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*Kari Palonen*

# TRANSFORMING A COMMON EUROPEAN CONCEPT INTO FINNISH: CONCEPTUAL CHANGES IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF ‘POLITIIKKA’

*The meaning of the word political depends, thus, largely on the purpose and context in which it is used.*

R.E. (Rafael Erich), *Poliittinen*, Tietosanakirja, vol. 7, 1916, 772-773]

## The Conceptualization of Politics on a Periphery

The point of this essay is to relate the Finnish history of the concept of politics, *politiikka*, to the general European history of changes in the concept.<sup>1</sup> My point of departure is the ‘decentering’ of the concept of politics by means of the four nouns *policy*, *polity*, *politicking* and *politicization* (cf. Palonen 1993, Palonen forthcoming).

ing), taking each of them as presenting a horizon of possibility for the conceptualization of politics, with my primary interest being in the politics-as-activity concept as opposed to the concept of politics as a sphere. (cf. Palonen 2000) I am mainly interested in the explicit thematization of the concept, i.e. in contributions in which authors attempt to problematize the concept for one purpose or another. In other words, my concentration on the direct thematization aims at the “illocutive” or performative dimension of “linguistic action,” and not to the “locutive” or indicative use of the concept of politics. (cf. Skinner 1996) This perspective has led me to accentuate the individual variations over the commonplaces, the exceptional over the regular. We can, however, better understand both the changing horizons of the regular and their overriding even when the conventions are not broken down.

I will cut the substantial European story short and present the Finnish material extensively, although in a manner in which my general interpretation of the European history of the concept of politics posits the problems to be taken up in each chapter, and the progression of the chapters illustrates conceptual changes in the understanding of politics in the 19th and 20th century Europe in general.

The character of the sources used is related to the research intentions. The dictionaries, encyclopedias, word archives etc. play a rather minor role in a study of this kind, while prior to the late 1960s there have been hardly any attempts to rethink the concept in academic monographs. Authors of some of the contributions have attempted to explicate the state of the discussion on it (cf. Rantala 1963 in the handbook *Yhteiskuntatieteiden käsikirja*). Especially some literary authors have developed a more personal view on the concept, and I have often found the works of authors such as Eino Leino and Jouko Tyyri to be more fruitful than those produced by academic writers. In addition, I have used diaries, collections of speeches, debate books, academic literature, and occasionally even Parliament proceedings. In order to understand the change in the post-war years, I have extensively examined issues of the main critical organ of the period in question, the Helsinki student weekly *Ylioppilaslehti*, from 1950 to 1965. The translations from Finnish are my own.

## The Adoption of the Polit-vocabulary

During the formative phase of Finnish as a written, public and academic language in the mid 19th century, several 'translation' strategies were used. In some cases old Finnish words, such as *valta* (power), were revived to also include a meaning associated with their conceptual usage (for related problems cf. M. Hyvärinen 1998), while in others Finnish neologisms, such as the term *valtio*, were created, which more or less took over tai adopted the conceptual problems of the European state vocabulary with its certain inherent peculiarities (Pulkkinen 2000). In the case of the term *kansalainen* (citizen), a kind of direct translation of a Swedish particularity was carried over into Finnish, having a number of unanticipated consequences (cf. Stenius 1999). In other cases, however, both the Finnish neologism *kansanvalta* and the 'internationally' derived word *demokratia* were used as partly synonymous and partly as having different implications (cf. M. Hyvärinen 2000).

From the late 1840s onward we can distinguish several alternative modes of referring to the phenomenon of politics in Finnish. Let us briefly recapitulate the situation:

- a) the Greek vocabulary of *polis*, *politeia*, *arkhé politike*, *politiké techné*
- b) the Latin vocabulary of *civis*, *civitas*, *societas civilis sive politica*
- c) the "early-modern" European vocabulary of *stato*, *state*, *Staat*, *stat* or *gouvernement*, *government*, *Regierung*, *regering*
- d) the "post-Sattelzeit" European vocabulary of *politics*, *policy*, *la politique*, *Politik*, *politik*, which was became generally accepted during the 19th century (cf. Palonen 1985, 1990b, 1993, 1999a,b, 2000)
- e) the possibility of inventing a pure Finnish neologism

In the case of politics the first attempts were based on alternative c). However, the alternative d) was adopted in the 20th century, and it was no longer contaminated by the vocabulary of alternative a). The Latin and the neologism models did not play any noticeable role in this process.

Some attempts were made in the 19th century to create a "Finnish translation" that would replace the polit-vocabulary, however, these translations directly connected the concept with the state and gov-

ernment vocabularies. Amongst the proposed translations only two were relatively successful. *Valtiotaito* (art of the state, *Staatskunst*) – and not *politiikka* – was the subject of an entry by K.R. Brotherus, the first professor of *yleinen valtio-oppi* (a direct translation of the *Allgemeine Staatslehre*) in the handbook *Valtiotieteiden käsikirja* (vol. 4., 1924). The adjective *valtiollinen* (stately) was more successful in the translation of the terms *politisch*, *politisk* or *political* (cf. Pulkkinen 2000). In the bi-lingual Liberal programme of 1880, from amongst the more than 20 polit-words in the Swedish vocabulary only one remained in the Finnish vocabulary. In the Social Democrat's Program of 1903 based on the programme of the Austrian Social Democrats from 1901 *politisch* was translated as *valtiollinen*. This practice was, however, slowly beginning to vanish. To mark the end of it we can quote the Swedish People's Party's programme of 1964 and its contemporary translation: in it *politisk* was always translated as *poliittinen* (For the documentation of the party programmes cf. Borg [ed] 1965).

The 'trial balloons' for a Finnish translation of politics appear today as curiosities. The conceptual changes primarily concern the adoption and acceptance of the polit-vocabulary as something that is no longer a foreign word in Finnish, the meaning of which must be learned, but, rather, is a word which people are able to use as fluently as those words for which a pure Finnish neologism was found. The history of the changes in this fluent use forms the second step, in which both the diversifications and the revisions of the polit-vocabulary are reached in a more or less intimate relation to the change in attitudes toward the phenomenon of politics as such.

One characteristic of the Finnish polit-vocabulary from the late 19th century until at least the 1920s is the strong presence of compound terms ending with the word *politiikka*. In this Neocameralist jargon the polit-vocabulary is depoliticized from within. In the fields of economic and social policy, an explicit break with this tradition has been never made, and an open struggle over policy questions has until now been shadowed by quasi-objectivist formulas. In Finnish foreign policy the Meineckean (1924, 1) idea of one best possible policy-line, the singularized *Staatsräson* for each country, shaped, for example, president Paasikivi's views (Paasikivi 1958, 93-96).

Certain tendencies, resembling for example the German discussion, can also be detected in the Finnish polit-vocabulary. The verb *politikoida* was first understood as merely “talking politics,” but was also used by some, such as the poet Eino Leino in his political causeries, in the sense of “acting politically” or “politicking” as early as 1904 (quoted from *Pakinat*, 116-117). This latter understanding also made its way into a dictionary of foreign words (Haavisto 1911, 37). Indeed, the Finnish term *politikoida* resembles the English *politicking* in its ability to use for ‘acting politically’ one single word – something that is impossible in German, French or Swedish.

*Politisoida* (to politicize) was originally used synonymously to *politikoida*. At the encyclopedic level it was only in 1964 when the difference was accepted by ‘defining’ *politisoida* in the formula: “render political, mix with politics” (*Uusi tietosanakirja*, vol. 16). In its everyday use the term for politicization had long carried a merely negative meaning: *politisoituminen* refers to politicization through the act of others. For instance, the Leftist writer Raoul Palmgren speaks in 1935 “against the politicization (*politisoituminen*) of the literature” (*Tekstejä...*, 62).

The noticeable increase in the early 20th century of the polit-vocabulary in other languages (for the German cf. Kann 1973) also clearly holds true for the Finnish vocabulary. In this respect the differences between textual genres deserve to be taken into account. In such a popular genre as the causeries in the newspapers, the polit-vocabulary was already accepted around the time of the Parliament Reform of 1906, while in academic literature the state-vocabulary persisted for until much later.

## The Disappearance of the Discipline Concept

Aristotle’s famous book *Tà politikà* was a study of the polis, and similarly, the academic discipline of *politics* in the medieval and early modern universities was a discipline on “political matters” (cf. Sellin 1978), the Latin plural being *politices*. Also at the University in Turku, founded in 1640, there was during some decades a chair called *politices, ethices, historiarum* (cf. Klinge 1988). The term *politices* re-

ferred to an array of different matters, both those between states and those dealing with internal legal, financial, administrative and other questions. The German *Polizeiwissenschaft* (cf. Maier 1966, Brückner 1977), as well as its analogies elsewhere, was a variant of this kind of an ‘umbrella discipline,’ within which it was not necessary to identify things that were specifically ‘political.’

Reinhart Koselleck (1967, 1975) has detected that *die Geschichte* was grammatically transformed from the plural to the singular and became contaminated by the term *Historie* between the 1760s and 1780s, beginning thus to refer also to the *res gestae* – to a phenomenon itself and hence not only to a story about one. Something similar happened with politics from ca. 1800 onwards: the subject matter of the discipline was being turned by a metonymic operation into a phenomenon in its own right, and since then we have referred to certain kinds of activities as “politics” or as “political” (cf. Palonen 1985, 1990b, Vollrath 1989). I have spoken of a “horizon shift” in the understanding of politics. As for politics, the horizon shift was more or less simultaneous in French and German sources, and it also seems that there is no radical difference from the British sources, either.

The thematization of politics during the 19th century consists of attempts to draw the contours of the new horizons. Authors used to refer to politics as if there was still a relative level of continuity to the Aristotelian view. However, upon closer examination of the texts it becomes clear that the discussion of a science or an art of politics actually referred to the instruments used to improve the quality of politics as an activity. The thematization of politics in the Finnish language began at a time in which the discipline concept had already become anachronistic elsewhere. A kind of a dualist view, distinguishing between “theoretical” and “practical” politics, can be found e.g. in the dictionary of the conservative Fennoman Meurman, for whom *politiki* means a “science of the state” and “its adaptation to the affairs of the state is called practical politics” (Meurman 1883/90, 639).

In particular, a remnant of the discipline concept can be detected in the interpretations of the various policy-fields, in which the relation between an action and a discipline was never explicated. The sense of a break with this discipline view was, nonetheless, indicated in an article on social policy by Böök, a government official, in the handbook *Valtiotieteiden käsikirja*.

In academic literature politics means both the science of the state, and the life of the state and the action concerning the life of the state. In daily parlance politics only has the latter meaning (Böök 1923, 435).

The chair of political science, or *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, at the University of Helsinki was founded in 1921. The applicants, Brotherus (1924a,b,c) and Laurila (1923), Erich (1924), who wrote the expert review to the faculty, and Ruuth [later: Ruutu] (1922a,b, 1924), who applied for a private docent's position, all had something to say on the concept of politics. At that time none of them was entirely free from the remnants of the discipline concept, and especially Georg Jellinek's idea of politics as a *praktische Wissenschaft* (1900, 13-19) was often mentioned. The academic discourse did not adopt any reference to the usage of the concept by political agents, among whom no one referred to politics in the disciplinary sense in Finland.

## A Policy of the Finnish People

There have been few thematizations of a systematic account of the policy-conception of politics (for its distinction from the politics and polity conceptions cf. Rohe 1978/1994). Especially those interested in "policy-analysis" in political science seem to have been uninterested in asking why a definite policy should be preferable to an oblique, opportunistic and situation-oriented form of politicking. Nor have I found any systematic explication of how the coordination of different activities into a policy could be realized, how the primary acts are transformed, or when they are included into a policy. In this sense, policy does not seem to play the role of an independent concept. (cf. Rohe & Dörner 1991)

In the 19th century Finland was a semi-colonial country in which the personal experience of acting politically was almost entirely lacking. Times, however, began to change in the early years of Czar Alexander II's reign as the Finnish Grand Duke through such events as the nomination of the Fennoman ideologist J.V. Snellman to the the Senate, or "domestic government," the convocation of the Finnish



part of the medieval Swedish Estate Diet in 1863 with its regularization of the Diet sessions since 1869. An elementary party competition between the Fennoman, the Svekoman and the Liberal fractions began amongst university students in Helsinki. (cf. Klinge 1967, vol. 2).

The Fennoman “party leader” professor Yrjö Koskinen (orig. G.Z. Forsman, later Y.S. Yrjö-Koskinen) rewrote the history of the Swedish empire from a “Finnish” perspective. In his writings we find for the first time the expression of the idea that the Finns also had a policy. In Hegelian style he writes in 1869:

The highest form of the national life is, of course, the political (*valtiollinen*). The Finnish people is no exception in this respect, and we shall not forget that it also has a policy of its own (*oma politiikkinsa*) (Yrjö-Koskinen 1869, 541).

This is a good example of the application of the *policy*-perspective. Every ‘state’ or ‘people’ has, according to Koskinen, a policy of its own. The word policy was used, above all, to refer to a foreign policy in the European concert, in the balance system of the great powers. In spite of Finland’s being part of the Russian Empire, Finnish writers (for example Mechelin 1873) claimed that it was a ‘state,’ and Koskinen’s view contained the idea that the ‘Finnish people’ was a policy-agent.

State or government were in general considered as the main policy-agents in Finnish sources around 1900, but the formula was extended to refer, for example, to the policy of a Bismarck or of popes in *Tietosanakirja* (1909-1922). In the 1920s this formula was applied, at least in the daily parlance, to the activities of individual politicians, although this extension was also the target of a great deal of criticism. In his diary, President Relander wrote on the ambassador Holsti that:

...Holsti tries, to too great an extent, to follow a policy of his own at the cost of the policy of the government. (Relander I, 61, from 1925)

The idea here was that a state or a government cannot have but a single policy. Koskinen and others legitimated this view by the

essence of a nation, and Paasikivi and Kekkonen later legitimated it by the necessary singularization and unification of the policy in the name of the *Staatsräson* (cf. Palonen 1987). Kekkonen states that in the international politics there are two “leading factors,” “the national interest of the states” and “relations of power between the states,” which should be balanced with each other as the a criteria of identifying a proper line for the foreign policy of a state to follow. (Kekkonen 1944, 13-14, 25-26) Both subscribed to the conclusion that “the domestic policy should be adapted to the facts dictated by the foreign policy and not vice versa” (Kekkonen 1943, 32).

The policy to be followed was understood as being determined by the “being” of the Finnish state in its relation to the great powers, as a question of detecting the demands of the *Staatsräson*. That the leaders of Finnish foreign policy had to make a choice and had to deliberate among the competing alternatives was something that these leaders tended to rather avoid facing. Or, the existence of an open choice was being publicly thematized only when the old “line” had become obsolete, as was the case after World War II (cf. Kekkonen 1944) and again following the collapse of the Soviet Union. To mitigate the moment of choice, a policy had to be based on a ‘line’ or a ‘doctrine’: The Paasikivi-Kekkonen-line as a doctrine in Finnish post-war foreign policy was understood to be a foundation independent of political conjunctures.

A point of debate has been the “necessity” of Finland’s entering the war against the Soviet Union alongside Nazi Germany in June 1941. After the war the ‘national’ historians constructed the so-called “driftwood theory” to legitimate the necessity thesis. It was, however, criticized already by the Prime Minister Paasikivi in February 1946. He put forth a counter-factual thought experiment in favour of a policy the aim of which would have been to avoid the war in 1941 by the methodological criterion that without imagining the realizability of that which had not happened, no historical judgement is possible. (*Paasikiven linja*, esp. 51-57) Acknowledging a *Spielraum* of action as a condition for all politics and for every policy long remained a minority view.

## From the State to the Political System

The demarcation of a definite “political” sphere, sector or field from other spheres was the dominant trend in the 19th century understanding of politics. The problems of demarcation, especially in terms of legal topics and their relation to politics, could be delicate and, hence, of immediate importance politically (cf. already Guizot 1821, 1822). The questions of “political” crimes, criminals, prisoners and refugees were perhaps the concrete cases in which a demarcation between the political and the legal sphere were experienced as urgent (cf. Riila 1993). Nonetheless, the results of attempted demarcations in international law remained fragile. For instance, both the Hague Peace Conference in 1899 and the League of Nations in the 1920s tried to draft a list of “non-political” questions, but, of course, no consensus could be achieved between the participating states about its content. (cf. Morgenthau 1933, 27-32).

Characteristic of the Finnish political vocabulary, especially as opposed to the British one, is, however, the absence of a quasi-natural distinction between the public and the private sphere as a criterion of the political. *Political* is rarely rendered as *julkinen* (public) in Finnish. In two important ‘definitions of politics,’ the public is, however, evoked. In the entry by Forsman – he was a law professor – for *Politiikka* in *Tietosanakirja* (VII, 1916, 774), public life is used as a differentiating criterion for politics as activity. A half century later the same distinction played a key role in professor Jan-Magnus Jansson’s textbook (Sw. 1969, finn. 1970, quoted from the translation. 39-41) in the demarcation of a ‘narrower’ interpretation of politics from a ‘wider’ one, the interpretation of an “organized activity” in general. Jansson’s claim that the act of a doctor caring for a patient in a state hospital might be taken as a political act, while the same act in a private hospital is not (op. cit, 61), sounds quite strange to present-day Finnish readers.

The relation between *valtiollinen* (stately, etatist), *oikeudellinen* (legal) and *poliittinen* are dealt with extensively in the *Tietosanakirja* by constitutional law professor Rafael Erich. He interpreted the relation between the legal and the political as follows:

... we often speak of political, matters, viewpoints, reasons etc. as opposed to the *legal*. The political is, then, a kind of matter etc., which is essentially determined by the cause of the purposes of the state and not the pure principles of justice. In international law disputes of a political character are such disputes, which cannot be principally judged by a legal criterion (TSK, VII, 1916, 772).

Here, Erich uses the teleological judgement as the main criterion of the political, as opposed to normative legal judgement. He wanted to restrict the range of the political and was not prepared to define the political as independent of the state. He followed the usage of the Jellinekian *Allgemeine Staatslehre* (cf. esp. 1900, 158), which would later be criticized for its etatism by a number of German authors of different backgrounds, such as Max Weber (1919), Carl Schmitt (1927/1932), Otto Hintze (1929), (and) Hans Morgenthau (1929, 1933) in post-World War I Germany.

The questions of polity and constitution, which were actualized by the Parliament Reform of 1906, the formation of new mass parties with their own programmatic statements, as well as by the first elections to the unicameral *Eduskunta* with universal male and female suffrage in 1907, were hardly described as political. When the polity-questions were treated in terms of *valtiollinen*, the policy-dimension gained a special significance in the Finnish polit-vocabulary.

In certain situations the use of the adjective *poliittinen* (political) was in itself the expression of a partisan view in an acute dispute. A clear case in this respect is the creation of the special courts dealing with "crimes against the state" (*valtiirikostuomioistuimet*) after the Civil War of 1918. In a parliament debate on the amnesty for the "Reds" in 1920, only the Social Democrats spoke of them as *political prisoners* (cf. the proceedings of *Eduskunta*, 30.5. 1920, 600-624).

Indications of an extended usage of the term *poliittinen* can be found in the diary of President Relander, in which it frequently appears together with metaphors of play, theatre, and even sport (*political arena, ballet, farce, stage, playboard* etc.), and Relander, a doctor of botanics, also uses metaphors of nature (*political climate, heaven*). Many of these expressions are clearly pejorative, while others manifest the president's distance from the "ordinary" politicians. Simi-

larly, his attitude toward political tactics is ambivalent: some of his expressions, such as *political humbug and intrigue*, are derogatory, while a certain appreciation of political cleverness is manifested in such formulas as *political constellation, puzzle, maturity, wisdom* and or also *political eye, move (veto)*, although also directly moralistic formulas, such as *political goodness (hyve)* or *political conscience*, play a role in his vocabulary.

Jussi Teljo, in his inaugural lecture of 1949 as political science professor at the University of Helsinki, advocated an Americanization and “behavioralization” of Finnish political science (Teljo 1950). However, in his monograph concerning the period of rupture of 1905-1908 in the Finnish “state life” (Teljo 1949b), Teljo still uses *valtiollinen* in dealing with constitutional or ‘macro-political’ questions as an epithet for such concepts as reforms, events, aims, history, and life. The range of reference of the term *poliittinen*, in the other hand, has to do with the the ‘micro-political’ questions of strategy and tactics. *Poliittinen* refers to a *situation, position, question, attitude, struggle, orientation, or stage*. The state still appears to be the framework of politics.

A shift in the vocabulary took place among Teljo’s students in the 1950s. Jaakko Nousiainen’s (he later became a professor of political science at the University of Turku) textbook from 1959 was called *The Finnish Political System*, and the title itself was a program for a shift from the state to the “political system” (although not in the strict system theoretical sense, advocated by Easton in 1953). The figure of the system serves as a new framework for the polity, by means of which politics was domesticated into a sphere or sector of “society,” which was the name given to the new “super-system” by the expanding “social sciences” (cf. Nousiainen 1959a, 4). In Nousiainen’s *Puolueet puntarissa* (“Weighing the Parties”), also published in 1959, there is no mention of *valtiollinen*, but *poliittinen* is applied in the content of questions of life, history, and, above all, the parties themselves. The political parties are the main political agents in the the post-war political science and in public opinion. The ordering character of the parties in the polity-sphere is also expressed by Nousiainen’s claim that political parties are a means of avoiding “anarchy, confusion, or chaos” (1959a, 9). In *Ylioppilaslehti* the socialist student politician Teuvo Olli almost identifies politics with “party politics”:

It is, then, the parties which formulate and realize in practice the programmes and goals of different currents of political ideas. It is for this reason (the) political activity is also an activity of the parties. Correspondingly, all municipal and parliamentary politics is party politics. And it is simply natural that this is the case. (*Ylioppilaslehti*, 31/1960)

Thus, the older practice, which partly followed both the Swedish and the German usages, giving priority to the state-vocabulary, was replaced in Finland by the more Anglophone use of the polit-vocabulary. The older usage, restricting *poliittinen* to strategico-tactical questions, which are subordinate to the constitutional ones, was replaced by a twofold strategy by making the political more acceptable through its domestication into a separate sphere within the super-system of "the society." Thus, the claims of change, struggle, tactics and intrigue were no longer held to be essential aspects of politics, but, rather, as a subsystem *politiikka* (i.e. the polity) gained a respectable position both within the academic world and within the general public.

## The Professionalization of Politicians

According to Max Weber (1919, 41), professional politicians can be found only in Western countries. Nonetheless, the reputation of politicians has remained highly contested, and they have tended to be despised by the "establishment." This has particularly been the case with the new types of professional politicians, who have been recruited with the extension and democratization of suffrage. Relying on the critical studies of modern party politics by James Bryce (1886/1910), Moisei Ostrogorski (1903/1912) and Robert Michels (1911), Weber (1917, 1918, 1919) stresses the formation of professional politicians as one of the conditions for the existence of a democratized mass polity. The whole reputation of politics, the differentiation of a political sphere and a thematization of politicking as a professional activity are all closely related to these new "realities" of professionalized politics. From these slightly different viewpoints the politician as a figure deserves a separate discussion (within) in the conceptual history of politics.

In the Finnish polity we cannot speak of there having been professional politicians prior to the formation of the Social Democratic Party (1903), the Parliament Reform of 1906 and the first parliamentary elections to the new *Eduskunta* in 1907. The dependence of the Finnish parliament, and especially the Senate, on the Russian rule prevented the full realization of democratized politics before 1917-1919. With the exception of a few Social Democratic “agitators,” the existence of professional politicians who earned their living off politics became possible after that time, if not even later.

The development of politicians abroad was, nevertheless, keenly followed in Finland. The Committee for Parliamentary Reform warned against the professionalization of politicians, and the historian E.G. Palmén spoke in the Clergy Estate against a “class of politicians, who exist solely in order to participate in politics” (28.5. 1906, 614). The debate was revived with new intensity in 1917, with the plans to extend the session period (and, correspondingly, the fees) of the M.Ps. Several bourgeois representatives saw the reform as contributing to the formation of a profession of politicians who earned their living off politics. For example, Hornborg from the Swedish People’s Party referred to the fact that in some countries two professions lack prestige, that of a politician and a journalist (op.cit., 707, cf. Weber 1919, 54, 68), drawing the implicit conclusion that a special competence in politics is not commonly appreciated. As opposed to the bourgeois politicians, the Social Democratic M.P. Walpas-Hänninen asked: “Which one of you is not a professional politician?” Accordingly, he considered the professions of a professor or a chief banker as secondary businesses that enabled them to “politick every day” (proceedings of *Eduskunta* 1917, 708). He called for the improvement in the salaries of politicians in order to attract “more competent professional politicians” (ibid.).

The Finnish bourgeois parties were also reluctantly yet increasingly prepared to accept the professionalization of the activities in the polity by introducing a monthly salary for M.Ps in 1947 and by increasing the number of functionaries earning their living from politics. Another matter, however, is the parodying of the conventional critique of politicking, as in the following formula of then nationalist student politician (and later professor of folklore), Martti Haavio.

"Youth should not be engaged in politicking," we often hear said by those wise men who, who find it inconvenient that the youth is not content with their "statesmanship" (1923, quoted from *Ylioppilaslehti*, 1913-1963, 42).

The first person I have found to use *politikoida* (to politick) to characterize his own activity was the Social Democratic politician and history professor, Väinö Voionmaa. In a courier letter to his diplomat son, Tapio Voionmaa, who was during war time in Switzerland, he writes: "I have been politicking the whole afternoon" (*Kuriiripostia*, 280, from 1943).

Still, in the post-war time the professional politicians, in particular the "district secretaries" of the parties and trade unions, were often ridiculed by the *literati* and journalists (see for instance Paavola 1959, 96). To some extent it was the growth of the field of academic political science that enabled the consideration of politicians as belonging to an honourable profession among others. Jaakko Nousiainen contributes to this by calling *politicking* the "profession" of politicians:

... the number of those people who earn their living from politics has increased... . Their profession is politicking (Nousiainen 1959a, 40).

Perhaps the most eloquent defence of politicians can be found in Johannes Virolainen's chronique of his time as Prime Minister (1964-1966). Appointed to the post of Prime Minister after a non-party presidential government of high officials in the ministries and central offices, Virolainen defends the politicians as follows:

... the Prime Minister should be an active politician. I myself have been an active politician my whole life, beginning with my student days (Virolainen 1969, 55).

Also among the younger academics and *literati* a clear shift in the mood toward the acceptance of politics, and politicians in particular, can be seen in the late 1950s. This is most clearly visible in the pages of the student weekly *Ylioppilaslehti*, which became an "academic culturo-political weekly." For example, Jaakko Itälä, later a Liberal minister himself, parodies the unpolitical attitudes manifested in schools.



Oh awful word, politics. It has created a disaster in our fatherland. It has mixed itself with all kinds of things, especially today, and dirtifies them immediately. It prevents ordinary men from holding leading positions and beats down competence based on schooling (*Ylioppilaslehti* 5, 1957, cf. also Itälä's contribution in *Suomen Kuvalehti* 34, 1957).

A direct exhortation to students not only to follow political events but also to join political student associations and parties was given by Teuvo Olli. Doing so would make up a "new chapter in Finnish student life" and an action "in the spirit of the developing society of the 1960s" (*Ylioppilaslehti* 30/1960).

Already a certain ironic distance from the new pro-political mood can be found in the poet Pentti Saarikoski's entry *Politiikka* in his "Guide to raising intelligentsia":

Politics. Fashionable. It is old-fashioned to claim that politicians are stupid. You have to give an impression that you personally know at least one politicians (*Ylioppilaslehti* 37, 1959).

For the history of the concept this story of the relative, and usually not so enthusiastic, acceptance of the professionalization of politicians has several important, although rather indirect implications. The legitimacy of politics as such becomes a rather pragmatic matter, while the position of taking a stand in favour of politics but against professional politicians, which was especially strong in the pre-democratic British political discourse (cf. Palonen 1999a and the sources quoted there), becomes obsolete. The metonymic quasi-identification of politics with the practice of professional party politicians earning their living from politics strengthened the understanding of politics in terms of spatial metaphors of a sphere, sector or field. The increasing significance and legitimacy of professional politicians can, however, also lead to closer attention being paid to the very activity of politicking, its qualities and characteristics. This attention is, however, independent of thinking in terms of the metaphor of spheres.

## Qualifying the Activity of Politicking

The activity of politicking is bound to be a queer, oblique, opportunistic, situational and self-changing mode of action, while policy attempts to reduce the range of variation within the activity. The first dimension in the qualification of politics as an activity exclusively concerns just its relation to the form of a policy. The arguments in favour of a clear and definite policy might be questioned as being incompatible with the radically discontinuous and dispersive, plural and conflicting character of the political aspect in the phenomena. It is in the breaking points and in dealing with them as challenges and opportunities for change that politics manifests itself.

This situational view on politics was introduced in the early 20th century German thinking about politics that was initiated by Max Weber and followed in the Weimar Republic for example by Helmuth Plessner, Carl Schmitt and Walter Benjamin. After World War II the situational perspective transcended the Rhine and can be detected in the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre and at least partially Raymond Aron, as well as in the works of such German emigrants in the United States as Hannah Arendt and Hans Morgenthau (cf. Palonen 1985, ch. 6, 1990h, 1998).

In the vocabularies this shift can be pinpointed to the partial replacement of the word politics by *the political*. *Das Politische* in German was known already around 1800, used for example by Georg Jellinek (1900, 158). It was made famous by Carl Schmitt's *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1927/1932), and was transformed into French in Morgenthau's book *La notion du 'politique' et les différends internationaux* (1933), although taken up by French authors only much later (cf. Freund 1965, Debray 1981). In the Anglophone discourse "the political" seems to be an even later expression, although it has been used increasingly since the 1980s (cf. Mouffe 1993). Sometimes, from Schmitt onwards, "the political" is used as a counter-concept for politics as activity, in the sense of devaluating the latter. Hence, from this sort of view there is not much to be gained by the qualification of politicking as activity. The works of Weber, especially his criteria of the politician living for politics, and Arendt, her metaphor of politics as a performing art in particular, still remain the starting points for any discussion on politicking.

In the Finnish literature, characterizations of politicking remain rare until the late 1950s. The contexts in which it used to be formulated were encyclopaedias and textbooks. The evasive character of politics is acknowledged explicitly by Yrjö Ruutu, who at that time was acting professor of political science in Helsinki and probably the person best acquainted with the international literature on the subject in Finland, in his textbook on international politics:

Politics is a concept of which there are only few definitions in literature. Either this concept is considered to be self-evident, which it by no means is, or is otherwise so complicated that one cannot possibly confine it to one single definition. It is a word which is used in everyday language without close consideration of its content (Ruutu 1934, 5).

Amongst the definitions of politics that Ruutu offered on various occasions, the most explicit is this one from 1938. Polemizing against “unpolitical liberalism,” Ruutu, then a member of the Social Democratic Party, writes:

... politics... means the common action of different societal groups for common interests, as well as common action for the guidance of societal development by means of the state for specific values (Ruutu 1938, 9).

Ruutu represented an evolutionistic philosophy of history, in which values, interests, and groups appear as quasi-natural entities and the state as the only proper policy-agent. He advocated an instrumentalist view on politics, as did Forsman (1916), Swentorzetzski (1928, 11), and later Teljo (1949a). In these views, politics is understood as a fabrication of an artefact, not as an activity in its own right.

A slightly different perspective appears in the views of some post-war political scientists, who have taken power (*valta*) as the key concept of politics. Risto Hyvärinen, a soldier-diplomat, departs from the power politics tradition and singles out “the struggle for power in society or politics” as the main object of political science and “the struggle on power between the states” as that of international politics (R. Hyvärinen 1963, 191).

In an early article preceding his dissertation on Kelsen’s theory of the state (1950), Jan-Magnus Jansson defined politics by combining a Weberian and Kelsenian view, as the struggle over new laws (Jansson

1948, 131). According to him, the point is to claim that “the primary object of political action is power” (Jansson 1961, 31), and it is the generality of the object that enables politics to comprehend all the phenomena of power. Weber’s point is thus so far well taken up by Jansson as he sees that in politics “power serves other purposes” (ibid.), although he refrains from discussing either the priority of the medium over purposes or the specific Weberian view on power as a *Chance*.

In his textbook, Jansson proposes a “wider” formula of politics, one which replaces power by *Herrschaft* as a key to politics. As every political science student in Finland until very recently used to know, Jansson understands politics, as “ruling over organized groups of human beings” (1970, 38). By using the resources of Weber’s formal concept of *Herrschaft*, Jansson’s ‘definition’ is not as so *von oben* - oriented as it first appears. Yet both the concepts of organizing and of ruling introduce elements of continuity and regularity that are hardly suited to the consideration of a Weberian *Macht*-based interpretation, namely in the consideration of the elements of *Chance* and the situation.

In the *Politiikka* article in *Yhteiskuntatieteiden käsikirja*, Onni Rantala, later a professor at the University of Turku, combines an instrumental perspective with the metaphor of art. He demands à la Bismarck, some qualifications before the activity can be counted as politics:

Essential in the art of politics is the choice between different ends and means, as well as the realistic judgement of different existing possibilities. The task has been defined briefly by Otto v. Bismarck in his remark that politics is the art of the possible. The final decision is based on the known facts of the moment and not on idealistic hopes. A free and prejudiceless deliberation belongs thus to the essence of politics. It implies two characteristics for political activity. Reason has a greater influence than emotion, and the policy followed (*poliittinen menettely*) varies according to the situation (Rantala 1963, 501-502).

Thus, Rantala views politics as the deliberation between possibilities, although not necessarily in the reductionist sense of the *Realpolitik*. Correspondingly, policy is understood as changing according to the situation. In general, in the Finnish understanding of politics (as claimed by Pekonen 1997), the possibility of changing

the government through electoral defeats has played a marginal role. However, this shift in governments has been present in the everyday understanding of politics, as we can see from a remark by the writer Arvo Turtiainen concerning the treatment of political prisoners (he was himself a prisoner during the War due to pro-communist views):

Political prisoners are treated more cautiously. The Finnish prison officials have during the years come to realize what a burden (*riisa*) they can come to be. Politics is, moreover, politics. You can never be sure what kind of men will hold leading position next year, or even tomorrow sit on the leading positions (Turtiainen 1945, 164).

In terms of searching the qualifications for politicking as an activity the literati are often better than political scientists. The most explicit formula is presented by Jouko Tyyri in an aphorism (written originally in the early 1960s)

No party can be designed in advance, because politics is an action and acquires its form from counteraction. The whole affair (*puuha*) arises from the diffuse foresight that something must and can be done together. And nothing can be realized without resistance (quoted from Tyyri 1975, 110).

Here, we can see a strong Arendtian component both in terms of the unpredictable action and in the “action in concert.” It is complemented by the Weberian insight on the constitutive role of struggle and resistance in politics. The works of the authors do not, however, seem to be an explicit source for Tyyri, but, rather, he is more prepared than the more conventional academic writers to look for these aspects of politicking in politics (cf. also his views on politics as freedom, discussed below).

## The Controversies over Politicization

By politicization I do not mean an increased “interest in politics” among the people, but, rather, the naming of something as political or interpretation of something politically. In this sense, any refer-

ence to politics presupposes some level of politicization. The controversy has to do with what is named as political.

However, the recourse to the vocabulary of the *polis* and the polity as something given and already commonly known became the primary naming of some phenomena as political rather than uncontroversial. Only in borderline cases did the naming become controversial during the differentiation of the political sphere in the 19th century. Already in the late 19th century there were, at least in the German and French contexts, some signs of change that were related to the qualification of the political as being independent of the spheres – for example in Weber's Freiburg inaugural lecture (1895). What was hence being qualified as political did not belong to the polity in the conventional sense.

The noun *Politisierung* seems to have been introduced by Karl Lamprecht in 1907, without revising the concept of politics. But he originated a discussion in which the expressionist *literati* Ludwig Rubiner and Kurt Hiller reinterpreted phenomena such as theatre and literature by claiming their political character (cf. Palonen 1989, 1985, 57-59). By calling for the politicization of diverse phenomena they rendered the topics controversial and politically significant, as well as created new subject matters for politicking beyond the conventional polity sphere. In addition, they also questioned the political character of conventional politics (cf. esp. Hiller 1913). Thus, what was eminently political was no longer a matter of tradition or convention but, rather, a matter of the quality and intensity of the question disputed. The reactions to such claims, as represented by Thomas Mann's *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918), were also shaped by the reconceptualization of politics in terms of the possibility of politicization.

The German expressionist *literati* thus played a pioneering role in the politicization of questions independently from their "locus." The academic debate on the revision of the concept of politics, beginning with Max Weber, continued along the path paved by the *literati*. Outside Germany this usage gained ground slowly, emerging in France only after World War II, with the "existentialist" *literati* and philosophers posing as the "avant-garde" (cf. Palonen 1990a, 1990b, 89-90). The claims of the "end of ideology" in the 1950s were frequently seen to indicate the "decline of politics" without really thematizing

the concept of politics itself. One exception was the French debate on *dépolitisation*, which also offered chances for the rethinking of politics, although the critique of the *dépolitisation* thesis was not turned into active demands for politicization, as it was once done by the German *literati* a half century earlier (Palonen 1990b, 90-93).

A politicization was, thus, needed in order to create a Finnish polity. Perhaps Koskinen's call for Finns to have their "own policy" can already be interpreted as representative of this. However, when looking at the greatest politicizing event, namely the 1906 Parliament Reform, one is struck by the scarcity of the polit-vocabulary used in the debates of the Estate Diet. Only Magnus Lavonius of the Bourgeois Estate talks about the awakening of the "sleeping of the political life" in Finland (proceedings, 28.5. 1906, 612), and Paavo Snellman of in the Clergy Estate wanted to educate the Finns into a "politically self-conscious nation" (proceedings 28.5. 1906, 597). At the same time Eino Leino made a request of the unicameral Parliament for "a new..., more vigorous [*vireä*] political life" (*Pakinat* II, 62). He had written a month earlier on the comprehensive character of politics:

Politics continues to fill the minds of everyone. Its phenomena concern, as it is well known, the whole country and the entire people (op.cit., 55).

No overall awareness of politicizing moves as being necessary aspects of the creation of the specific Finnish polity was attained during the rapidly realized Parliament Reform. The same seems to be the case in the critical years of 1917-1919, also on the Socialist side: the above quoted apology of professional politicians by Walpas-Hänninen was perhaps the most remarkable exception in this respect.

A sort of populist anti-politicism played a role in the Finnish discussion, for example, when Arvo Turtiainen referred to a fellow-prisoner during the war years

Politics was in his opinion "garbage and deceitful" (*huijausta*). ... in him was harvested that sewing of high patriotic and reactionary propaganda,

which aims at defaming and depreciating political life and action. By means of this propaganda especially the youth in this country has been successfully "depoliticized" (Turtiainen 1946, 66).

The critique over disturbing culture with politics was a widely held stance in the inter-war era. Even the young Marxist Raoul Palmgren spoke in the 1930s of "our politicized" time and referred to the danger of reviewing literature from a purely political point of view (*Tekstejä...*, 93). In the debate volume *Pidot tornissa*, however, Olavi Paavolainen, a well-known pro-European writer, both acknowledged and at the same time regretted that "our time has been politicized and economicized" and at this time, "when we speak about culture, that unfortunate political colouring must immediately be present. There are no purely cultural activities any longer" (*Pidot tornissa*, 1937, 32).

An astonishing denunciation of all politicization by someone who was considered by others as a politician herself is contained in the answer of Liberal M.P. Irma Karvikko, to a query of *Ylioppilaslehti*. She writes:

Since the wars life in our country has become badly politicized. The ultimate reason for this is the entrance of Communists into stately (*valtiollinen*) life. They do not feel responsible for the fate of their country and their people, and therefore they have readily made great and small promises in all directions. The error of the others is that they have followed into half-way, in order to prevent danger. As a result of this error stately life has been continuously politicized and party goals have dethroned the general interest of the entire country (*Ylioppilaslehti* 5/1953).

This quote is certainly representative of the mood amongst some bourgeois circles in the post-war years. They participated in politics in order to delimit both the politicization of questions and the conscious politicking. The politicization of life in general was also acknowledged by academic writers, for example by Nousiainen, who speaks of the "politicization of the different fields of the societal life" (1959b, 3). In his inaugural lecture as a professor of political history, L.A. Puntila emphasized that "present-day human being encounters



politics at every step” (*Ylioppilaslehti* 10/1952). Later Puntila also spoke of “politicization,” in the sense of the increased significance of politics, as being one of the current trends (*Ylioppilaslehti* 11-12/1959). He also saw that it is “the dictatures, in which the direction of development is determined entirely politically” (*Ylioppilaslehti* 10/1952). It is probably this identification of “politicization,” with its maximum of state or party intervention, which led to the attempts to keep something out of the grasp of politicization. Both the right wing M.P. Georg C. Ehrnrooth and the left wing M.P. Eino Kilpi wanted to treat the world refugee problem as a “purely humanitarian” and not a political issue (*Ylioppilaslehti* 29.1. 1960).

Critics of the common lamentations of politicization can be found among the young *literati* of the late 1950s and early 1960s. They saw a lack of politicization in the common claims of unanimity in both domestic and foreign policy, strengthened by the *ex post* idealization of the experience of the War. Jouko Tyyri criticized the “demonstrations of unanimity” (*yksimielisyys*) (*Ylioppilaslehti* 7/1959), Arvo Salo wrote an editorial called “The Art of Quarrelling” (*Ylioppilaslehti* 39/1959) and Jörn Donner, later a M.P. and even M.E.P., parodied the protests “against the politicization of the society” (1969, 274). Professor Antti Eskola objected to the alleged “unpolitical” decisions of the experts, on the grounds that all decisions have political consequences (1968, 38).

Generally speaking, it has tended to be easier to criticize the claims that something is unpolitical rather than insisting on the existence of politicization. The critique was restricted to the width of the political sphere, or to the definiteness of its boundaries, for instance with regard to sports (cf. Holappa 1970, 26, 1986). Provocative claims of the further politicization of different aspects of life and culture are lacking in the Finnish discussion. The ideas that the level of controversy would be increased or the *Spielraum* of action extended by politicization seems to have been explicitly defended. This seems to be the case even with the *literati* writing in *Ylioppilaslehti*, which at its peak was the key organ of the culturo-political debate in Finland around 1960. Politics beyond the conventional polity-sphere was indicated but not really explicated in the writings of Tyyri and other *literati*.

## Legitimizing Politics – Necessity or Freedom?

What is the more general human and historical significance of politics? Such a question becomes possible to answer only after the acknowledgement of the horizon shift of politics as an activity, and it is, to a considerable extent, precisely by thematizing such questions that the drawing of the contours of the new horizons occurs. To dramatize the question I exclude from my discussion a purely instrumental view on politics and concentrate instead on conflict legitimization in the dichotomous terms of necessity and freedom.

A functional or necessitarian view could be combined with a Hegelian philosophy of history but also with a more prosaic and implicit form of the belief in “progress” as a force in its own right, reaching beyond the variations in political activity. In the early twentieth century such German thinkers as Hans Freyer and Rudolf Smend advocated this kind of functional view on the significance of politics (cf. Palonen 1985, 64-66). Later the functionalist or structuralist mode of social science as well as many Marxists have strongly relied on the necessity of politics.

As expressions of the freedom legitimation we can count the non-teleological views on politics as a play or game, as an activity which is not measurable by the aims or results of the activities themselves, but, rather, by their qualities. This argument is already implied in British politics of the late 19th century, and in some respect also by thinkers who insisted on the autonomy of politics, such as, Alexis de Tocqueville (1835-1840). As comprehensive conceptions of politics as an expression of freedom these views appear perhaps most eloquently in Max Weber's (1919) ideal type of a politician living for politics and Hannah Arendt's view of politics as paradigmatic form of action, as contrasted with labour and fabrication (1958), as well as a view of freedom as the *Sinn* of politics (1993).

In the Finnish context the “necessitarian” view was already advocated in Koskinen's ultra-Hegelian interpretation of world history (1879). In insisting, however, on the role of the Finnish people's “own policy,” Koskinen combined a certain instrumentalism of politics as a necessary condition for the progress of nations.

Perhaps the most explicit necessitarian view on politics in Finland was presented by Reinhold Swentorzetzski (later Svento), a Social Democrat of Polish origin, in a pamphlet entitled *Politiikan taito* (The Art of Politics). He used biological analogies, comparing politics to the circulation of blood “through the organs of the state” (1928, 11). What is considered to be positive in politics is that which is necessary, i.e. the solution of great problems of the state, and it is “life itself” that “requires political activity from the citizens” (op.cit., 47). The necessity of politics means, from a certain perspective, that the citizens cannot avoid mixing with it.

We have to talk of politics, which today penetrates all ... of the organisms of state and society like a necessity, independently whether we like it or not. In an expanding democracy, politics is diffused by the daily mediation of newspapers to all circles of society, and it obliges citizens to think “politically,” to deal with political topics, to personally feel the force and importance of politics, to detect its negative aspects, to participate in it or to despise it and to be its unconscious victim (op.cit., 7).

This necessity of politics thus appears as necessary for its sustention and for the functioning of an order. This view, resembling Durkheimian functionalist sociology, however, also contains traits of a *condition humaine*, which leaves the choice of action to the vast number of political agents. Here however, Swentorzetzski sees the potential danger of a situation in which problems become more complicated (op.cit., 34), insisting that the remedy is the role of the “art” of politics, which must remain a privilege of the few. In terms of the foundations of the art of politics, the author searches for the “evidences” (*selviöt*) of politics, as something comparable to the laws of nature. Politics should be subordinated to nature and reason, and “reason is the final winner also in politics” (op.cit., 140). Thus, politics is viewed from a strongly progressivist perspective, although progress is by no means a self-sufficient force, but, rather, the “art of politics” is a necessary instrument in its realization.

A strain of the functionalist necessity of politics is also contained in the post-war discourse on politics as a subsystem of “society.” This is perhaps most clearly visible in professor Erik Allardt’s Durkheimian political sociology (1964), but also otherwise the

Parsonsonian and Eastonian variants of the functional necessity also entered not only sociology but also political science in Finland, as in Nousiainen's aforementioned view on the parties as necessary for the prevention of chaos and anarchy.

The most popular "definition" of politics in Finland, the "management of common affairs" (*yhteisten asioiden hoito*), has a pseudo-Aristotelian orientation toward a given "good life," and also includes a shift from the public to the common. The most characteristic term of this formula is, however, *hoito* (literally: nursing or curing), which I have translated as 'management' in order to stress the functional necessity implied by it. However, in the 1960s the formula was also invoked by some rather leftist authors in order to counter the popular anti-political mood (Ahlroos 1965, 7, Holappa 1970, 165). The necessitarian presupposition is most explicitly expressed by Pertti Hemánus, who later became a professor of journalism. He objects to the popular accusation of the dirty character of politics by presenting the following formula:

Talking about the dirtiness of politics is as meaningful as, for example, the claim that labouring (*työnteko*) is to be despised. Labouring belongs to the necessities of life, which is also the case with the management of common affairs, which we call politics (Hemánus 1963, 48).

Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* was published five years earlier. Had it reached the Finnish audience at that time it would have been outrightly rejected, particularly by social scientists. For Hemánus, Arendt's defense of politics as freedom-in-action as opposed to a necessary function of "society" would have seemed completely incomprehensible. If the 'driftwood theory' of history was a paradigm of a right wing apolitism, a social-science-like subsuming of politics to functional necessities was popular on the "left."

Still, the conceptualization of politics in terms of the possible is not entirely absent from the Finnish political vocabulary. However, it remained primarily connected with the German *Realpolitik* tradition, in which the possible is used to delimit the realizability of certain aims (cf. Rochau 1853/69). This was the core of the Bismarckian formula of politics as the 'art of the possible.' Nonetheless, in the late Wilhelmine Germany several authors, ranging from Max Weber to

Karl Liebknecht, inverted the formula, demanding that an attempt at conquering the impossible was necessary in order to achieve the best possible (for the debate cf. Palonen 1985, 38-41, 75-79, 106-110).

In Finland, the purest example of the Realpolitik style reductionist view of appealing to the possible in politics can be found in Kekkonen's writings toward the end of the war.

Politics, and foreign policy in particular, is – to quote Napoleon's well-known definition – the calculation of the states of affairs and of possibilities (Kekkonen 1944, 25).

As I already mentioned, J.K. Paasikivi defended the continuous presence of a realizable alternative, posing the question: “what would be the position of our country had another policy been followed” (*Paasikiven linja*, 54). In the rhetoric of the *Paasikivi-Kekkonen-line*, there was, thus, a tension between the narrow *Realpolitik* and the discussion of possibilities. The latter line was taken by the young *literati* of the 1950s, who were opposed to the claims of the “societal” activities of the students, as proposed both by right-wing student organizations and by social and political scientists whose reputations and level of fame were beginning to gain ground. Among the *literati* particularly Pekka Lounela connects politics with freedom by referring to ancient Athens, where “*free men* walked in the alleys and market places by talking politics – and they were not responsible for anything and did not politick as a duty” (*Ylioppilaslehti* 21/1955). Some years later Lounela advocated an unwittingly Weber-inspired view on power as a medium of playing with possibilities:

Power is an end in itself only for a bad politician – for a good professional it is means, an instrument for realizing his purposes... power allows a more suitable opportunity for acting politically (Lounela 1959, 80).

Jouko Tyyri was another prominent writer who criticized the implicit monopoly of social and political scientists in terms of talking about politics. As an answer to the critique of not talking about politics proper – a topic also addressed to him by the sociologist Mauno

Koivisto, who later became the President of the Republic (*Ylioppilaslehti* 38/1958) – Tyyri explicates his position: “I posed the question: What kind of language is politics?” (*Ylioppilaslehti* 7, 1959). As compared to the conventional “specialists of politics,” he finds that “the relation between signs and significances is a problem closer to my interests” (*Asenteet* 1959, 67, also 101), and he insisted that Paasikivi “observed without fatigue the *signs of time*” (op.cit., 71). In this respect Tyyri’s view predated the “linguistic turn” in Finnish political science by some two decades .

It is the distance made possible by this – in a broad sense the rhetorical approach – which allows Tyyri to see in politics the question of freedom and choice:

Politics is about choosing. A conversation is possible only between alternatives, and politicking is possible only in so far as freedom is possible. Politics ends when we encounter a necessity. Politicking in a compulsory situation is no longer politics but suicide. To deny the implies the declaration of war, whether it be internal or external, of ideas or of weapons (*Asenteet* op.cit., 138).

In the next sentence he insists the correlate of freedom and choice, namely contingency, the *Spielraum* for action as a constitutive criterion of politics.

In a free country people have a *Spielraum* (*pelinvara*). We dispute the more or less suitable possibilities, none of which are fatal. If a disaster is looming, politics must be ended (ibid).

Relating his discussion to Paasikivi’s diplomatic and negotiating attitude towards the Soviet Union, Tyyri uses the play or game metaphors as opposed to the legalistic *non possumus* view:

The most important rule of the game is, thus, that the presence of a *Spielraum* is acknowledged. Correspondingly, the political language shall be, above all, a language of negotiation, emphasizing the relativity of matters and the internal relations between them. A politician can at any time claim that it should and would be possible to obtain better results, to industrialize more rapidly, to govern more cleverly. His terms are comparative and avoid all categoriality (op.cit., 138-139).

These views presented by Tyyri are probably the best expressions of politics in terms of freedom and contingency in the entire Finnish literature on politics until this point. As compared to Tyyri's views, the social scientific jargon of the functional necessity of politics sounds apolitical, like something which turns acting politicians into a kind of puppetry of "deeper social and historical forces." Conversely, Tyyri's view also acknowledges the reality of a politician's experience of the omnipresence of contingency, of the chances of acting differently, without *a priori* claiming that it does not matter how one acts, for it is the functional significance that matters and not the acting itself.

I have exaggerated here the contrast between the two styles of thinking about politics, for a certain degree of freedom that is embedded in the activity of politicians is allowed by the social scientists. But this aspect is, rather, considered to be a by-product in the understanding of politics, as in Jan-Magnus Jansson's textbook, in which the Weberian perspective is diluted by the Eastonian systems theory. Jansson admits, however, the obvious role of contingency in politics:

We can, of course, say that the more 'political' a decision is, the more it contains the freedom of deliberation (Jansson, 1970, 60).

The omnipresence of contingency in politics and, more specifically, the qualification of degrees of politicalness is seen as clearly dependent on the degree of the freedom of contingency in deliberation. For Jansson, however, that is not the primary qualification of the political.

## The Profile of Thematization

In retrospect, the understanding of politics appears more coherent and one-dimensional, more well-known and unanimously accepted than it actually was, if we consider the contemporary views and debates. Despite this, however, the impression that there existed an established politics in post-war Europe had a certain 'reality' within the audience of the media, the general public, the rank-and-file politicians as well as mainstream political scientists. For example

it has been possible to conduct Gallup polls on the question "Are you interested in politics?" for decades now without having to specify the concept.

On the international level we can detect at least two waves of the questioning of established politics. The first can be loosely spoken as that of the New Left of the sixties, extending politics beyond the conventional polity sphere. The second is formed by the "alternative movements," beginning with the Feminists, claiming that they had created "new" or "alternative" politics. In addition, there has been an academic rethinking of politics, which was inspired by both of the aforementioned groups and which reactualized the work of older theorists, such as Arendt, Weber, Schmitt and Oakeshott.

The "New Left" argument for politicization frequently operated with the "societal" rather than the political, and it emphasized the political consequences and conditions of diverse social phenomena. A Neo-Republican view was present especially in the French discussion, understanding "*La politique ... comme prolongement des expériences quotidiennes,*" as André Philip (1962, 62) put it. For Jean-Paul Sartre politics was "*une dimension de la personne*" (1964, 132). Sartre's views can, however, already be seen as a bridge to the second wave of the critique, especially due to his critique of voting and elections as paradigms of politics (cf. Palonen 1990a, 1992).

The search for "alternative" politics was prominent in the German discussion of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The key idea here was the rethinking of politics as an existential condition and as a specific lifestyle, which soon appeared as an insufficient replacement for "old politics." Participation in the parliamentary and electoral process without accepting all the conventions and practices involved in it was the original idea behind alternative politics in west Germany.

Since the 1960s, the Finnish debate has been more closely connected to the new European trends than in the past. A vast array of new practices and theorizations seem to have settled in the Finnish debate within a short interval. This does not mean, however, that their reception has been any more direct or imitative than in earlier decades. The dominant tone, rather, is that the interesting views from the French and German discussion are almost entirely watered down within the context of Finnish political agents.



In the discussion in the 1960s neither the republican extension of the public life to the personal nor the existential reinterpretation of established politics from the personal viewpoint seemed to have played any role at all in the Finnish debate (cf. M. Hyvärinen 1994). Even Feminism was etatistic and not manifestly political (cf. Holli 1990, Parvikko 1990). Similarly, the reception of “green” and “alternative” ideas were partly related to a few spectacular extra-parliamentary activities having to do with the content of environmental policies. The critique of the forms of parliamentary politics in terms of questions surrounding lifestyle have remained marginal outside of the sphere of a few political science professionals who are sympathetic to the Greens.

When considering the Finnish contributions to the concept of politics, the primary impression is that the general Western European patterns of conceptual change are repeated in the Finnish debate. The shift from treating politics as something occurring abroad to a topic about which almost every Finnish adult citizen has her/his own opinion has taken place in an astonishingly short period of time, roughly speaking in the 100 years between 1870 and 1970. The conceptual changes can be considered as a part of this relatively rapid learning process, turning the Finnish views from those of a semi-colonial periphery into those corresponding to the views in any Western European country. In the thematization of politics as a concept, the Finland of the 1960s was no longer a *verspätete Nation* (Plessner 1959).

This rapid “Europeanization” of Finnish political culture is a main source of the Finnish *Sonderweg* in the history of the concept of politics. Compared with Great Britain in particular, a strong sense of a kind of traditional wisdom, which was experienced as being threatened by the democratization and novel practices in politics, is lacking. In Finland, practically no defence of the old order in the name of politics can be found. Politics was, rather, experienced as new object of learning, an instrument of change, which also required that actors have a certain level of self-confidence. Its proponents, from Koskinen onward, attempted, however, to find some “objective grounds” for politics above itself and thus lessen the burden of responsibility. The 20th century conceptual history of politics in Finland is, to a remarkable extent, a story of liberation from these “ob-

jective grounds," which retained their last resort in the foreign policy and which return even in the claims of "the only possible financial policy" in the early 1990s.

Within Finnish texts the policy perspective has been given priority over the polity perspective in the thematization of conventional politics. Policy refers here to a teleological orientation, combined with the demand for a unitary purpose and not an open deliberation on the direction of policy choices. In addition, Finland was viewed for a long time as being an "underdeveloped" country with a strong belief in progress as a force that moves above politics, even when realized in the sense of economic growth and social improvements (cf. Kuusi 1961).

The questions surrounding primary politicization as the constitution of a separate and definite Finnish polity were never thematized in detail, which is due in part to the usage of the state vocabulary, which was legitimated by authors through their emphasis on Finland's character as an autonomous state within the Russian Empire (cf. Jussila 1989, Pulkkinen 2000). The view of "Finland" as an ancient political unit constructed within the national historiography can be added to this legitimization. Neither the Parliament Reform of 1906 nor the constitutional struggle 1918-1919 appeared as the constitution of a new polity, creating new horizons for political action. The polity perspective was adopted only in the 1950s, based on the notion of "the Finnish political system" and the legitimization of party struggles as parliamentary and electoral practices as something normal within "advanced" political cultures.

This relative secondary nature of the polity perspective also implies – as compared with the Anglophone quasi-identification of politics with the "public sphere" – a certain flexibility in the understanding of politics following the superseding of the old etatist view. This flexibility involves both the increasing diffuseness of the borders of the "political sphere" and an increasing openness to the conceptualization of politics as an aspect of any phenomenon, independent of its "location." Here, we could speak of a certain readiness toward a quantitative or qualitative politicization.

Qualifying politics in terms of its character as an activity has turned it into a temporal phenomenon, and the priority of policy over polity also implies a certain temporalization of politics, namely in a

“futuristic” sense. The inversion of the conventional depreciation of politicking was facilitated by the introduction of the rather elegant verb *politikoida*, particularly in the literary “discourse” ranging from Leino to Tyyri. A critique of Finnish politicians as political players, because of their rule-bound and predictable style of playing, has been emphasized more recently by the writer Paavo Haavikko:

The Finnish politician is never surprising. This, therefore, is why he always loses the game. He remains by the game board after the winners have already left (Haavikko 1992, 167).

The lack of provocative politicization can also be viewed as the fear of the consequences of the unregulated contingency of politics. But perhaps it is precisely this incompetence of conventional ‘politicians’ that has strengthened the sense of contingency in the understanding of the non-established forms of politics and its theorization in Finnish political science in the 1980s. In the changing political practices of the Finns there are now good reasons to advocate the view of politics as an expression of contingent freedom, not only as joyous but also as something that forces people to face the the dreadful consequence of the existential “being condemned to freedom,” as Sartre put it in *L'Être et le néant* (1943).

Not only has the separateness of the specific Finnish polity been shaken to its very foundation by its joining the EU and EMU, but the provincial “shelter from politicization” has been challenged by the increasing numbers of foreigners and refugees in the country, as well as by the loss of the monopoly of the family paradigm and monoculture in terms of sexual identity. The philosophies of history legitimating the subordination of individuals to national and social entities have similarly lost their hold on the Finnish audience.

Thus, when human beings are condemned to freedom they are also condemned to politics. Having to face existential, stylistic, strategic, tactical and technical choices is one of the daily experiences of both Finnish politicians and citizens, called by Weber “occasional politicians” (Weber 1919, 41). As such, to fear politics is to fear freedom.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Having written extensively on the concept both in Germany (Palonen 1985) and in France (Palonen 1990b), sketched an interpretative perspective of the concept of politics in 20th century Europe (cf. esp. Palonen 1993) and as I am currently working on a comparative monograph (for the first versions cf. Palonen 1999a,b, 2000), I believe that I am well equipped to achieve the demanded *Verfremdungseffekt* in relation to the Finnish discourse.

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