found on three levels. First, in the organisations a confrontation emerged between former communists and anticommunists. Second, on the political level, the question was how to deal with the past: should the former communists be punished or should “the past” be left to the historians. Three laws have dealt with the punishments which in the end were contrary to the constitution. The last decision was made by the Constitutional Court in autumn 1996. On the third level there are the researchers. For example, the Hungarian version of this book was criticized by some veterans who considered the book did not tally with their own experiences.

Recent discussion has been clearly political and at least four comments have to be made in order to understand it. At first, 1956 is still so close, only forty years from the present, which means few archives but many eyewitnesses, who control the historians and their results. Secondly, history writing itself has belonged to the change. When the present was on the move, the same could be said about the past and vice versa (history after 1945, for example, did not form part of higher school examinations in 1990-1993).

Also during the change new political subjects (like parties) emerged, each requiring a history, an identity. When the old parties and the new opposition groups emerged in 1988 (illegally until February 1989) they had to build their past. Many different movements had “1956” in their programme, often even old veterans were among the first founders of the parties. Thus, the past became a part of

these new identities, creating new perspectives and horizons of expectation, which have created and united political movements during the first years of the new republic. The third comment will be the impact of communism, an ideology, which already claimed to be based on a concept of history. In this sense the discussion is peculiar to the whole of former Eastern Europe. Fourth, national traditions and culture have to be taken into consideration. It could also be called mentality, if mentality consists of language (understood widely as a part of the whole cognitive process), history and culture. The minutes of discussions of the Central Committee in 1989 were published already in 1993.

In conclusion, it would have been interesting if the present context of history writing had been explained more closely to the international audience. Now that a narrative from the “glorious past” is available, events are often seen through metaphors of resistance and words like “unity” and “the whole nation” are common. These try to create an image of a united history, of good people or “we”, even if these are difficult to prove. This book is not “unbiased” either but rather a part, moderate and the best one until now, of the discussion which has taken place in Hungary during the last few years. In this sense the preface and the afterword are the most interesting to anyone who already knows the story. Did “they” really lock *every* typewriter in the factories and offices before 23rd October? How was the decision explained? Actions like these help people to remember rather than forget.

However, in his afterword Péter Kende sums up the three most important impacts of Hungary 1956. First, until 1956 the almost unshakeable Soviet Empire was shaken. Second, Hungary exploded the political (and philosophical) fiction of proletarian socialism and a number of other dogmas of the European left. Hungary also became a model for coming revolutions and revolts. Flags with holes in the middle were later seen in East Germany, Romania and in the Soviet Union.

Heino Nyysönen

Economic Development as World Revolution

Kojima Kiyoshi (1996) Trade, Investment and Pacific Economic Integration. Selected Essays of Kiyoshi Kojima. Tokyo: Bunshind.

To commemorate his third and final retirement, at the age of 75, Kojima Kiyoshi (b. 22 May 1920) has compiled this collection of some of his most important articles published in English during his 52 year career as an ‘academic politician’. His main work was done as the professor of international economics at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo, which he left in 1984, working thereafter seven years at the International Christian University, and five years at Surugadai University.

Although all of the articles distinctly represent the work of an economist, they can also be reviewed as political texts. Politics can be put into many clothes, and economic language is one of them. Mastering economic language is indispensable not only for a student of Japanese and Pacific political discussions. The phenomenon of widespread use of economic language in political rhetoric, and the structuring of public discussion around economic topics, can be easily observed in politics around the world. Traditional political science tends to subsume this phenomenon under the term ‘economic policy’, placing it at a lower ranking level than ‘politics proper’, which deals with voting behaviour, political parties, actions by national leaders, the strategies and tactics of foreign policy, etc.

Incidentally, this is a view that also most contemporary economists would undersign, preferring to confine themselves within a ‘properly economic’ sphere of academic activity, symbolizing this with the use of highly esoteric mathematical language that effectively marginalizes them from public discussion. Nevertheless, economic language – especially in its verbal, widely understandable form – can be seen as only one of the forms that political argumentation

can take, and a person with an economic background can consciously use this language in trying to shape the horizons of understanding of various actors both within his own country and in the international arena. In this sense he can also be termed a 'politician'; not as a member of a specific political party, but simply as a person who acts politically among his fellow human beings.

In this sense Kojima can be understood as a politician. His whole career was spent within the academic world. He never belonged to any political party, nor did he ever hold an official governmental position, except that of a university professor, or an academic member of various Japanese national economic planning committees. Yet his writings have had since the 1960s a profound, although unmeasurable, influence on Pacific politics. There exists another common distinction between the academic world, and the world of politicians, but also this distinction is largely illusory. A politician may simply engage in politics as a profession, just to derive his monthly salary and possible kick-backs from it, without any real commitment to influence and change the world. An academician may be committed to doing just that, and although he receives his salary as a professor, and partakes in public discussion merely in the form of scientific books and articles in scholarly journals, he may, both in his intentions and in the practical results of his work, be acting as a politician. The apparent academic neutrality and arguments based on theory can even enhance his weight as a politician. In this sense Kojima Kiyoshi can be considered as an academic politician.

Kojima himself is completely conscious of the situation, even though he does not present it in these terms. In his foreword he criticizes modern economics of being so refined in analytical techniques that it is hardly of any practical use. He places himself instead in the classical tradition of political economy, and is not at all ashamed of his ability to present sharp theoretical insights with clearly understandable language that can be used in formulating national policies (p. v).

This is not to say that Kojima does not master also the language of mathematical economics. The road from a relatively pure economist to an economic politician took a long time. The earliest essay in the collection, an analysis of [David] 'Ricardo's Theory of the

International Balance of Payments Equilibrium', written in 1951, is mainly mathematical, and addressed solely for a specialist academic audience. Thereafter the textual space devoted to mathematics, graphs and statistical tables tends to diminish in Kojima's text, and argumentation with a clearly understandable scientific prose tends to increase. A marked threshold is the essay on 'A Pacific Economic Community and Asian Developing Countries' in 1966, when Kojima for the first time consciously tried to influence Pacific international politics, and bring about the establishment of a Pacific Free Trade Area (PAFTA). It would have been a competing organization to the European Economic Community (EEC), and it would have been composed of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States, with a number of Pacific Asian and Latin American developing countries holding an associate status within the organization. Even though a PAFTA was never created, the idea has continued to evoke steady attention within the Pacific region. The proposal for some kind of wide regional non-European economic organization has been modified many times over during the subsequent discussion and political activity, but Kojima's original vision is still regarded as the genealogical source of later proposals. Kojima's later writings have consequently been more or less connected with Pacific integration issues, as he has analyzed, criticized, and evaluated contemporary developments, and offered his own solutions. The last of these essays, 'The Pacific Community in a New World Economic Order', originally published in 1994, is an analysis of the global economic and political situation of the 1990s, and a critique of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, which is trying to set up a free trade regime within the greater pan-Pacific region.

Notwithstanding Kojima's intellectual influence in Pacific integration politics, his activity has not been limited solely to integration issues. A deeper line in his thinking has been 'world revolution'. Kojima is the most outstanding of the pupils of Akamatsu Kaname, the Japanese originator of the theory of the flying geese pattern of development in the 1930s. Akamatsu's central problem was how a poor, agricultural, non-industrialized country like Japan, India or China can successfully industrialize, and catch up with the Euro-American

developed countries. He had in his youth been inspired by the Russian revolution and Marxist ideas of a just economic liberation of the oppressed people of the world, but became later convinced, after early Japanese developmental success, that industrialization occurs best in an evolutionary way in close economic and cultural communication with the established developed countries. Enlightened nationalism in combination with relatively open trade was seen as a vehicle for the importation of advanced economic culture to a backward country. Even though the process was evolutionary, the final goal was the liberation and industrialization of colonies and economic dependencies around the world, resulting in effect in a revolution of the world's economic and political structure.

Kojima inherited from his teacher this basic problematique, but his most fruitful period of writing was during the 1960s and 1970s, when Japan was already rapidly attaining that goal, while countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and other South-east Asian countries had also entered a process of rapid industrialization. While Akamatsu had tended to think of development as a relatively slow process requiring centuries, Kojima sought ways to speed up the process. His favourite temporal unit was a decade, rather than a century, and his favourite method was foreign direct investment (FDI), rather than trade. He was fascinated with the work of contemporary radical economists like Gunnar Myrdal, Raul Prebisch, or Stephen Hymer, and adopted many viewpoints from them, but unlike they he was fairly optimistic about the prospects of development, especially in the case of Pacific Asian countries. In the great debate of the 1970s and 1980s among international economists, political scientists, and peace researchers about the usefulness of applying the centre-periphery model into international politics, e.g. in the form of UNCTAD's New International Economic Order (NIEO) tactics, Kojima generally acknowledged the basic insights of the *dependencia* school, but was steadfastly opposed to the overt reliance on natural resources as a weapon in international negotiations (because focusing on natural resources shifted attention away from industrialization), and to the tendency of advocating the severing of relations with the advanced countries and seeking only forms of exclusive south-south cooperation (because that tended

to provide only poor markets and the spread of old-fashioned economic culture). A representative essay of his views in this debate is, e.g. 'A New Capitalism for a New International Economic Order', published in 1981. Like Akamatsu, also Kojima advocated the usefulness of a dynamic understanding the international economic system as a procession of stages, where nationalistically conscious, but friendly economic cooperation among all types of actors produces the best results.

Among economists Kojima is best known for his theory of foreign investment, represented in the compilation by the original 1973 article 'A Macroeconomic Approach to Foreign Direct Investment', but already his early 1951 study on Ricardo pointed to this direction. At the beginning of the 1970s Japan had attained the stage of development where it was losing its comparative advantage in cheap labour intensive manufactures, such as textiles, or the assembly of cheap electronics, such as transistor radios. His idea was to transplant all of these old-fashioned types of industries to developing countries through FDI, instead of trying to maintain them in Japan with the help of protection. Their establishment in developing countries would require little education of workers and investment in infrastructure, but they would easily be set up as export industries bringing in income to the country. At the same time Japan would get rid of a mass of dead-weight industries, and free its resources on developing – or adopting from more advanced economies like the United States – more technologically advanced industries, such as car or computer making. A middle level industrial country like Japan would thus act as a conduit in passing industrial civilization from advanced to less advanced countries. The third tier countries like South Korea or Singapore would eventually pass the experience to the next layer, to countries like China or Indonesia. As the application of tried industrial culture is many times faster than the development of new culture, the whole Pacific area could end up as a prosperous region within a few decades. Japan caught up with the United States during the 1980s, Singapore and Hong Kong have been doing it during the 1990s, and for Kojima it seems quite plausible that the rest of the Pacific Asian countries from Malaysia to China could succeed in doing it by 2010 or 2020 (p. 154).

Kojima's writings on integration, and his partaking in Pacific integration politics can be seen as an attempt to create cooperative structures facilitating both trade and investment among the countries of the region, to enhance the rapid development of Pacific Asian countries. As he put it in his 'Economic Cooperation in a Pacific Community' in 1980: 'The ultimate objective [...] is to raise East and Southeast Asian economies to a level equal to advanced Pacific countries and to build the Western Pacific economic region into something resembling the European Community' (p. 217). A transference of the centre of the international system, away from the North Atlantic to the Pacific region, was thus his long term political objective. From there development would spread deeper into the Asian continent and Latin America.

Another line in his thinking was the problems of countries on a similar level of development; i.e. how to organize the relations of a large number of countries that have become economically roughly equal, so that they would not fall into bickering or war among themselves, as had so often happened throughout history. A typical essay is 'Towards a Theory of Agreed Specialization: The Economics of Integration' from 1970. Kojima's basic solution is the development of a sense of community among these countries during the integration process, and a wide use of open interaction within the community, so that company level – rather than state level – decisions would steer countries towards specializing on sufficiently different types of industries, so that their economies would remain complementary to each other. However, it is difficult to conceptualize the situation in a totally peaceful way, because the most likely reason for any group of countries to develop a sense of community with each other would be 'competition from third countries with superior competitive power' (p. 66). A political scientist might employ here the concept of a common enemy. As long as the geographic setting is the Pacific, Europe would appear as the most 'natural' common enemy, but if the setting is restricted to the Western Pacific, or Pacific Asia, a more complicated pattern of relative 'friends' and 'enemies' might emerge. Be that as it may, even Kojima cannot find a way to separate international conflict from the process of development. He only aims at a world economic revolution through the evolutionary proc-

ess of trade and investment, and a management of the ensuing tension as well as possible. In a sense this is natural, because peace and tranquillity hardly are reasons for trying to change any existing situation. The ultimate mover of development is conflict, and the two cannot be separated.

Trade, Investment and Pacific Economic Integration is not simply a glance through a man's life work. It contains important source material for a historian of Pacific politics, and for a historian of economic theory, but many of the issues that Kojima has raised throughout his career are relevant also nowadays. The book would be useful reading especially for contemporary Europeans struggling with their own brand of integration. Even for a pure political scientist, most of the book is understandable.

Pekka Korhonen

Contributors

Adriana Cavarero
PhD, Lecturer,
Dipartimento di Filosofia,
Università di Verona

Sisko Haikala
PhD, Senior Assistant
Professor of History,
University of Jyväskylä

Pasi Ihalainen
Assistant Professor of History,
University of Jyväskylä

Pekka Korhonen
PhD, Senior Assistant
Professor of Political Science,
University of Jyväskylä

Reinhart Koselleck
Professor emeritus für die
Theorie der Geschichte,
Universität Bielefeld

Eerik Lagerspetz
Professor of Philosophy,
University of Jyväskylä

Heino Nyyssönen
PhD Candidate,
University of Jyväskylä,
working in Budapest

Kari Palonen
Professor of Political Science,
University of Jyväskylä

Tuija Pulkkinen
PhD, Fellow of
the Finnish Academy,
Kristiina Institute,
University of Helsinki

Michael Quante
Dr., Wissenschaftlicher
Assistent,
Universität Münster,
Philosophisches Seminar

Melvin Richter
Professor of Political Science,
City University of New York