Redescriptions

Yearbook of Political Thought,
Conceptual History & Feminist Theory

Redescriptions vol. 16 discusses the modes of conducting conceptual disputes in Swedish legal philosophy as well as changes in two less discussed concepts, namely conscience and innovation. The 'new realism' in contemporary political philosophy, the political thought in the film Avatar and the politics of parliamentary obstruction in late nineteenth and early twentieth century further main topics.

Redescriptions is in the middle of a transition process from a yearbook to a journal. This is the last yearbook, the journal with two issues will be published by Manchester University Press beginning with the volume 17, 2014.

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REDESCRIPTIONS

Yearbook of Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory

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Editorial: "Rectifying the Names" or "Newspeak"?

Paul-Erik Korvela

Many of the articles in this issue of Redescriptions study, in their different ways, rhetorical redescriptions. Names, words and concepts play an integral role in shaping our moral evaluation of things and events as they frame the debate. Redescription is an essential tool in all fields of rhetoric. In forensic rhetoric, the aim is to alter the evaluative description of past events. In deliberative rhetoric, the aim is persuasion. Also in epideictic rhetoric it is easy to re-describe past actions because of the close proximity of virtues to their neighbouring vices. The practice of naming and renaming can also be used to attain similar effects.

Because of the moral ambivalence of rhetoric and its possible use to manipulative purposes in gulling the credulous, there is a long history of objection to rhetorical redescription. Although his opinions on the issue vary in different dialogues, Plato is among the most notable defenders of "true meaning of words" and thus an opponent of crafty use of rhetoric. He clearly opposed the Sophist use of rhetoric because through savvy use of rhetoric one can justify any courses of action, rational and irrational alike, and make untrue things seem true. Rhetoric

is focused on persuasion instead of truth, and thus lacks true notion of justice in Plato's view: due to rhetorical persuasion, *doxa* prevails over *episteme*. Still Thomas Hobbes sought to eliminate disagreements deriving from language by a sort of authoritative fiat. But also Confucius, for instance, called for a "rectification of names" as the primary task of a statesman. The view is expressed in the chapter III of the XIII book of the *Annalects*. When asked what is the first thing to do in order to administer government, the Master replied:

> What is necessary is to rectify names. … If names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success. … Therefore a superior man considers it necessary that the names he uses may be spoken appropriately, and also that what he speaks may be carried out appropriately. What the superior man requires, is just that in his words there may be nothing incorrect.

For a relatively long period of time, the fulcrum of good government was seen to reside in correct use of language, words, names and concepts. When we arrive to the modern era and especially the contemporary political discourse, almost the opposite view seems to prevail. Current governmental practices are often more reminiscent of Orwellian newspeak rather than the Confucian practise of "rectifying the names". The mainstay of governing is not in the impeccable and proper use of language but is rather founded in the deceptive nature of rhetoric. Maybe even part of the disillusionment nowadays associated with traditional parties and politicians, the emergence of anti-system parties and populist politics, is partly attributable to vagueness of political language.

But of course, there are certain advantages in hollow and vague language. The creation of more accurate terms and concepts would limit the range of possibilities on the part of political actors. This was acutely observed by George Orwell immediately after the second world war. In 1946, Orwell argued in his famous essay *Politics and the English Language*:

> The word Fascism has now no meaning except insofar as it signifies "something not desirable." The words democracy, socialism, freedom,

> patriotic, realistic, justice, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like democracy, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides. It is almost universally felt that when we call a country democratic we are praising it: consequently the defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning.

Thus the aim of modern statesmen is often not to rectify the names but to use them loosely enough. Within the purview of contemporary politics, the current Eurozone tumult is especially interesting against the backdrop of rhetoric and conceptual change. What was arguably essentially a private sector debt problem was skilfully rhetorically transformed as a public sector debt problem. Austerity measures were called to curtail lavish public sector spending, although arguably the original problem resided more in the loose and high-risk spending of private banks that needed to be saved with public funding, as well as in the distortion of data concerning economic performance in some cases. After a populist backlash against the publicly funded bail-outs, bail-in (stakeholders and investors instead of taxpayers shouldering the losses of ailing banks) has been introduced as a "new" concept – as if the idea that bad investments result in losses would be new. Concepts like "limited liability" are sure to provide ample material for future conceptual historians in this respect. The economic debate more generally is often framed by rather dubious concepts and outright paradoxes like "negative growth".

Apart from the intrusion of the language of economics into politics, in the contemporary political parlance we notice clear conceptual changes of central political terms. Wars as we have come to known them (as inter-state activity proceeding after formal declaration of war) have basically vanished. Wars are no longer declared and increasingly involve non-state actors. War is no longer a clear-cut change vis-à-vis peace time, but a kind of paradoxical "continuous state of exception" prevails. Sovereignty, to take another example of a central political concept, has undergone a series of changes. In the original Westphal-

ian sense of the term, among the states of present international system maybe only North Korea remains sovereign. The member states of the European Union, for instance, no longer possess the Westphalian sovereignty, as part of their legislation comes from the EU and thus they can not wholly preside over the legislation of their own territory – a crucial prerequisite of the Westphalian sovereignty. Whereas in the Weberian sense statehood was connected to the legitimate monopoly of physical violence in a given area, statehood today has almost nothing to do with it. Instead, the recognition of other states is the primary (or even sole) criterion of statehood. Taiwan may have the de facto Weberian monopoly, and it may even be "more sovereign" than the EU member states as regards its legislation, but it lacks the widespread recognition of other states. Some states, like arguably Somalia, are held together only by that recognition of other states. Words, names, concepts, and their redescriptions, are now as ever a central part of politics.

One of the articles in this collection focuses on the conceptual change the concept of innovation has undergone. Originally a negative term associated with rabble-rousing and political upheaval is nowadays largely viewed as positive and one could even say an integral part of government policies. Many countries, Finland included, even have a national innovation system. There are also increasingly vociferous calls for "democratic innovations". Could it be that innovation passes as common currency in contemporary discourse because it was in a way depoliticized? The connotations of innovation are no longer associated with rabble-rousing because the word invokes the image of primarily technical innovations, revolutionary ideas that can be used to create new technologies. It should be noted that technical revolutions have almost always been viewed as positive, whereas political revolutions not always so. Political revolutions can be progressive or conservative, but they inherently threaten the stability of the polity and the powers-that-be. Machiavelli sought (in his *Discursus florentinarum rerum*) to devise a stable political order for Florence, a body politic in which no one needed to aspire "rinnovazione". But later the idea of innovation became

politically less revolutionary and was associated instead with utility and technical advance. The true difficulty of innovation, political and technical alike, is not in the act of innovating itself, i.e. inventing new ideas, but in getting those who benefit from the old system to accept the new ideas. And in this, as we know, rhetoric and conceptual redescriptions play an integral role. It would, however, be relatively safe to say that newspeak, rather than "rectifying the names", passes for general currency in contemporary politics.

In the first article of this issue of Redescriptions, Johan Strang focuses on the rhetorico-political construction of the tradition of analytical philosophy in Sweden. In a chain of rhetorical moves, the adherents of the analytical tradition described their opponents as politically dubious and bearing foreign influences, while at the same time they portrayed their own analytical tradition as already possessing deep roots in Sweden. Moving beyond the mere arguing whether or not a given thinker was within the confines of analytical tradition, Strang opens up the debate what people were trying to do by using labels such as "analytical philosophy". In the second article, Esther Abin discusses the tradition of political realism, pointing out that "realist" accounts of political life are not necessarily more objective or realistic than normative and "moralist" ones. Realism tends to emphasise contingent and autonomous sphere of politics, but at the same time remains bound to normative and prescriptive implications deriving from that autonomy of politics. The third article in the issue deals with the political role of artistic representation. Through reading of James Cameron's "Avatar", Annabel Herzog points to a representation of a new political subjectivity, "the network protester", deriving its existence from connectivity of rooted people against disconnectivity. The article also scrutinizes Cormack McCarthy's novel "The Road" as an example of artwork's capacity to bear witness of the fundamental but vanishing values of a political system.

Finally, there is a group of three articles that focus on three different concepts and their histories. Benoit Godin delves into the conceptual change of innovation, pointing out that whereas during the seventeenth

century the concept was largely polemical and served as a pejorative term with which to slander adversaries, since the nineteenth century the term has been more associated with utility and carries more positive connotations. Mika Ojakangas peruses the political role of conscience, compares the thoughts of Hobbes and Rousseau regarding this matter, and offers an interpretation of Rousseauian "religious" model for politics in which the liberty of conscience is eradicated from the political sphere. Henk te Velde offers a glimpse to the history of parliamentary obstruction, arguing that obstruction is not – despite the fact that contemporaries often interpreted it in such a way – a sign of degeneration of the parliamentary system, but instead fulfils certain important functions parliaments and parliamentary speech have.

Redescriptions is currently in a process of changing its publisher and the format. This is the last volume as a yearbook; the journal Redescriptions will be published by Manchester University Press biannually, beginning with Volume 17, Issue 1, 2014.

The rhetoric of analytic philosophy

The making of the analytic hegemony in Swedish 20th century philosophy

Johan Strang

When Arne Næss in 1965 published his book *Moderne filosofer – Carnap, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Sartre* it was in Sweden received as something of a philosophical scandal (Bengtsson 1990, 220-225).[1] The reviewers failed to see any point in comparing the proper scientific analytic philosophy of Carnap and Wittgenstein with the unintelligible prose of Heidegger and Sartre. In the subsequent discussion in the Swedish cultural press, it remained a mystery how this sober Norwegian analytic philosopher could embark on such a dubitable venture.

The dominance of analytic philosophy was tremendous in Sweden, arguably much stronger than in the Anglo-American world or in the neighbouring Nordic countries. In this article I will examine the making of the analytic tradition in Swedish philosophy from a rhetorical-political perspective. I will show that the analytic hegemony in Sweden was the result of a series of rhetorical moves by which a group of younger Swedish philosophers succeeded in denouncing their opponents while simultaneously claiming the national philosophical heritage. While the rivalling philosophies were stigmatised as foreign (German)

1 Arne Næss' book was translated into English in 1968 as *Four Modern Philosophers – Carnap, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Sartre*.

and politically suspect, analytic philosophy was portrayed as proper scientific philosophy, and as a tradition with strong domestic roots in the Uppsala philosophy of Axel Hägerström (1868-1939).[2]

The politics of philosophy

Philosophers often look upon labels of scholarly movements with great suspicion and sometimes even contempt. By labelling a scholar as a representative of a particular philosophical or intellectual movement that person is reduced to an advocate of simplistic philosophical slogans or erroneously ascribed ideas and theories that he or she does not in fact support. Also among historians of philosophy and intellectual historians it is quite common to argue that scholarly labels are more prone to confuse than to bring clarity. A philosophical label is seen as the result of an unwarranted generalisation that blurs the ideas and theories of the historical actor, and makes it utterly impossible to appreciate the originality of the individual intellectual. Countless articles and books have been written in order to revise the received view of an intellectual as belonging to a particular movement, and, to be sure, on closer examination almost any scholar will turn out to be something of an exception to the school that he or she is commonly regarded as a representative of.

There are, of course, some of us who believe that there are good reasons to take philosophical labels seriously and to examine them from a historical perspective. The most comprehensive effort towards a history of philosophical concepts is the ambitious 12 volume *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (1970-2005), edited by Joachim Ritter, Karlfried Gründer and Gottfried Gabriel, which provides valuable information regarding the first mentions of different philosophical labels, as well as an overview of the different philosophical positions that have been denoted by them throughout the history of Western thought, from An-

2 This article is a development of an argument in my PhD-thesis (Strang 2010a) *History, Transfer, Politics – Five Studies on the Legacy of Uppsala Philosophy* [Philosophical Studies from the University of Helsinki 30], available from the author or at http://ethesis.helsinki.fi.

cient Greece to present.[3] It is certainly important to acknowledge the differences between the "idealism" of Plato and Hegel, between the "scepticism" of Sextus Empiricus and Hume, and between the "positivism" of Comte and Carnap. In this article, however, I will argue that there is much to gain from a perspective that focuses on the rhetorical struggles to name and define a philosophical position or movement at a particular historical moment.

During recent years there have emerged a number of studies that look for the historical roots of the analytic tradition and for the origins of the divide between the analytic and the continental in western philosophy. But it seems to me that even the most historically oriented of these studies fall short as they proceed from or end up with a normative attempt to define "analytic philosophy" as a set of theoretical family resemblances (e.g. Føllesdal 1997; Stroll 2000), as a genealogic tree of historical influences (e.g. Dummett 1993; Hacker 1996), or, perhaps, as a combination of the two (Sluga 1998; Glock 2008). These accounts may give us an idea of what we understand with "analytic philosophy" today, but as historical accounts they are seriously incomplete as they fail to discuss how analytic philosophy was produced as a movement. It is only by paying attention to the rhetorical moves that philosophers and intellectuals have made in labelling themselves and each other that we can study how they positioned themselves in relation to both historical and contemporaneous scholars and ideas, how they distinguished friends from enemies.

In showing how the Swedish analytic tradition was produced, I will draw on Quentin Skinner's (1996, 128-180; 1999; 2002, 115) proposal to study "rhetorical redescriptions", that is, the ways in which historical actors have altered the meaning of a particular term (the semasiological aspect) or the naming of a particular phenomenon (the onomasiological aspect). To be sure, Skinner's approach originates the field of political philosophy, and political struggles are often palpably rhetorical in the sense that they concern the definitions and usages of certain key concepts like "democracy", "liberalism" or "freedom". But contingen-

3 As the *Historisches Wörterbuch* does not operate with a *Sattelzeit* its temporal focus is wider than that of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (eds. Brunner, Conze, Koselleck 1971-97).

cy and controversy are not features of political language alone, and, as recently exemplified by for example Kari Palonen (2008a; 2010) there are good reasons to examine the academic world from a rhetorical perspective.[4]

Academic labels are, precisely as political ones, continuously contested by scholars who use them with different implications, and, more often than not, conflicting accounts collide and evolve into open struggles for "the true meaning of", "the correct definition of", or the sole right to use a term; or conversely, into fierce discussions regarding the "correct", "proper", or "accurate" label or designation for a certain philosophical position or group of intellectuals. Scholarly labels can also have a mobilising function very similar to that of political labels. They can become catchwords used by every ambitious scholar who wants to be part of the movement, or they can be turned into invectives that are used in third person only ("positivism").[5] Moreover, precisely as political language, academic language is very much tied to (national) institutions and traditions. The meaning associated with a philosophical label in one cultural or linguistic context does not necessarily translate when the label is appropriated elsewhere, and thus the transfer agents redescribe and reinterpret both the labels and the theories in order for them to play a particular role in the domestic debates.[6] Finally, the academic game is also like politics very much a matter of playing with time, of referring positively or negatively to past traditions and ideas while simultaneously trying to direct the future by means of making, naming, and defining philosophical movements. Following Reinhart Koselleck it is possible to discern different *Zeitschichten* in the academic rhetoric; longer or shorter periods of time that give significance to the usage of

4 Palonen uses Max Weber's ideas on objectivity as fair play to discuss similarities between the political-parliamentary debates and the academic-scientific discussions from a rhetorical point of view. Here, I will focus on the special case of labelling.

5 Or conversely, they can be coined as invectives, but be neutralised by the proponents. See e.g. Leonhard 2004 for an account of how "liberalism" evolved from denoting something foreign and radical to an integrated part of the English political language

6 See Marjanen 2009; Palonen 2003b; Richter 2005; Stenius 2004 on the importance of translations in conceptual history.

a particular term, or a specific momentum or *Spielzeitraum* in which a particular rhetorical move is possible (Koselleck 2000; Palonen 2008b).

In paying attention to rhetorical redescriptions, to processes of mobilisation, translation and interpretation, as well as to questions of timing and temporalisation, this article argues that the history of philosophy has much to learn from recent rhetorical approaches to politics. This "politics of philosophy" provides a fruitful perspective and an empirically credible way of studying intellectual movements, how they are established, how they mobilise, how they transform, and how they fade away.[7]

Canonising a movement

The pivotal figure of Uppsala philosophy was Axel Hägerström (1868-1939) who revolted against the idealistic philosophical tradition of the 19th century which in Sweden was associated with Christopher Jacob Boström (1797-1866) and his pupils. Hägerström's philosophical position has been described as an original form of Neo-Kantianism that included elements from Austrian act psychology and *Wertphilosophie* as well as from the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and the perspectivism of Friedrich Nietzsche.[8] Hägerström's most original contribution as a philosopher was his radical moral theory according to which moral or evaluative judgements are meaningless as they always include an emotive element that does not aim at presenting its object as existent in time and space. Hägerström's theory, which he launched in his inaugural lecture as Professor in Practical (i.e. moral and political) Philosophy in Uppsala 1910 (Hägerström 1910), was groundbreaking in many ways. It is often said to have been the first pronouncement of the

7 For a related, but slightly different use of the phrase "politics of philosophy", see Palonen 2003a, 138 and Pulkkinen 2003.

8 See Heidegren 2004 and 2010 or Mindus 2009 for an account of the early phases of Uppsala philosophy, and Nordin 1983 and Strang 2010a for accounts of its latter phases and the transformation to analytic philosophy. Hansson & Nordin 2006 (esp. pages 105-119) provides an overview of the Swedish philosophical scene in the 1930s in English. Hägerström's relation to Nietzsche is discussed in Ruin 2000.

so called non-cognitive or emotive theory in ethics, which later became fashionable among analytic philosophers in Great Britain and the United States (see e.g. Satris 1987, 5). In its original Swedish context, however, Hägerström's inaugural lecture signified a modern breakthrough in philosophy (Heidegren 2004, 317-377), with significant political and cultural underpinnings (Källström 1986). It was the belated introduction of the radical and progressive political and cultural ideas of the 1880s (*kulturradikalismen*) at the conservative department of philosophy in Uppsala, and, accordingly, Hägerström was celebrated among radicals and scorned by conservatives. The political connotations of Hägerström's value theory were certainly one of the main reasons for the central position of Uppsala philosophy in the political and cultural debates in Sweden during the 1920s and 30s.

Uppsala philosophy was consolidated as a group around Hägerström already at the turn of the century – they even nursed plans for launching a journal (Heidegren 2004, 348-352) – but it seems to have taken quite some time before the movement was given a name. It was only after Hägerström had claimed Boström's old chair in Practical Philosophy in 1910, and his disciple and colleague Adolf Phalén (1884-1931) the chair in Theoretical Philosophy in 1916, that the label "Uppsala philosophy" (*Uppsalafilosofien*) emerged. The term was, however, seldom employed by Hägerström or Phalén themselves. It was used, rather, by their disciples and critics, and often in more popular writings that in way or another compared and contrasted the ideas of Hägerström and Phalén with those of other movements or scholars.

One early example is the article "Hur en norsk filosof uppfattar svensk filosofi" (How a Norwegian philosopher perceives Swedish philosophy) which Einar Tegen (1884-1965) wrote as a reaction to Anathon Aall's book *Filosofien i Norden* (1919). Tegen was not only enraged of the disproportionally small space allocated to Swedish philosophy (52 pages) in comparison to Norwegian (147) and Danish (146) philosophy (Tegen 1920, 53).[9] He was particularly infuriated of Aall's treatment of "contemporary Uppsala philosophy" (*den nuvarande Uppsalafilosofien*). Aall had categorised Hägerström and Phalén, "the main men of the modern philosophical direction in Uppsala" (*den moderna filosofiska rik-*

9 Finnish philosophy was treated in 13 pages.

ningens i Upsala huvudmän), not as representatives of something new and unique, but as Boströmian philosophers, albeit of a "younger type". This was, according to Tegen, nothing short of grotesque as Hägerström's and Phalén's main incentives had, from the very beginning of their careers, been to refute Boströmianism (Tegen 1920, 54).

For Tegen, who was the same age as Phalén but somewhat less experienced as a scholar, it was both natural and important to use the label "Uppsala philosophy" as a rhetorical move by which he aimed at increasing the prominence of his own texts. In *Finsk Tidskrift*, as a comment on the book *Vetenskapliga vanföreställningar* (1920) by the Finnish philosopher Rolf Lagerborg, Tegen specified the similarities and differences between the phenomenalistic views (Mach, Avenarius) that Lagerborg was defending on the one side, and the views of Hägerström and Phalén on the other. The article was programmatically titled "'Fenomenalismen' och 'Upsalafilosofien'" (1921) and thus Tegen figured not merely as an individual philosopher, but as a spokesperson and representative of an established philosophical movement.

"Uppsala philosophy" as a contested label

Tegen was very much the coming man of Uppsala philosophy, but he struggled to find a permanent position at a university. There were only five chairs in philosophy in Sweden at the time (two in Uppsala, two in Lund, and one in Göteborg) and therefore every vacant chair was the object of intense struggles and the appointment processes were significant events, followed by the philosophical community as well as by the general public through the newspapers. The Swedish (and North-European) practice of employing a number of "independent" scholars as referees evaluating the competence of the applicants can be seen as a way of "politicising" or even "parliamentarising" the academic world (Palonen 2010, 54). The idea was that the referees serve as guardians against local sectarianism and as a balance between opposite schools and movements, and their statements are often written as arguments pro/contra not only the particular applicant, but the whole philosophical school or movement that he/she represents. Thus these statements,

and all the other material related to these appointment processes, form a fascinating source material as they quite explicitly, and frequently also in a rather ferocious tone, expose the dividing lines and major points of disagreement between different intellectual schools and movements.

In the livid and prolonged debates regarding the chair in practical philosophy in Lund 1927-29, which were conducted not only at different levels of the university bureaucracy, but also in the newspapers and even in the national parliament, Uppsala philosophy featured as a united philosophical front. Tegen's mentors Hägerström and Phalén supported him staunchly as appointed referees, while the three other referees supported the rival candidate Alf Nyman who eventually won the race. Both sides in the controversy had their allies both at the other departments in Lund, as well as in the media and among the politicians. There was clearly much at stake and one newspaper even referred to the process as a war between the philosophers in Uppsala and Lund (Nordin 1983, 73-91). Like any political debate, the discussion was often conducted by means of linguistic innovations and rhetorical struggles. The critics of the Uppsala philosophers invented a number of different tags which they used in order to defame Hägerström, Phalén and Tegen. Some talked about "positivism", "formalism" or "logicomania", others about "conceptual mystics", "sophism" or "Marxism".[10]

The term "Uppsala philosophy" was also often given a considerable negative weight in this discussion. A significant example was the pamphlet *Uppsalafilosofien och sanningen* (1929) which the philosopher John Landquist wrote when Hägerström and Phalén had deemed him unqualified for the chair. By Landquist the geographic name "Uppsala" was used pejoratively emphasising the narrow-mindedness and the sectarian tendencies of the Uppsala philosophers. In a very angry and dejected tone, Landquist argued that it was no surprise that Hägerström and Phalén were the only referees (out of five) who had disqualified him and who had prioritised Tegen. According or Landquist it was a sign of the parochial nature of Uppsala philosophy that it approved of no other philosophy than its own. "The Uppsala sect" was a self-satisfied, introvert and provincial movement that threatened to take over every philosophical chair in Sweden, thus "stifling the philosophical

10 See e.g. Landquist 1929; 1931; Vannérus 1930.

freedom of thought in the country" (Landquist 1929, 28-29).[11]

Landquist was neither the first nor the last to complain about the isolationism and doctrinarism that marked Uppsala philosophy – it was a recurring theme among the critics. The Uppsala philosophers themselves tried to counter these allegations by means of "paradiastolic redescriptions" in which the vices of being introvert, doctrinaire and provincial were turned into virtues like autonomy, originality and uniqueness.[12] For example, in 1920 Tegen stated that Uppsala philosophy did not allow itself to be seduced by contemporary trends in philosophy or intellectual life. In comparison with the Uppsala philosophers, Tegen argued, the Danish philosopher Harald Høffding was nothing but a shallow intellectual who preferred intimate connections to the life and pulse of contemporary life to deep probing philosophical speculation (Tegen 1920, 52).[13] Similarly in 1938, Gunnar Oxenstierna, one of Phaléns pupils, claimed that Uppsala philosophy was "the only independent and original effort in Swedish philosophy" (Oxenstierna 1938, 4).

Another strategy to counter the allegations of doctrinarism was to point at differences within the group of Uppsala philosophers. In an article in the Swedish newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* (March 5, 1934), the young Uppsala philosophers Ingemar Hedenius (1908-1982) and Anders Wedberg (1913-1978) responded to a criticism against "the barbaric Uppsala School" raised by the famous conservative nationalistic literary critic Fredrik Böök, by claiming that "there is no such thing as an Uppsala philosophy". The philosophers in Uppsala, Hedenius and Wedberg argued, did not propose any common doctrines save the call

11 "…förkväva all filosofisk tankefrihet i landet".

12 On paradiastolic redescriptions see Palonen 1999, 48-49; Palonen 2003a, 164-169; Skinner 1996, 150-172; Skinner 1999.

13 "Till och med en sådan filosofisk storman som Høffding med sin egendomliga klarsyn och djupa världsvisdom verkar mot bakgrund av den svenska spekulationen och det svenska nutida tänkandet närmast som en kulturpersonlighet med intima relationer framför allt till det levande och pulserande livet i sin egen samtid, och de filosofiska tankarna äro hos honom ej så konsekvent genomtänkta eller skarpt fixerade som fallet är t. ex. hos Hägerström eller Phalén här i Sverige."

for a careful analysis of the concepts involved, and thus there was no single argument by which all of these individual philosophers could be brushed aside (Hedenius & Wedberg 1934a). Somewhat less radically Oxenstierna explained in the philosophical journal *Theoria* in 1935, that, while he saw himself as a representative of "Uppsala philosophy" it was important to recognise that his ideas diverged considerably from those of, for example, Hägerström (Oxenstierna 1935, 189).

It should be noted that while Hägerström's own disciples were likely to credit the grand old man himself by using phrases such as "the Hägerströmian ideas" or "Hägerströmianism" (Fries 1927; Lundstedt 1942), it seems as if the label "Uppsala philosophy" was more frequently used by those who, like Tegen and Oxenstierna, were mainly influenced by Phalén (e.g. Marc-Wogau 1932a-d; 1933; Hedenius & Wedberg 1934a; 1934b). By using "Uppsala philosophy" they called attention to the fact that there was more to Uppsala philosophy than Hägerström. After the death of Phalén in 1931, his disciples found themselves in a difficult position. With their mentor gone, the Phalénians were repeatedly neglected in the races for the few and precious chairs at the universities. When Hägerström as an appointed referee prioritised a non-Uppsala philosopher (Anders Karitz) over the Phalénian pupil Oxenstierna to Phalén's old chair in theoretical philosophy in Uppsala, it was received as a declaration of war by the Phalénians, who throughout the 1930s made a series of different attempts at challenging the position of Hägerström as the sole front man of the movement (Nordin 1983, 93-114). Against this background it was hardly surprising that Oxenstierna, Hedenius and Wedberg, during the mid-1930s, were keen on stressing that "Uppsala philosophy" was not a unanimous voice.

Gradually, the deteriorating relations between the Hägerströmians and the Phalenians evolved into an open battle for the right to define and represent "Uppsala philosophy". In the very same debate as that in which they had denied the existence of a unanimous "Uppsala philosophy", Hedenius and Wedberg also launched an attack on the legal scholar and Social Democratic Member of Parliament Vilhelm Lundstedt, who was an ardent devotee of Hägerström, accusing him of making illegitimate use of Hägerström's ideas for popular and political purposes. By presenting simplistic caricatures Lundstedt had, Hedenius and

Wedberg claimed, "damaged the reputation of Uppsala philosophy far more than the antagonists Böök and Landquist" (Hedenius & Wedberg 1934b).[14] This provoked a reply from Hägerström himself who entered the discussion by publically sanctioning the writings of Lundstedt and by arguing that Uppsala philosophy should be evaluated on the basis of its arguments rather than its public reputation (Hägerström 1934).

One of the most explicit efforts to promote Phalén as the main representative of Uppsala philosophy was the small pamphlet with the revealing title *Vad är Uppsala-filosofien?* (What is Uppsala philosophy?) by Oxenstierna (1938). Here Phalén was hailed as the sole originator of nearly every aspect of Uppsala philosophy except the value theory, while some early works by Hägerström were considered to have "nothing to do" with Uppsala philosophy (Oxenstierna 1938, 4). Oxenstierna's book was naturally met with anger by the Hägerströmians, for example by Martin Fries in the newspaper *Stockholms-tidningen* (June 13, 1938) and by Lundstedt, who interpreted the book as another move by which the Phalénians were trying to diminish the accomplishments of Hägerström (Lundstedt 1942, 143).

"Value nihilism" – claiming a legacy

By the late 1930s it was clear that "Uppsala philosophy" had become the subject of internal struggles between the two different branches of the school: the Hägerströmians and the Phalénians. But despite the efforts of the Phalénian faction, Hägerström remained the central figure of Uppsala philosophy in the eyes of both the academic world and the general public. This was largely due to his controversial value theory which continued to play a central role in the Swedish debates. The claim that conservative moral and political ideas were meaningless was a powerful argument in the hands of politicians and intellectuals with radical ambitions, and during the 1920s and 30s, Hägerström's ideas were often used as an argument in favour of modernisation, and politi-

14 "…därigenom har uppsalafilosofiens anseende skadats i långt högre grad än vad som kunnat ske genom angrepp sådana som prof. Böös och dr Landquists".

cal, cultural and moral change, particularly, but not exclusively, by intellectuals who, like Lundstedt, sympathised with the Social Democrats (Källström 1986; Strang 2008).[15] But Hägerström's value theory was controversial and its many critics suggested that the theory was, if not responsible for, then at least a symptom of, a general cultural and moral decline of Western society.

It was also among the critics that the label "value nihilism" emerged in the early 1930s. It is usually asserted that the first time that it was used was in a review of Anders Vannérus's book *Hägerströmstudier* (1930) which John Landquist published in the newspaper *Aftonbladet* on May 23, 1931.[16] Here Landquist claimed that Hägerström wanted to dispose of all cultural and moral knowledge, and that "such a value nihilism is not culturally normal". The term rapidly established itself among the critics who suggested that Hägerström's theory, in denying the objective status of moral norms, undermined the very foundations of society, culture and civilisation, and that Hägerström preached a practical nihilism according to which "everything is allowed". Approaching the Second World War, and especially after the posthumous – Hägerström died in 1939 – publication of a collection of Hägerström's moral philosophical essays in 1939 (*Socialfilosofiska uppsatser*), the criticism became even more fierce. In a number of newspaper articles and reviews titled "Hägerström and the world crisis" and "Hitler and Hägerström" the critics suggested that there was a connection between the "value nihilism" of Hägerström on one hand, and the decline of civilisation and the rise of totalitarianism on the other (see e.g. Källström 1986, 110-116; Strang 2009).

The Uppsala philosophers themselves struggled hard to overcome this negative rhetoric. They argued that a philosophical analysis of the concepts of "value" and "duty" could not by itself lead to the destruction of morality (Marc-Wogau 1933, 9); that an Uppsala philosopher indeed could have strong moral convictions; or that the very statements "destroy morality" or "everything is allowed", which the opponents as-

15 Among the other intellectuals who made political use of Hägerström one can mention the economist Gunnar Myrdal and the social scientist Herbert Tingsten.

16 This according to several sources, e.g. Marc-Wogau 1968, 202.

cribed to Hägerström, were value judgements and as such meaningless according to the theory itself (Oxenstierna 1938, 63). Instead of "value nihilism" they used vague descriptions like "Hägerström's value theory" (*Hägerströms värdeteori*), (Lundstedt 1942, 7), "the radical value subjectivism of Hägerström" (*Hägerströms radikala värdesubjektivism*) (Marc-Wogau 1933, 9) or "Hägerström's criticism of the concept of value" (*Hägerströms kritik av värdebegreppet*) (Oxenstierna 1938, 57).

Eventually, however, "value nihilism" became a term that the proponents would use themselves. In this connection Ingemar Hedenius' book *Om rätt och moral* (1941) marked a decisive turning point. Hedenius was perhaps not the first Uppsala philosopher to use the label,[17] but he was certainly the first to programmatically defend "value nihilism" as a philosophical position. It was a conscious rhetorical move; his explicit motivation to use this, what he called, "totally misleading term" was partly "brevity", and partly the aspiration to "wear out the dismal, but unfounded associations, that have made the word a useful weapon against Uppsala philosophy" (Hedenius 1941, 13).[18] It is probably safe to say that Hedenius succeeded with his ambitions. There were hardly any complaints about the terminology in the reviews of *Om rätt och moral*, and "value nihilism" soon became a fairly neutral name for the theory in the Swedish.

The move of claiming the vocabulary of the opponent in order to demobilise it is, of course, a familiar rhetorical strategy.[19] However, there are good reasons to presume that Hedenius had additional and more

17 Anders Wedberg had used "nihilism" of Hägerström's theory already in 1933.

18 "Ehuru denna benämning [värdenihilismen] egentligen är alldeles missvisande skall den användas här, dels för korthetens skull och dels i hoppet att genom nötning få bort de kusliga, sakligt ogrundade associationer, vilka någon gång gjort ordet ifråga användbart som tillhygge mot uppsalafilosofien."

19 According to Skinner "ambition" and "shrewdness" were exclusively used pejoratively until the 17th century when they were neutralised (Skinner 2002, 152), and Henrik Stenius has similarly pointed to the ways in which potentially oppositional concepts such as Pietism have been neutralised and disarmed as they were transferred and introduced to the Nordic countries (Stenius 2010, 35).

subtle intentions by using "value nihilism" in 1941. It was also a move in the struggles between the Phalénian and the Hägerströmian factions of Uppsala philosophy. The death of Hägerström in the summer of 1939 opened a *Spielzeitraum* for the Phalénians who immediately started publishing articles on Hägerström in order to claim his legacy. While Konrad Marc-Wogau (1902-1991) wrote articles on Hägerström's theory of knowledge (Marc-Wogau 1940a; 1940b; 1946; 1947), Hedenius focussed on the value theory (Hedenius 1939; 1940a; 1940b; 1940c; 1941b; 1941c; 1942a; 1942b).[20] Hedenius programmatic use of the pejorative but popular label "value nihilism" (which had been shunned by Hägerström himself) must therefore be seen as a move towards claiming Hägerström's position as the main representative of Uppsala philosophy. And also in this respect, Hedenius' move was extremely successful. Although some reviewers were less than impressed with Hedenius "diluted" version of Hägerström's theory (e.g. Ljungdal 1943), it was clear that Hedenius by virtue of being a "value nihilist" had emerged as the new front figure of Uppsala philosophy ahead of several other contenders. From this perspective it is hardly a surprise that the only ones to complain about the usage of the term "value nihilism" were the orthodox Hägerströmians such as Lundstedt (e.g. 1942, 24).

It is also important to recognise the temporal aspects of Hedenius' move. He succeeded in utilising the momentum created by Hägerström's death to colonise the legacy of Uppsala philosophy, and now he was able to use it for his own strategic purposes. His move to claim the past was a move to be able to direct the future. At this point in time, Hedenius was together with his closest Phalénian colleagues Marc-Wogau and Wedberg abandoning the doctrines of Uppsala philosophy in favour of recent trends in international philosophy, especially logical empiricism. Accordingly, there were significant theoretical differences between the value theory originally proposed by Hägerström and "the value nihilism" that Hedenius defended in *Om rätt och moral*. While Hägerström had elaborated his value theory on the basis of Austrian *Werttheorie* (Brentano, Ehrenfeldt, Meinong), Hedenius presented it as a semantic theory akin to the emotive or non-cognitive theories of

20 Many of these articles were incorporated in Hedenius' book *Om rätt och moral* (1941a).

the logical empiricists Carnap (1935) and Ayer (1936) (see e.g. Nordin 2004, 106-115). Hedenius was very much aware of the fact that he did not doctrinarily follow the Hägerströmian arguments; he explicitly stated that he will "formulate it in a different manner from what is common amongst hägerströmians" (Hedenius 1941a, 13). But by adopting the familiar rhetoric of "value nihilism", Hedenius was able to claim the Uppsala legacy. It can even be argued that Hedenius introduced logical empiricism to Sweden by rhetorically anchoring it in the domestic "value nihilistic" tradition after Hägerström (Strang 2010a; 2010b).

"Analytic philosophy" – making a tradition

The shift in Swedish philosophy, from the Uppsala philosophy of Hägerström and Phalén to logical empiricism, or analytic philosophy, happened in a few years around 1940 with Hedenius' *Om rätt och moral* (1941a) as a pinnacle. It was a swift and drastic change, but by using the familiar terminology of "Uppsala philosophy" and "value nihilism" Hedenius was able to soften or even blur the transformation. It is striking that Hedenius hardly ever used "logical empiricism" or "logical positivism" even if he was clearly inspired by this kind of philosophy.[21] Instead he preferred terms that on the one hand referred back to the Uppsala tradition, but which also, on the other hand, had an established meaning and use within the logical empiricist framework.

One important label in this regard was "scientific philosophy" (*vetenskaplig filosofi*), which already by the old Uppsala philosophers of the 1920s had been used as an authoritative marker distinguishing their own philosophical method from, for example, that of Landquist's Bergson-inspired *Lebensphilosophie*. During the 1940s and 50s this familiar rhetoric was furnished with an international framework, referring also to the "philosophy of science" practised by the logical empiricists who

21 Although, admittedly, at this point in time the terms "logical positivism" and "logical empiricism" were not very common among the international representatives of the movement either.

had moved over to the United States in the 1930s and 40s.[22] The curious translation of "philosophy of science" (*vetenskapsfilosofi*) to "scientific philosophy" (*vetenskaplig filosofi*) was mitigated by the fact that the latter term also figured internationally.[23]

From this perspective it was also rather convenient for Hedenius to subscribe to the emerging rhetoric of "analytic philosophy". Internationally, "analytic philosophy" was launched as a name of a particular philosophical movement by Ernest Nagel in 1936, but it was not until Arthur Pap's *Elements of Analytic philosophy* (1949) that the label established itself in the international philosophical vocabulary.[24] The term "analysis", however, had been central to both the logical empiricists and the Cambridge philosophers Russell and Moore, not least by virtue of the journal *Analysis* which was founded in Oxford 1933 by a younger generation of British philosophers.[25] In Sweden, the Uppsala philosophers had honoured both "conceptual analysis" (*begreppsanalys*) and "logical analysis" (*logisk analys*) as their main philosophical methods since at least the early 1920s (see e.g. Tegen 1921, 54). But the nature of the Uppsala philosophical "analysis" was rather different from that of the logical empiricists. While the Uppsala philosophers believed that a logical analysis concerned the psychological ideas (*Vorstellungen*) associated with the concept, the logical empiricists thought that the analysis would either have to concern the facts denoted by a term or the logi-

22 For example in the journal *Philosophy of Science* which was founded in 1934.

23 E.g. Hans Reichenbach, *The rise of scientific philosophy*, 1951. A search on JSTOR on the terms "scientific philosophy" and "philosophy of science" in the period between 1930 and 1960 generates 1117 respectively 3727 hits (on December 3, 2010).

24 Cf. Strang 2006; Hacker 1996, 274; von Wright 1992, 200. This is also confirmed by a search on the terms "analytic philosophy" and "analytical philosophy" in three leading philosophical journals in the period 1930 to 1960 (*Mind*, *The Journal of Philosophy*, *The Philosophical Review*). While there are 31 hits in the 1930s, and 24 hits in the 1940s, there are 108 hits in the 1950s (on December 3, 2010).

25 Susan Stebbing and Gilbert Ryle were among the first editors, while philosophers such as Alfred Ayer and Max Black figured as authors in the first volume.

cal relation of a term to other terms in a formal logical system. During the late 1930s, when Hedenius, Marc-Wogau and Wedberg were in the process of converting from Uppsala philosophy to logical empiricism, they seemed to nurse hopes of uniting these perspectives with each other. For example, in the article "Begriffsanalyse und kritischer Idealismus" Hedenius defended a position according to which the analysis concerned the facts denoted by a term or a phrase, but he still claimed that this view was compatible with Phalén and Hägerström (Hedenius 1939, 294-298; see also Nordin 1983, 149). A couple of years later it was already quite obvious that Hedenius, Marc-Wogau and Wedberg had abandoned Uppsala philosophy, and at that point, "analysis" was primarily a way of linking their Uppsala philosophical past with their logical empiricist present. In *Om rätt och moral* (1941a) Hedenius presented logical empiricism, the Cambridge school and Uppsala philosophy as expressions of the same "tendency of sobering and logical analysis in modern philosophy" (Hedenius 1941a, 10).[26]

When the label "analytic philosophy" arrived to Sweden in the 1950s,[27] Uppsala philosophy was presented as a central part of the (pre-) history of the movement. For example, when Gilbert Ryle's famous compilation *The revolution in philosophy* (1956), which canonised philosophers such as Frege, Moore, the Vienna Circle, Wittgenstein and ordinary language philosophy as a distinct revolutionary philosophical movement, was translated to Swedish, it also included a chapter by Marc-Wogau on "Axel Hägerström och Uppsalafilosofin". The preface of the book explained the addition by boldly claiming that Uppsala philosophy, the Cambridge School and logical empiricism were the three most significant branches of modern scientific philosophy, "often called analytic philosophy" (Marc-Wogau & Wennerberg 1957, 7). The same characterisation was repeated in several publications in the following years, for example in the third edition of Alf Ahlberg's *Filosofiskt lexikon* from 1963, where "Analytic philosophy or scientific philosophy" was said to be "the label of a number of directions in modern

26 "tillnyktringens och den logiska analysens tendens i modern filosofi."

27 Konrad Marc-Wogau had used "analytische Philosophie" already in 1942, in a review of Hedenius' *Om rätt och moral*, but at that point it was arguably used more as a description than as a name. Marc-Wogau 1942, 61.

philosophy. […] The three most significant braches are the *Cambridge circle*, *logical empiricism* (in its earlier stages the *Vienna Circle*), *Uppsala philosophy*, and during recent years the *Oxford School*" (Ahlberg 1963, 10).[28] Also in Marc-Wogau's *Filosofin genom tiderna* (Marc-Wogau 1964, 123), in Wedberg's *Filosofins historia* (Wedberg 1966, 366), and even as late as in 1984, in the third edition of Marc-Wogau's *Filosofisk uppslagsbok*, Uppsala philosophy was mentioned as one of the main sources of modern analytic philosophy (Marc-Wogau 1984, 23).

In repressing the phenomenological, Neo-Kantian and Nietzschean roots of Uppsala philosophy and ardently associating it with logical empiricism and analytic philosophy, Hedenius' and his companions legitimised their own personal philosophical development from Uppsala philosophy, through logical empiricism, to analytic philosophy. But it was also a way of furnishing this foreign philosophy with domestic roots in order to facilitate its introduction to Sweden. The domestication of analytic philosophy could be used as a political argument against rivalling philosophies. In the aftermath of the Second World War the position of analytic philosophy was often promoted by either explicitly or implicitly playing the domestic vs. foreign card. A common strategy was to stigmatise continental, and particularly German philosophy (idealism and phenomenology), as semi-fascistic (see Östling 2008), while simultaneously celebrating the democratic nature of analytic philosophy. Not only did analytic philosophy have strong national roots in the Uppsala philosophy of Hägerström, it was now also very much associated with the English-speaking world that had emerged from the war as the champions of democracy.

The Nazi-stigma was not the only means by which "the other philosophers" were outmanoeuvred.[29] In his inaugural lecture as Profes-

28 "Analytisk filosofi eller vetenskaplig filosofi kallas en rad riktningar i nyare filosofi. […] De mest betydande riktningarna inom denna filosofi är Cambridgekretsen, den logiska empirismen (i sitt tidigare skede Wienkretsen), Uppsalafilosofin och under de allra senaste åren Oxfordskolan."

29 "The other philosophers" [dom andra filosoferna] was Hedenius' way of denoting "… not only structralisms, but also other existentialisms and Neo-Marxisms and drivel-theologies" […inte bara strukturalismer utan också andra existentialismer och nymarxismer och svammelteologier"]. Hedenius 1977, 33.

sor in Practical Philosophy in Uppsala in 1948, Hedenius claimed that neo-Thomism and Marxism were popular philosophies largely only because of the support they received from the Catholic Church and the Communist party. Existentialism, in turn, was refuted as a psychological reaction to the horrors of the World Wars. Hedenius even claimed that "if philosophy was given full freedom everywhere, the philosophical tradition that now appears as the most scientific one, would probably prevail" (Hedenius 1948, 17-19).[30] In a similar vein in the textbook *Att studera filosofi* (1961), Marc-Wogau made a brief settlement with "philosophy as it should not be studied" in a chapter called "Unscientific philosophy", before he commenced with philosophy "as it should be studied" in the chapter on "analytic philosophy". The first chapter was clearly inspired by Hedenius' inaugural lecture as it had the telling subchapters "In the grip of politics. Philosophy in the Soviet Union", "In the duty of religion. Neo-Thomism" and "In the wake of the World Wars. Existentialism" (Marc-Wogau 1961, 1-24). In this way, the analytic philosophy was in Sweden presented as the only politically scrupulous philosophy, as more autonomous and scientific than its contenders.

Conclusion – the Hedenian moment

The making of the analytic tradition in Sweden illustrates the ways in which the history of philosophy can be studied from a political-rhetorical perspective; that is, as a game of controversies, contingencies, redescriptions, and redefinitions. Precisely as when applied on political labels and terms, the nominalistic perspective is particularly rewarding when studying periods of great turbulence, when opposing philosophical schools and movements are formed and defined against each other ("the analytic" vs. "the continental"), or when two factions of the same school dissociate and struggle for the sole right to represent the movement and its legacy (Phalénians vs. Hägerströmians on "Uppsala philos-

30 "Och dock är det en tröst, att om förhållandena överallt medgåve full frihet åt filosofien, så skulle troligen den filosofiska tradition, som nu framstår som den mest vetenskapliga, bli den enda härskande".

ophy"). Philosophical labels are often coined by adversaries and loaded with a considerable pejorative weight ("Uppsala philosophy" or "value nihilism"), but by making the right moves, they can be neutralised, or even turned into weapons for the proponents themselves. It is also important to remember that the meaning of a philosophical label is not given once for all. For example, "value nihilism" was to a considerable extent filled with a new content by Hedenius, but by means of a consistent use of the same term, he succeeded in creating a sense of continuity. Finally, the example of "analytic philosophy" shows how an international conceptual innovation can be transferred and appropriated in a national context by giving it a domestic history and background.

More than anything, the rhetorical making of the analytic tradition in Sweden emphasises the importance of timing. It is surely justified to talk about a "Hedenian moment" in the 1940s, a particular *Spielzeitraum* during which the introduction of analytic philosophy in veil of Hägerström was possible.[31] The death of Hägerström in 1939 was, of course, absolutely crucial in this respect, as it balanced the contest between the Hägerströmian and the Phalénian factions of Uppsala philosophy and triggered a struggle for the right to the Hägerströmian legacy. With the grand old man alive it would hardly have been impossible for Hedenius to claim the value theory and to redescribe Uppsala philosophy as part of the analytic tradition. But Hedenius' move was also made possible by the central position that logical empiricism had gained in the international and the Nordic philosophical debates. During the 1930s logical empiricism had become a leading philosophical movement, presented to the world in many popular and wide-spread introductions such as Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936), Carnap's small pamphlets in the *Psyche* miniatures series (Carnap 1934; 1935), and von Mises' *Kleines Lehrbuch der Positivismus* (1939). Even if logical empiricism did not have a commanding representative in Sweden,[32] its central arguments were

31 J. G. A. Pocock (1975) famously used the word "moment" to designate a specific political situation in which a certain move was possible. Palonen (2003b: 65) notes that the idea has since been borrowed by Rosanvallon (1985) and Palonen (1998) himself.

32 Åke Petzäll (1901-1957), who later became Professor in Practical Philosophy in Lund (1939-1957) had written an introduction to logical empiricism already in 1931, but his efforts went largely unrecognised in an Upp-

undoubtedly familiar to the Swedish philosophical community. The philosophical situation in the neighbouring countries was immensely important in this respect. The strong position of logical empiricism in the Nordic countries and of the Nordic philosophers within the logical empiricist movement was manifested not least through the Second International Congress for the Unity of Science which was arranged in Copenhagen in 1936 with many Uppsala philosophers as guests. The logical empiricists Eino Kaila in Finland, Jørgen Jørgensen in Denmark and Arne Næss in Norway, assisted the transformation from Uppsala philosophy to analytic philosophy in many ways. Not only by taking part in the common-Nordic philosophical debate (for example in the journal *Theoria*), but also as referees in the nomination processes for the vacant chairs in philosophy in Sweden. For example, in the race for the chair in Theoretical Philosophy in Uppsala in 1945, Kaila strongly favoured Marc-Wogau and Hedenius who stood for an "Uppsala philosophy in progress", while claiming that an appointment of the orthodox Hägerströmian Martin Fries would represent "stagnation" (Kaila 1945-46, 11-12).[33] For Kaila, the time was ripe for Swedish philosophy to catch up with the philosophical development in more advanced countries.

Simultaneously, one must also recognise the fact that logical empiricism itself was in a process of transition during the 1940s. The exodus from continental Europe meant that logical empiricism was fused with British and American ideas, and gradually replaced both substantially and rhetorically by novelties such as "ordinary language philosophy", "philosophy of science" and "analytic philosophy". This transition certainly played to the advantage of Hedenius and his companions as they no longer were forced to import the "logical empiricism" which had been shunned by their predecessors within the Uppsala school. Instead they could participate in the making of something new, that is, analytic philosophy.

Finally, "the Hedenian moment" can also be said to have been char-

sala philosophy-dominated Swedish discussion.

33 "Hos [Marc-Wogau] – och likaså hos hans medsökande doc. Hedenius – kan man numera tala om uppsalafilosofi i utveckling" and "[Valet av Fries] skulle betyda ett stillastående och icke ett framåtskridande."

acterised by the political circumstances that Hedenius and his companions were able to draw upon in furthering their own position. Hedenius' move coincided providentially with the general cultural turn from Germany to Great Britain and the United States. Whereas "analytic philosophy" was framed as Anglophone and democratic, competing philosophies were burdened with associations to Germany and totalitarian modes of thinking. The radical political connotations that had marked Uppsala philosophy during the 1920s and 30s were largely transformed in the emerging Cold War context. No longer a radical argument against the conservative political and moral elite, "value nihilism" and "analytic philosophy" supported and legitimised the official political agenda of the neutral (and Social Democratic) Swedish establishment. It is not unlikely that these political connotations, together with the domestic roots that the analytic tradition was furnished with in the figure of Hägerström, can serve as an explanation for the comparatively strong and persistent analytic dominance in Swedish philosophy during the latter half of the 20th century, and for the rather hostile reception of Næss' book *Four Modern Philosophers – Carnap, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Sartre* in the mid-1960s.

The rhetorical making of the Swedish analytic tradition described above is an example of the ways in which a rhetorical-political perspective can open up for novel interpretations in the history of philosophy, and I am sure that a similar examination of, for example, the *Positivismusstreit* in Germany or the curious invention of "continental philosophy" in the English speaking world in the 1960s and 70s, would produce equally fascinating results. The time is certainly ripe to abandon the rather tedious debates on whether this or that philosopher is an analytic philosopher or not, in favour of a discussion of what particular intellectuals have tried to do in using philosophical labels such as "analytic philosophy".

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Political Realism, Contingency and Philosophy

Esther Abin

Introduction

The relationship between political theorists and the time of politics is a complex one. Any theorist who emphasises the importance of the temporal and historical dimensions of politics will be naturally sceptical about the rational and ethical purpose of normative political theory itself. Recognition of the temporality of politics leads philosophers to unfold their conception of human reason in relation to the course of events, and further the role that they assign to normative theory and contingency constitute a limit to human reason in regulating and stemming the course of politics? In what sense can political theory remain consistent with the temporal and contingent aspects of politics? William Galston[1] has somehow kicked off this debate in pointing out that for the last decade, a number of political theorists have been criti-

1 Galston, William, "Realism in political theory" in *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010) pp.385–411.

cal towards the abstract theorisation of liberalism and the way in which liberal theorists neglects the fact of political contingency. Galston uses Bernard Williams's term "realism"[2] to identify this critical strand. According to Galston, this "realist turn" has emerged as a critique of "political moralism" associated with post-Rawlsian political theory (John Rawls[3]; Ronald Dworkin[4]; Jürgen Habermas[5]). Since the publication of Galston's article, one can observe a "realist revival" in British political theory, although, Galston himself is unclear about the consistency of these realist theorists (Bernard Williams, Stuart Hampshire, John Dunn, Richard Bellamy, Raymond Geuss, John Gray etc.), for they come from quite different normative backgrounds. Yet, their common denominator lies in the recognition of the temporal, contingent and practical aspects of politics.[6]

The general argument of this article consists therefore in unravelling the normative issues raised by political realism and pointing out its (non-exhaustive) limits. My intention is not to disparage entirely its critical relevance though; notably against the revival of non-historical and utopian political ideologies. I rather purport to refine the philosophical and normative claims of contemporary realism and pay more attention to its philosophical premises. I first instance *via* a comparative analysis of Machiavelli's and Hobbes's theorisation of political temporality that political realism does not work as a consistent normative strand of political theory. I thus raise some concerns about the extent to which political realism can consolidate a clear cut normative argument. The fact that Galston identifies John Gray and Bonnie Honnig as realists does not do justice to their distinctive philosophical claim. Realism often works as a superficial theoretical label, which flattens and undermines the meaning and the stake of the various arguments associated with it. Following this, I suggest that the recent revival of political real-

2 Williams, Bernard, *In the Beginning Was the Deed* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2005).

3 Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford Paper Backs 1973).

4 Dworkin, Ronald, *Taking Rights Seriously* (London: Duckworth 2002).

5 Habermas, Jurgen, *The Post-National Constellation: Political Essays,* (Cambridge: MIT Press 2001).

6 Abin, Esther, *Rationality and morality in political theory: a paradigm shift*, PhD Thesis (2011) Keele University.

ism and its corollary critique of the place of ethical and rational norms within politics entail almost logically a form of rejection of political philosophy. For political philosophy provides the concepts and the arguments by which political norms can be valued, endorsed or contested, philosophy enables politics to be meaningful and arguable beyond *defactoist* and positivist arguments. Last, I suggest that the quest for a "realist" political theory advances arguments that end up intentionally or not as a justification of political expediency.

Before political realism: the political philosophy of temporality and contingency

In support of Raymond Geuss[7], the categorisation of realism and moralism in terms of "is *versus* ought" does not necessarily capture the most distinctive features of realism. In fact, one can hardly consider the question of realism without coming across the issues of time and contingency, for they both frame the way in which political philosophers reflect about rationality and morality in politics.[8]

To recognise political contingency is also to recognise a limitation to the exercise of rationality and ethics within politics. Geuss, for instance, insists on the changing character of values, beliefs and morality and argues that a suitable political theory cannot yield anything *practically* relevant without taking those changes into consideration. As he puts it: "Politics is in part informed by and in part an attempt to manage some of these changes. In addition, as people act on their values, moral views, and conceptions of the good life, these values and conceptions often change precisely as the result of being 'put in practice.'"[9]

Historically, the recognition of temporal contingency in political theory reflects the advent of modernity whereby politics *on earth* is no longer seen to reflect the omnipotence of a divine will; it is recognised that political will is inherently limited by the fragility of the human

7 Geuss, Raymond, *Philosophy and Real Politics*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2008).

8 Abin, *Rationality and morality in political theory: a paradigm shift*.

9 Geuss, *Philosophy and Real Politics*, pp. 4-5.

condition. There have been various representations of political contingency throughout history.[10] Machiavelli and his heirs provide a distinctive account of the spatio-temporal dimension of politics - a time of the present rather than eternity, contexts rather than universals, changes rather than permanency, fluctuations and cycles rather than linearity. Political actors perform "in a universe of moral stillness" for there are "no prefigured meanings, no implicit teleology and no comforting backdrop of a political cosmos, ruled by a divine monarch and offering a pattern of earthly rulers."[11] For all political plans and actions are at the mercy of contingency, politics is associated with an art, a *techne,* whose function is to try to tame the course of political events. Contingency is thus central to a realistic account of political theory and the way contingency is articulated with the role and capacity of rational and moral norms contributes to shaping specific kinds of normative orders. Machiavelli and Hobbes are, in this respect, both considered to be "realists"[12] although their political philosophies of time are almost polar opposites. In order to grasp the differences between Machiavelli's and Hobbes's theories, it may be helpful to leave the concept of "realism" aside for some time and consider how both theories engage with the question of rationality and ethics with regard to the question of time and contingency.[13] Interpretations of Hobbes's and Machiavelli's texts result in two very distinct accounts of the relationship between human reason and the course of political events. The Machiavellian account of politics is centred on a particular understanding of time in politics; it interprets time and its contingent effects as being fully involved in the practice of political rationality and ethics. Hobbes's account of time is very differ-

10 Orr, Robert, "Time Motif in Machiavelli", in Martin Fleisher (ed.) *Machiavelli and the Nature of Political Thought* (London: Croom Held 1973), pp. 198-199.

11 Wolin, Sheldon, *Politics and Vision* (Boston: Little Brown and Company 1960), p. 224.

12 In so far as the term "political realism" is anachronistic and cannot be originally associated with Hobbes's and Machiavelli's political philosophy.

13 I do not engage, in that respect, in a literal analysis of Machiavelli's and Hobbes's respective works, but rather in the way both philosophies are important resources for realism in political theory. I thus refer to both philosophies by drawing on their respective recent interpretations.

ent, for it draws on his scientific ambition to liberate the human condition from the impediments of temporal contingency that, in Hobbes's own time, included civil wars and religious conflicts. His account of rationality and morality is intended to nullify the contingent effects of time upon people's political condition. These different attitudes towards temporality entail different political philosophies and different political views, a distinction that has so far been ignored by contemporary realist theorists. It may be useful to briefly articulate what I mean by Machiavellian and Hobbesian attitudes towards temporality in politics. I mainly use, for that purpose, Robert Orr's,[14] Sheldon Wolin's[15] and J.G.A. Pocock's[16] theoretical and interpretative works on "time" and "ethics" in the thought of Hobbes and Machiavelli.

Machiavelli locates his political theory in time, for the world, according to him, is ruled by temporal boundaries. Time expresses itself through series of events whereby no timeless essence, no eternity, no present can stop its flux.[17] Time is also central to his representation of political norms and indeed, is at the foundation of his political and moral philosophy. The latter consists in reconciling contingent (temporal) circumstances with political rationality and morality. His concept of "Fortuna"[18] is that of a time that intervenes in human affairs and creates new circumstances, new political configurations. *Fortuna* is thus the engine of human events; it either brings luck and prosperity or misfortune and catastrophe. In other words, Fortuna simply "tests" human ability to withstand the world of contingency. This resistance involves a certain degree of rational anticipation and intuition as well as a sense of morality that will further both human values and political ambition.

Political virtue is, in this context, an intelligent precaution to "mitigate and soften the impacts of events".[19] It is important to emphasise that Machiavelli's political theory does not disparage morality as such

14 Orr, "Time Motif in Machiavelli".

15 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*.

16 Pocock, J.G.A., *Politics, Language and Time* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd.1972).

17 Orr, "Time Motif in Machiavelli", p. 188.

18 Machiavelli, Niccolo, *The Prince*, ed. R.M. Adams (London: W.W. Norton & Company 1992), pp. 67-68, 125, 143.

19 Orr, "Time Motif in Machiavelli", p. 202.

(as distinct from conventional, e.g. Christian-Ciceronian morality). In Machiavelli's view, moral life implies "recognition of its own contingency that does not attempt to slip out of the time scale we know into some other, rooted in eternity or in some foreordained schedule of events".[20] He is not directly concerned with the simple question of whether or not one should be moral; in general terms, he takes for granted republican principles and the desirability of securing the peace and prosperity of Florence. He is thus not a cynical or *a*moral political thinker but rather subordinates conventional morality to the attainment of the political goals that he praises or favours. Machiavelli insists though that morality cannot apply to politics "out of political time", that is, regardless of the changing circumstances and configurations of political situations: "To adopt the rules of accepted morality was to bind one's behaviour by a set of consistent habits. But rigidities in behaviour were not suited to the vagaries of an inconsistent world."[21] In other words, his political morality is consistent with his account of political time. It does not stand as a sort of *a*temporal normative imperative beyond the contingent circumstances of politics – it is entangled with those circumstances: "Machiavelli's concern with the shortcomings of traditional ethics and his quest for a suitable political ethic stemmed from a profound belief in the discontinuities of human existence."[22]

Hobbes's political philosophy is based upon the artificial structure of a rationalist and systematic political rhetoric. His theory acknowledges the contingency of events in politics, which are part of the contingency of the physical world although human reason cannot control or anticipate the contingent course of events, for "God is author of them".[23] As opposed to Machiavelli's philosophy, which seeks to provide human reason and morality with the necessary imagination and talent so as to anticipate and respond to the intervention of *Fortuna*, Hobbes's philosophy divorces the world of contingency from that of politics. He thereby creates an artificial order whereby politics is liberated from uncertainty. Politics becomes an area of freedom and safety that contrasts again ar-

20 Orr, "Time Motif in Machiavelli", p. 206.
21 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 225.
22 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 227.
23 Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, p. 156.

tificially with the state of nature, which represents the world of contingency, fear and enslavement by the strongest: "the condition of political nothingness".[24] There is a close relationship between Hobbes's scientific beliefs and his understanding of political rationality: "The claims of science, that the mysterious phenomena of the universe were open and accessible to the methods of mathematics, appeared so undeniable to a mind like Hobbes that he boldly prepared to apply the same assumption to the political world."[25] The world of politics depends, for Hobbes, on a structural logic of rationalist and mechanical orders of truth and values accessible to men, provided that they follow those paradigmatic orders. Hobbes thus invents the permanent and abstract time of the modern state. It is synchronic, one-dimensional and unhistorical:

> Hobbes has followed the pattern, very common in the history of Western philosophy, of removing from the domain of political time into that of political space, a removal usually carried out for precisely the reason which he gives: the sequence of events in time cannot be known with certainty sufficient to be termed "philosophical." Only by abandoning diachronic for philosophical thinking can we understand scientifically how political authority must come into being, or erect a system of authority on a foundation of rational certainty.[26]

It thus seems that the association of "real world politics" with the political theory of Hobbes is severely misleading. Hobbes's political time is pure fiction; it has nothing to do with the contingent and "natural" world of physical phenomena, indeed, his intention is to escape from it. This theoretical escape derives from the modern belief that hu-

24 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 244. Wolin points out that although the "state of nature" is an artificial and fictional conceptual creation, the latter is motivated by historical circumstances whereby the state of nature was "the dramatic contrast to their deep belief in the possibilities of political construction" as well as "the source of the anxiety which shaded their hopes and caused their dogmas to trail off into questions".

25 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 243.

26 Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, pp. 157-158.

man rationality can recreate a world of its own through the lights of science and mathematics. As Wolin puts it: "There was a potential congruence between the phenomena of politics and the concepts of human mind, provided that these concepts were founded on the right method. When armed with the right method, and further armed with opportunity, man could construct a political order as timeless as Euclidean theorem."[27] Hobbes's alleged political "realism" is thus anything but the acceptation of the temporal and contingent aspects of politics. His political philosophy is the promotion of a moralistic order of knowledge under the control of rationality and faith, a philosophy that is "comparable in certainty to the truths of geometry, and *pari passu*, superior to the contingent truths of physics."[28] Arising from this, the only common denominator between Hobbes's and Machiavelli's account of political theory is the way in which they found normative political orders upon the relationship between rationality, morality and contingency.

On the impossibility to grasp the reality of politics *theoretically*

In giving due acknowledgment to the temporal and contingent aspects of politics, realism raises a number of questions concerning the way it is accounted for in political theory. Part of realist claims advance a view of political philosophy that denies its status as sub-branch of moral philosophy. This is particularly true in *After Politics*[29] whose author, Glen Newey, is seen by Galston as a representative of the "Realist School". Newey's main claim may be summarised as follows:

> The normative bias in contemporary political philosophy consists partly in its failure to establish methods and aims distinct from those of ethical theory. But it is also due to the fact that political philosophy has been largely given over to normative theorising, or what is often called "applied ethics." I do not deny that this form of theo-

27 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 243.

28 Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, pp. 246-247.

29 Newey, Glen, *After Politics* (London: Palgrave 2001).

> rising has its place within the discipline. But there can also be cognitive gain in description and the discipline as currently practised is perhaps disproportionately concerned with normative theory. Just as moral philosophers can usefully address the moral life in all its imperfection, so political philosophy can, and should, address that of the political life.[30]

Newey's claim is not meant to contest the philosophy of politics *tout court*, rather the *moral* dimension of political philosophy. In other words, he criticises moral philosophy or normative ethics for being inappropriate in the philosophical study of politics: "Insofar as political philosophy has aimed at articulating the guiding principles and institutional matrix of the ideally just society, it has had little to say philosophically about politics."[31] What exactly lies behind Newey's meta-philosophical critical concerns? Besides the fact that there may be inherent tensions between "real world politics" and any political theory, Newey is critical of the way contemporary political philosophers approach politics, for they presuppose an "anti-political reductivism" that "expresses a view of politics characteristic of liberal democracies".[32] Put differently, contemporary political philosophy is *partisan* in the sense that it formulates and, by the same token, promotes, the normative foundation of liberalism and aims for the ethical application of liberal norms in politics, in particular, that of the "rejection of politics".[33]

Besides this argument, Newey engages in a methodological - not to say a genealogical - reflection over the foundations and the practical rationality of contemporary political philosophy. He argues that political philosophers withdraw the historical and temporal dimension that surrounds philosophical texts about politics; these philosophers are said to promote their (liberal) moral views by turning them into some sort of "timeless body of truth"[34] or "trans-historical truth".[35] The latter, he

30 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 16.
31 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 17.
32 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 18.
33 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 22.
34 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 20.
35 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 20.

argues, is used by liberal philosophers as a unilateral and partisan framework of analysis applicable to any questions in political philosophy:

> To the extent that a text qualifies for the canon by memorably addressing a set of timeless concerns, it comes ready-interpreted. These concerns are not, however, usually taken to be political. In practice they amount to the implicit belief that there are "truths" of ethics or human nature which transcend the contextual particularity of the texts' production. Since this is taken to comprehend the political circumstances in which the texts were written, it is inferred that their philosophical value lies not merely outside these circumstances, but outside politics *tout court*. Thus there is a dichotomy between politics, as the sphere of historically conditioned particularity, and an apolitical set of concerns, and the works' philosophical merit consists in their account of the latter.[36]

While Newey, drawing on Machiavelli, characterises "politics" as "force, contingency and mutability",[37] he also notes that contingency is used by contemporary philosophers to mark a boundary between politics and ethics:

> While there are certainly major differences between the political circumstances of sixteenth-century Florence and the modern world, the relapse into normative theorising may be explained not by the thought that Machiavelli's view of politics is not any more applicable but that it is all too applicable. The desire to eliminate contingency from ethics is a dominant strand in much current (particularly Kantian) moral theory. In this respect real-world politics is apt to appear irrational, and requiring rational control.[38]

Newey's appeal to Machiavelli raises certain questions though. An ambiguity arises from the fact that Machiavelli can be referred to as the

36 Newey, *After Politics*, pp. 20-21.

37 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 21.

38 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 21.

father of *non-ethical* accounts of politics as well as a political adviser who prescribes theoretical devices as to how to succeed in politics despite its contingent nature. It seems that Newey appeals to both representations, which results in differentiating two kinds of prescriptive arguments in political theory, one being strictly prescriptive and the other ethical. Machiavelli is usually considered as *the* prescriptive realist political theorist since *The Prince* is a sort of handbook for wielding political power, although this political treatise is not concerned with "ethics" *per se*, but rather, the appropriate skills for political actions in changing circumstances.

This, thus, requires differentiating prescriptive *ethical* norms from prescriptive *political* norms. Yet, in this ground, it appears clearly that both realists and moralists can be *prescriptive* in their approach to politics. One can indeed infer, from Newey's argument, that while moralists yield *ethical* forms of prescription meant to be applied politically, realists rest on *political* forms of prescriptions – but why could *ethical* prescriptions not be *political*? The divide that Newey draws between ethics and politics lacks justification and arises from a parochial account of politics and ethics.

It may also be inferred that the opposition between *normative* and *descriptive* theories makes little sense since both moralist and realist philosophers portray "politics" from the angle that best suits their own *prescriptive* account of politics. However, *describing* politics without *prescribing norms* seems more difficult to conceive as a philosophical enterprise; it may indeed rely on a more empirical method of analysis that may not be qualified as "philosophical", but rather, as a sort of political sociology. Yet descriptive forms of enunciation can be contained within philosophy but, in this case, they belong to an order of discourse that is instrumental to that of philosophy.

Newey's critique is, in this respect, meta-theoretical. It can therefore hardly provide any substantive philosophical account of politics "as it is". However, that does not prevent him from offering analyses, all of which derive from his own subjective and partisan view of the reality of politics, of "the nature of political corruption and the loss of political virtue; considerations of general questions of legitimacy, not necessarily with reference to the notion of political obligation; the problem of

dirty hands and general questions concerning the relation between ethics and politics and elsewhere; non-idealised conceptions of public discourses […]".[39] As such his alleged realistic account of politics remains on a level with other alleged realistic accounts of politics. If Newey disagrees philosophically with the liberal and ethical content of political philosophy, he may have to address his critique both philosophically and politically.

Here we touch upon the problem of the epistemology of practical knowledge. According to Kelly,[40] Newey draws on Oakeshott's distinction between distinctive orders of experience,[41] which results in the separation of politics, as a mode of practical experience, from philosophy as reflecting on the presuppositions of practice. Political philosophy is, in this respect, a second order reflection on things political. Here again, if Newey were to provide an account of the practical reality of politics, he would have to re-consider the philosophical and epistemological nature of his enterprise. He would have to re-evaluate the paradigmatic order of classification of "practical" and "philosophical/theoretical" knowledge. In fact, the way in which this question is addressed may confuse two orders of knowledge; confusion, which according to Gunnell, results from Aristotle's account of political science as practical knowledge:

> When designating political science as practical, Aristotle did not mean that, like the knowledge and art of the statesman, it was embedded in practice – quite the opposite. Although in some sense it might be based on, or a distillation of, the practitioner's knowledge or knowledge about *how* to do certain things and although it might have utility for practice and directed towards practice, it was distinctly still knowledge *about* politics. Yet it professed to say something authoritative – descriptive, explanatory, evaluative – with respect to politics. This entailed potentially, and perhaps necessarily, a clash of authorities – the authority of knowledge, or knowledge *about*, versus the authority of politics, or operative knowledge of *how*. It also

39 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 34.

40 Kelly, Paul, *Liberalism* (Cambridge: Polity 2005)p. 104. Newey refutes that he developed his theory under the sway of Oakeshott though.

41 Kelly, *Liberalism,* p. 104-105.

involved the question of how these universes of discourse were and could be related both in principle and with respect to the limitations and possibilities of specific historical instances.[42]

One is thus confronted by a persistent problem surrounding the nature of political knowledge *via* theory and the "existential"[43] relationship between political theory and politics. Realists, although they do not entirely deny that politics involves applying norms, say little about their own normative view of politics; or, when they do, they allude to it as something beyond contest, as some sort of uncontroversial factual truth - politics is about power, disagreements about the good life, disagreement about whether disagreement should be dealt with or not, and if so, how, etc. From a realist view point there are basically two options for political philosophers: that taken by moralists, who decide to prescribe remedies and devices so that the endemic disagreements and power-relations that characterise politics might, in theory, be stabilised and regulated; and that taken by realists, who prefer sticking to the "reality" of politics and, who analyse the processes and new phenomena that arise from this reality. They can, for instance, attempt to manipulate the contingent and fluctuating realm of politics and to prescribe certain methods or "techniques" in the practice of political manoeuvres.[44]

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42 Gunnell, John G. "Relativism, the Return of the Repressed", *Political Theory* 21 (1993) p. 572.

43 Gunnell, "Relativism, the Return of the Repressed", p. 563.

44 Lieberman, Robert C., (quoted by Marc Stears in " Review article: Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion", *British Journal of Political Science*, 37 (2007), pp. 533-553) gives an insightful prescriptive analysis of the kind of skills required to adapt political contingency from a social scientific point of view: "When stable patterns of politics clash, purposive political actors will often find themselves at an impasse, unable to proceed according to the "normal" patterns and processes that have hitherto governed their behaviour. Political ideas and interests that had formerly prevailed might no longer be able to resolve (or even paper over) clashes of ideas as before. Political actors in such circumstances will often be induced to find new ways to define and advance their aims, whether by finding a new institutional forum that is more receptive to their ideas to take advantage if new institutional opportunities. The result of these moves is not that old orders

However, this categorisation implies that realist theorists may have to turn into social scientists, or sociologists. I do not develop this subject here, although it is symptomatic of the crisis of identity in the discipline felt by certain political theorists "torn" between humanities and social sciences. So, if political realists want to remain philosophers, what can their philosophy be about? As Newey puts it: "Political philosophy seems threatened by Polandisation, menaced on one side by merely descriptive (and on some views methodologically under-powered) political science, and on the other by the theoretical apparatus offered by deontological, consequentialist, and other currently debated theory- guided conceptions of the ethical."[45] In response to this, one can argue that political philosophy is descriptive *and* normative, i.e. driven by guided conceptions of the ethical and rational. The way in which Newey separates the descriptive and ethical spheres of political philosophy instantiates his tendency to eschew the political implications of political philosophy:

> Philosophers have demonstrated to us the inherent ambiguity and contestability of political concepts; and, most unsurprisingly, have shown that value assumptions are contained in any attempt at descriptions of political processes. Some professional students of politics in the universities – indeed this is a malaise in the social sciences – react to such criticism from the analytical philosopher by redoubling their efforts to appear "scientific" and purely factual, to purge themselves from value assumptions, and to emasculate themselves politically.[46]

Yet, the contingent features of politics do not necessarily preclude realists from seeking to provide politics with normative guidance. Marc

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are jettisoned but that elements of them are recombined and reconfigured into a new set of political patterns that is recognisably new and yet retains some continuity with the old ones." "Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change" in *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 96, No. 4, December 2002, p. 704.

45 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 17.

46 Newey, *After Politics*, p. 151.

Stears[47] argues that realist positions "do not in themselves stake out an alternative normative position" for they "do not see themselves merely as 'describing' existing realities. Rather they understand themselves as identifying essential, underlying characteristics of the activity of politics itself".[48] Stears identifies three "contrasting interpretations of the normative implications"[49] of realist critiques. The first includes theorists like Bonnie Honig, Chantal Mouffe and James Tully for whom "to act politically in the knowledge of disagreement and struggle is to open the possibilities of genuine free expression and, with Nietzsche, to celebrate the possibility of forging new realities through the struggle of the old ones".[50] The second view, whose most recent advocate, according to Stears, is Jeremy Waldron, is probably the most entangled with *ethical* liberal norms, in particular that of "democratic pluralism", even though Waldron's theory seeks to remain open to disagreements and conflicts through the active practice of "voting and legislating".[51] Last, the third view, drawing on Hobbes and advanced among others, by Geoffrey Hawthorn, is more pessimistic about achieving any real alternative within politics as it stands, and thus suggests maintaining "a sharp division of spheres between politics and 'civil society'."[52] Further to Stears's analysis, I would associate this last normative interpretation with the kind of realism influenced by Geuss and which develops through various critiques of value-based normativism. This realism, as for instance currently endorsed by Newey[53], Andreas Sangiovanni[54], John Horton[55] is committed to separating ethics from normativity and justice from

47 Stears, Marc, "Review Article: Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion", *British Journal of Political Science*, 37 (2007), pp. 533-553.

48 Stears, *Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion*, p. 545.

49 Stears, *Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion*, p. 545.

50 Stears, *Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion*, p. 546.

51 Stears, *Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion*, p. 547.

52 Stears, *Liberalism and the Politics of Compulsion*, p. 546.

53 Newey, "Just Politics", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* (2012).

54 Sangiovanni, Andrea, (2008), "Justice and the priority of politics to morality", *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 16 (2), 137–164.

55 Horton, John, (2012) "Political Legitimacy, Justice and Consent", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 15 (2), 149-164.

legitimacy. These dichotomies result in their reducing political theory to an account of political normativity, whose content is largely determined by particular and local contexts. Geuss has had a great influence on this sub-strand of political realism, especially since the publication of *Philosophy and Real Politics* in which he provides an insightful analysis into the way realism contributes to thinking and writing more *realistically* about politics beyond the "Is *versus* Ought debate." As he puts it:

> There is no single canonical style of theorising about politics. One can ask any number of perfectly legitimate questions about different political phenomena, and depending on the question, different kinds of enquiry will be appropriate. Asking what the question is, and why the question is asked, is always asking a pertinent question. In some contexts, a relative distinction between "the facts" and human valuations of those facts (or "norms") might be perfectly useful, but the division makes sense only relative to the context, and can't be extracted from that context, promoted, and declared to have absolute standing. However, I also think that the most convincing way to make this point is not by a frontal attack on the Is/Ought distinction, which would be very tedious, given that I grant that one can make the distinction in virtually any *particular* context, as a relative distinction. The Is/Ought distinction looks overwhelmingly plausible because of the way philosophers have traditionally framed the question and assumed one would have to go about answering it.[56]

Geuss's observation is particularly insightful, for he displaces the standard question about "realism" with a more subtle one about the responsiveness of theorising to the practical and contextual character of facts and norms. On this view, the possibility of being philosophically realistic about politics is to be understood not in terms of the systematic differentiation between normative and descriptive theories, but as an approach that is sensitive to understanding practical political assessment as contextually located in a particular time and place. Yet this assessment can hardly be otherwise than driven or influenced by some normative projections as there is no such thing as an "objective" account of temporal and spatial

56 Geuss, *Philosophy and Real Politics op. cit.*, p. 17.

contexts. Geuss appears himself sceptical about the term "normative" and whether the latter could replace ethics – as he puts it:

> […] The idea that there was a single "thing" or phenomenon that could be designated by the single term "normativity" may be thought to represent not a mere verbal quirk, but a not-in-significant step in giving the discussion of substantive issues a particular turn or slant or structure. Perhaps then, instead of any kind of single overarching "normativity", all there is are simply different – and possibly changing – human practices, with different goals, associated conceptions of excellence, and resultant goods; and human life consists of an art or skill in negotiating a way through, which is partly constituted by these practices, partly a matter of making use of them of other ends. What replaces ethics then is not another intellectual discipline, but forms of action, which may be skilfully or less skillfully performed.[57]

In the footpath of Hobbes, this form of realism circumscribes politics within the boundary of a particular and normative account of politics, encompassing notions such as legitimacy, justice, consent etc. Politics is deemed to have its own ethos and produce its own concepts, its own theoretical narratives and nomenclature. But as opposed to that of Hobbes, it conveys the view that no rational and moral theoretical device can withstand the contingent disorder of politics. "Geussean" realists thus express scepticism or pessimism about the practical relevance of the appeal to ethical and rational norms – a fact which undermines the role of political philosophy as a heuristic way of rationalising, valuing and making sense of politics: "There are no cases of political system which have not contained a tradition of political speculation. Such a tradition explains rationally why power always exits in the form of authority. Quite simply, there is always need to explain *what* we are doing, and also to provide some reasons (though they will never be conclusive) why we are doing it in a particular way. Political theory is itself political."[58]

57 Geuss, "Did Williams do Ethics?", *Arion* 19.3 (2012), pp. 141-162.

58 Crick, Bernard, *In Defence of Politics* (London: Continuum 2011), p. 154.

For political philosophy is meant to render the course of politics meaningful (in whichever way), it is also meant to improve the conditions by which one can understand and identify his/her political values – an essential step towards any commitment and participation to politics. Political philosophy is thus less about grasping the reality of politics (which may prove methodologically impossible) than making sense of it.

In defence of political philosophy against political expediency

Political theorists cannot eschew normative projections (moral and rational) in their analysis of politics. Therefore the relevance of realism, in political theory, lies less in its critique of rationality, ethics and philosophy *per se* than in the way that rationality, ethics and philosophy address the question of contingency in politics. In the former section, I argued that the recent revival of realism had been concerned with the defence of the practical and contingent dimension of politics against blind prescriptions of normative devices. Yet, this reactive movement of contest against "moralism" is double-edged: realists surely contest the projection of rational and moral norms regardless of the local and temporal aspects of politics but they fall short in re-thinking rationality and ethics otherwise.[59] It results that political realism reduces rationality and ethics to be the by-products of practical, prudential and factual determinations. This form of contextual determinism, which accounts for practicality and temporal contingency as *objective* limitations of political ideals, is thus embroiled with political conservatism and relativism – forging by the same token a critique of political philosophy *tout court*. In this section, I suggest that the kind of conservative realism, which has emerged alongside the rejection of moralism, and which has developed among British political theorists, accounts for political contingency as a way of justifying political expediency.

The "events" of the last decade, in particular the invasion of Iraq, have created an escalation of interpretations, moderate or radical, some-

59 Abin, *Rationality and morality in political theory: a paradigm shift*.

times vindictive, sometimes paranoid – all reacting in the face of the paradoxical combination of the allegedly "unforeseen" and "ineluctable". *In specie*, the invasion of Iraq was a shock to many European citizens, in particular those whose country was involved within the coalition of military belligerents. Investigations showing evidence of the absence of traces of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq and demonstrations of millions of European citizens in the streets of capital cities did not stop the machinery of war and terror in the skies of Baghdad. Nearly fifty years after the war in Vietnam, March 2003 has been, one more time, the arrogant demonstration that military power – *in specie* that of the United States – rules out the elegant rhetoric of diplomacy and the outraged opposition of public opinions. Further to witnessing the power of the strongest – a fact that some will find banal after all – British politics has been dragging a heavy and costly burden: that of having to comply with *public* lies[60]. It is as if the normative orders of law and justice had lost their grip on politics, the latter imposing its own contingent order. Of course, politics *per se* is not all about contingency – politicians and governmental representatives rule power in "governing" – but politics gives the appearance of being dominated by contingency when political representatives are not any more accountable to public wants and when they do not feel bound to legal regulations – in the case of Iraq, to the legal and normative corpus of the United Nations. In sum, political contingency expands in so far as it is conducted out of the normative space of democratic and legal accountability: when politics becomes a business of private and corporate interests. Acknowledging contingency in political theory must come along alternative ways of thinking rational and ethical norms. Withdrawing ethical and rational norms from politics of reducing them to mere instrumental and prudential motives amounts to political conservatism.

Politics is indeed about governing; and governing is about ordering[61]:

60 Geuss, "Blair, Rubbish, and the Demons of Noontime", *Redescriptions, Year Book or Political Thought, Conceptual History and Feminist Theory, Volune 12* (Berlin: Lit Verlag 2009).

61 As Bernard Crick puts it: "The fact of government must exist, both historically and logically, before the conditions of politics. The horse does go before the cart – even though he can never quite shake it off." *In Defence of Politics* (London: Continuum 2011), p. 147.

rationalising and designing procedures and policies. That political realism found a new breath in Britain may stem from the way in which British politics has been developing during the last decade. After the Second World War, and during the Cold War period, Michael Oakeshott accounted for British politics in an edifying way: an aspiration for moderation and the rejection of ideologies.[62] In the 90', British politics was inspired by an ideal of pluralism, indebted to the Lockean tradition of tolerance – it eventually took shape as a non-constraining ideal of social inclusion through consumerism and multiculturalism; an ideal that radical political theorists such as Chantal Mouffe[63] or Slvoj Zizek[64] have since then castigated. March 2003 marked a serious rupture in the public perception of British politics as enacting the liberal tradition of diplomacy, parliamentary deliberation and reasonable compromises. In that sense the decision to invade Iraq was a significant and *special* political action, which in Geuss's terms "for better or for worse, neither simply conforms to exiting rules, nor intervenes, like a qadi, to find craftsmanlike solutions to specific problems, but that changes a situation in a way that cannot be seen to be a mere instantiation of a pre-existing set of rules"[65]; a political action which, "creates new facts, violates, ignores, or even changes the rules."[66] Most politicians saw themselves either complacent of impotent in the face of an act of war aggression in which their own nation was involved. It is as if politics had been ripped of its rational and moral standards (respect for legal regulations, priority of diplomacy over military intervention etc.); of its ideal of moderation and appeasement. British politics became *something else*: what then could be left to British political theorists?

62 Oakeshott, Michael, *Rationalism and Politics.*

63 Mouffe, Chantal, *The Return of the Political* (London:Verso 1991).

64 Zizek, Slavoj, *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*, (London:Verso 2002).

65 Geuss, Raymond, *Politics and The Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2010), p. 41.

66 Geuss, *Politics and The Imagination*, p. 41.

Conclusion

The representation of politics in theory is unavoidably imbued with a view of what politics is about. Some realists contest the place of ethics within political theory and suggest instead another normative view of politics, which gives more importance to contingency. But this view cannot be identified with "realism" as a whole, for there is clear difference between Hobbesian and Machiavellian traditions of political philosophy. In that sense, the paradigm of time and contingency renders the whole concept of "realism" inconsistent as an autonomous normative category. Moreover, "realist" accounts of politics are no more objective or realistic than "moralist" ones. A distinctive feature of "realism" insists upon the autonomy of politics, but this leads to problems: for if politics is autonomous, it cannot be represented in political theory. Realist theorists can never be entirely faithful to politics if the latter is conceived as external to theory in the first place. How therefore can one apprehend the subject matter of political theory without creating what Gunnell identified with a "clash of authorities"[67] between the authority of politics and that of knowledge about politics? Attempts to recognise the externality or "autonomy" of politics include for instance: Aristotle's depiction of politics as a social organisation that develops through an evolutionary scale of institutions and regimes; Hobbes's depiction of politics as the state's sovereign and contractual protection of the individual's life within community; Schmitt's depiction of politics as a theological mission entailing wars and endemic conflicts etc. The "autonomy" of politics is thus represented artificially within political theory. It is precisely within these representations that there resides the ineradicable normative *and* political function of political theory, i.e. through its capacity to impart a persuasive representation of politics as being "politics". The normative function of this representation also resides in the way it articulates the nature of politics and that of human reason. Most contemporary political theorists, who claim to hold a "realistic" view of politics, identify and acknowledge this externality in terms of contingency, temporality and practicality. This depiction of politics has consequence on the way in which political philosophy is thought in relation

67 Gunnell, "Relativism, the Return of the Repressed", p. 572.

to politics. In accounting for politics in terms of practicality, temporality and contingency, some realists castigate ethical and ideal-based designs for being irrelevant to politics. However, theorising the practical, temporal and contingent aspects of politics is already rationally and ethically involved. In detaching ethical or ideal-based values from political norms, realism finds itself in a peculiar situation, for it remains bound to normative and prescriptive implications while emphasising that politics is contingent and autonomous; a peculiarity conducive to yielding ideas that Bernard Crick compared to "disguised doctrines"[68].

Political philosophy is thus a necessary tool to design partisan claims and render visible, because intelligible, the way in which authority and power are wielded.

68 Crick, *In Defence of Politics*. p 160.

Representing Political Subjectivity: James Cameron's *Avatar* and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*

Annabel Herzog

The question of the relationship between politics and art is as old as political philosophy, or even as philosophy *tout court*. Recall Plato's extravagant (and ironic) diatribe against art and poetry in Books II, III and X of the *Republic*. The ideal city must be purged of these imitators who depict false and inappropriate feelings, set a bad example, and corrupt the characters of decent people. Plato holds that there is a long-standing antagonism between poetry and philosophy, which he formulates as one between poets and political leaders ("guardians"). Since *philosophical truths* and *good political values* are the same, in Plato's well-ordered city art will be tolerated only if it is controlled by good political values—namely, by truth. Artists who do not submit to such values will be sent away.[1]

The fact that truth is susceptible to corruption, and that the corruption of truth can have unjust political consequences, has never ceased to be relevant and, hence, the discussion framed by Plato remains important—albeit with some corrections. We no longer assume the Platonic ideal in which politics is the domain of true justice, and we believe

1 Plato, *The Republic*, Book III 398 a.

that "imitation," or fiction, can serve precisely as a means by which the artist may demand justice. It is clear to us that deception and corruption stem not from art (or at least not only from art), but rather from political regimes which use art (as they use everything) for deceptive purposes. In other words, the longstanding desire of politics to control art is not always legitimized by a concern for truth and justice. Art, on the other hand, can be a tool to fight repressive political regimes or to expose unjust political practices. However, while these observations are self-evident in authoritarian (and *a fortiori*, totalitarian) regimes, they are much less obvious in liberal-cosmopolitan democracies.

By "art" I mean the *creation of affects*—as do Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*[2]—as well as the consequences of these affects on society and culture. By "liberal-cosmopolitan democracies" I mean a neo-liberal political culture marked by sociological parameters such as mobility, urbanity, environmentalism and hybridity.[3] In the following remarks, I will argue that in liberal-cosmopolitan democracies, art is not and cannot be a non-ambiguous political tool—either for propaganda by the regime or for criticism of it—because it is necessarily part of the hegemonic liberal discourse. As such, it is always ambivalent, as is James Cameron's acclaimed film, *Avatar*, which rejects Western imperialism while being a pure product of its values and practices.

In the first section of the paper I will focus on the relationship between politics and art, drawing on the political philosophies of Hannah Arendt and Jacques Rancière. From Plato to Rancière through Arendt, the relationship between politics and art has evolved from being a question of truth (in Plato), to being a question of plurality (in Arendt) and finally to referring to subjectivization (in Rancière). I will show that in such a context, art gives visibility to, or represents new political subjects, but also reflects the ambiguities and contradictions of their struggle for public existence. For that purpose I will offer a "reading" of Cameron's

2 Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 175.

3 A full discussion of cosmopolitanism and of the broad scholarship concerning it is beyond the scope of this essay, which focuses on central elements in the contemporary relationship between art and politics. In this essay, I therefore speak of cosmopolitanism in general terms.

Avatar, arguing that the film is one of the first artistic representations of a new political subject, the "network protester," who in recent years has appeared on the political stage, challenging but also being an expression of hegemonic values. Finally, I will turn to the example of Cormac McCarthy's novel *The Road*, to describe another possible political role of artistic representation in liberal-cosmopolitan times- that of testimony.

Politics and Art

Reflecting upon the relationship between truth and politics originally framed by Plato, Hannah Arendt wrote: "To look upon politics from the perspective of truth… means to take one's stand outside the political realm… The standpoint outside the political realm—outside the community to which we belong and the company of our peers—is clearly characterized as one of the various modes of being alone. Outstanding among the existential modes of truthtelling are the solitude of the philosopher, the isolation of the scientist and the artist…"[4] Contra Plato, who makes a radical distinction between the philosopher and the artist, Arendt argues that both the philosopher and the artist attempt to tell the truth, and that the nature of their attempt is an existential condition of solitude or isolation. Both the philosopher and the artist looking for truth estrange themselves from the political domain, which is the domain of opinion-making, namely, the sphere of togetherness and *plurality*, of different and coexisting *viewpoints* not necessarily related to truth:

> I form an opinion by considering a given issue from different viewpoints, by making present to my mind the standpoints of those who are absent; that is, I represent them. […] It's a question [...] of being and thinking in my own identity where actually I am not. The more people's standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my

4 Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin, 1968), pp. 259-260

opinion. [5]

For Arendt, the specific essence of politics is not truth, which, in its solitude, is non-political and even anti-political, but *taking other standpoints into account*. In line with Arendt but going a step further, the French philosopher Jacques Rancière argues that the *demand to be taken into account* constitutes the act of *becoming a political subject* and that, accordingly, politics consists of processes of subjectivization.[6]

Rancière draws a distinction between the concepts of *police*, *politics* and *the political*. As he conceptualizes it, *police* refers to the social order; it involves the rules, norms, and relationships by which society members are governed. The notion of police "entails community consent, which relies on the distribution of shares and [a] hierarchy of places and functions."[7] In other words, it is "the art of community management,"[8] whose goal is the fair distribution of roles and modes of involvement among the members of the social order, or as Rancière puts it, "the common world." Politics, in contrast, is the realm of conflict about the distribution of roles in the common world. As such, politics is about being seen—or perceived. The public space is in theory shared by all and managed by the institutions of the *police*. Yet in fact, there are individuals who are in effect excluded from this process. As Rancière argues — following Arendt, but also Aristotle and Marx[9]—some people have no share in the common world. They are not there or, more exactly, they are not counted; they are not seen. They have no right to speak and be

5 Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, p. 241

6 See Jacques Rancière, *La mésentente* (Paris: Galilée, 1995); Jacques Rancière, "Politics, Identification, and Subjectivization," in *The Identity in Question*, edited by John Rajchman (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 63-72.

7 Rancière, "Politics, Identification, and Subjectivization," p. 63. Rancière's *police* (in French) is in this book translated by *policy,* which is adequate for "community management" but does not express the fact that repression and management are part of the same concept. In rendering *police* by police I follow translators of other works by Rancière.

8 Jacques Rancière, *Aux bords du politique* (Paris : Gallimard, 2004), p. 16.

9 See Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics,* edited and translated by Steven Corcoran (London and New York: Continuum International, 2010), in particular p. 39.

heard, and when they happen to speak, they are not heard: their voice is not considered a voice but a noise. Politics is what happens when such excluded people suddenly demand to be seen and heard; when some aspect of their situation suddenly becomes unbearable and reminds them that they, too, deserve a share of the public domain; when they show that they are neither invisible nor silent, and speak a language no less articulate than that of the recognized members of the public stage.

For Rancière, issues are not intrinsically political or non-political.[10] Any issue can become political, and actually does so when something about that issue prompts people who were invisible to demand they be seen and heard in a "process of subjectivization"[11]: "Politics can therefore be defined […] as the activity that breaks with the order of the police by inventing new subjects."[12] Politics is about conflict over the distribution and redistribution of the common space, which brings new issues and new voices into the public domain—which brings a *surplus* into the well-ordered world of the *police*. Rancière calls the *political* the confrontation between the *police* and *politics:* between the social order by which people, communities, and organizations share the public space, and the conflicting demands for equal visibility made by the unseen and unheard who are hereby becoming new subjects.

Thus, on the basis of Rancière's analyses, we can say that, contra Arendt and in a kind of ironic agreement with Plato, art has a political dimension because it brings a *surplus* into the public domain. The affects created by artistic work bring into being something not previously perceived. Of course, art is not only political, and it is not equivalent to politics. One can even choose to see in art only art—that is, to hold that a real work of art refers only to itself: "art for art's sake." However, the distinction between artworks that refer to some political exteriority and art for art's sake misses the point. The political dimension of art does not stem from the fact that art can refer to political issues, but from the fact that by its nature, art extends the public space: "There is no 'real world' that functions as the outside of art. Instead, there is a multiplicity of folds in the sensory fabric of the common, folds in which outside

10 Rancière, *La mésentente*, p. 55.

11 Rancière, "Politics, Identification, and Subjectivization," p. 66.

12 Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 139.

and inside take on a multiplicity of shifting forms, in which the topography of what is 'in' and what is 'out' are continually criss-crossed and displaced by the aesthetics of politics and the politics of aesthetics […] Doing art means displacing art's borders, just as doing politics means displacing the borders of what is acknowledged as *the* political."[13]

Art is political in a paradigmatic way in a democratic system, where the public domain is characterized by a vibrant, free, ongoing competition for *visibility*.[14] In democracy as in theater, identities, spaces and activities are unstable and fluid.[15] In both, visibility and invisibility take precedence in turns. The rhetoric used in democratic politics and the poetry used in theater—with all their differences—similarly create new and competing realities. This is why Plato wanted to say an irrevocable farewell to the writers of epics and plays—as well as to all democrats. For Plato, identities had to be stable because truth was immutable. As a result, his city had no room for democratic or theatrical games. It was the true task of some to speak and others to work. However, the democratic order is fluid and unstable, because it is characterized by different points of view and competition for visibility, not by truth. In such a context, the affects introduced by art into the public sphere have a political resonance. In this way art sometimes generates some kind of emancipation, but it may also reinforce the dominant regime.

The Example of *Avatar*

In the following section I will illustrate art's political resonance and its incorporation into the political domain through an example: James Cameron's film, *Avatar*, which I will read as a text. A few words justifying this example are called for before I proceed. First, some might disagree that *Avatar*, as a Hollywood blockbuster, can represent an example of "art." However, as I speak here of art in terms of the creation and reception of affects, I regard the distinction between "art" and "pro-

13 Rancière, *Dissensus*, pp. 148-149.

14 See Rancière, *Dissensus,* pp. 31-32.

15 See Jacques Rancière, *Le partage du sensible: esthétique et politique* (Paris : La Fabrique-Editions, 1998), pp. 12-15.

duction culture" as irrelevant.[16] Second, and more seriously, it might be argued that a Hollywood production is by definition part of the hegemonic discourse and an expression of the *police* and ipso facto cannot be used to exemplify the *political* (in Rancière's sense) dimension of art. In response, I would underline the *ambivalence* of this specific Hollywood production, *Avatar*, which affirms and celebrates the hegemonic system even as it rejects it, in a form of *mise-en-abyme*. Beyond that, what I wish to focus on here is the creation or presentation in the film of a new political subject: the "network protester."[17] This new manifestation of *politics* represents a surplus in the *police* order to such an extent that it is currently modifying the political sphere in the Arab world; on Wall Street; and in Europe, South America, Russia and elsewhere.

A New Political Subject

Avatar depicts a world and a way of life in which the problem of mobility has been completely mastered. All places, no matter how far, can be reached without effort. On the planet Pandora, transportation has attained its optimal level. Technology provides humans with optimally efficient machines. Nature provides the Na'vi people with natural carriers: tamed animals, one equine-like, one winged, each optimally adapt-

16 Moreover, the rejection of Hollywood films as authentic art seems to me mistaken. In spite of uniform processes of production, the Hollywood industry is not wholly homogeneous; there is art and there are artists in Hollywood. Among the many scholarly works on this topic, see particularly John Thornton Caldwell, *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008).

17 As I write these lines, *Time Magazine* has just elected its "Person of the Year" for 2011: the Protester. I am not arguing that Cameron invented the protester as a political subject between 1994, when *Avatar* began development, and 2009, when it was released, but I do claim that his film represents one of the first artistic expressions of the "network protester." Another such expression—also ambivalently both part of the hegemonic system and rejecting it—is found in Stieg Larsson's bestselling "Millenium" novels.

ed for long-distance travel. There are no barriers between plains and mountains, earth and sky, sky and the entire cosmos—not because the divisions between these domains have been removed but because technology and Nature have provided means to overcome them. Indeed, in *Avatar* the body itself is, or can be made, essentially a perfect vehicle: Should you lose your legs, medical treatment can restore them; or you can become a Na'vi—and then you can run immeasurable distances, jump vast heights, swim in any stream.

If Cameron's previous great film, *Titanic*, drew from the realm of transportation to symbolize the perils of human hubris for the 20th century, *Avatar* symbolizes the world we are heading toward in the 21st—a world characterized by the complete mastery of geographic displacement. Cameron's vision in *Avatar* is descriptive—this is the life we will be living in the near future, this is the spirit of our time—but also critical, because absolute mobility is the tool for absolute imperialism, absolute greed, and eventually absolute destruction. In contrast, Cameron presents an ecological and moral ideal, as reflected in the life of the Na'vi. Even more than the humans, the Na'vi move with great ease. Unlike the human characters, however, the Na'vi are situated—*rooted*—in specific places, and they do not covet lands which are not theirs. The film thus makes a double statement: our world is one of physical mobility; physical mobility should never mean the cutting of our connection to particular places and the destruction of other people's connection to their own places.

As widely emphasized in environmental literature, the "world" can be seen in two ways. It can be considered an *extended space* of many opportunities, which humans exploit for their own benefit. At the same time, it can be regarded in terms of the natural environment: the web of interrelationships among the living and nonliving things that fill the surface of the planet. The world as extended space and the world as the natural environment are distinct points of view that lead to different ways of life. *Avatar* shows that considering the world as extended space implies disconnection, while living in nature implies connection.

Here appears therefore the main topic of the movie: *connectivity*. The Na'vi are connected people, who plug themselves into the natural world by means of a special braid (this practice is called "bonding"). It is their

being plugged in that makes the Na'vi special. At first sight, the moral of the film seems to be something like "be connected to nature, not to electric appliances." However, the film's idea of the natural life is drawn precisely from the model of electronic appliances. On Pandora, all living things are interconnected via a vast neural network—but to access the neural network, the Na'vi must plug in. As for the human beings in the film, they too need to get plugged in to access the Na'vi world. Sophisticated technology, including advanced genetic engineering, has allowed the scientists on Pandora to develop "avatar" hybrid bodies from human DNA and Na'vi genetic material; the humans whose DNA was used for each avatar can then use their dreams and mental energy to activate the avatar, which can plug into the Pandoran neural network. This procedure, which takes place in dedicated "sleeping machines," is called "the link" (note that "bond" is the word used for the Na'vi, the less-strong "link" for the human-Na'vi connection).

In short, there is no ontological continuum in *Avatar* between humans and the Na'vi, or between the Na'vi and the natural world. The link *has to be created*. One can be part of the web of life on Pandora—but one has to initiate the connection; one must plug in. What we have here is not technology imitating Nature, but nature imitating Technology. The nature we love to love on Pandora is attractive because it works just like the Internet—it is a simulacrum of a technological model. While the metaphor of the neural network comes ultimately from nature—the Pandoran network is a vast system of electrochemical connections, with trees serving as the equivalent of neurons in the brain—the language used to describe this network is drawn from computer technology. The trees form—I quote the film—a global network. The Na'vi get connected to it and they download or upload data."

The link established in *Avatar* between environmental issues and the fight against capitalism and imperialism is not new.[18] The film's innovation, however, is that the aboriginal population's natural way of life is based on a model offered by the internet. The Na'vi people dwell in a single village while being part of a cosmic web; they have absolute mobility while remaining connected to their world. It is this situation that constitutes the

18 In general, the plot of *Avatar* is not new. The film has been compared to several others, including *Dances with Wolves* (1990) and *Pocahontas* (1995).

cause and possibility of their resistance against Western imperialist culture.

Avatar gives visibility to a new kind of political subject—the *plugged-in* or *network protester*. The film shows that in liberal-cosmopolitan times, the idea of the network and the notion of protest come together. The network is not simply an instrument of communication. It is a metonymy for a new kind of protest, which involves the rebellion of *rooted* people against capitalist disconnection, and *solidarity* between subjects, and between subjects and earth, against the atomization and insensitivity of global hegemony. Put differently, connectivity *in itself* encapsulates the essence of a new kind of protest, one which allies capitalist technology and ecology, universal values (the call for traditional liberal rights) and parochial care for one's specific culture, rituals and pieces of land. The network protesters are at one and the same time participants in the Western imperialist system, and its opponents. Their participation in, and patronage of the very system they are opposing dooms them to ineffectiveness or at best gradual undermining of the system's values, and not their radical transformation.

The Ambivalence of the Liberal Framework

In *Avatar*, as in most movies about aliens, human beings encounter a population which is wholly "other," yet nevertheless similar to humanity. The Na'vi are blue and tall; they have four fingers, a tail and a braid-plug; and they worship Nature in a way that most contemporary people are likely to find alien. However, these strange humanoids have the same feelings and the same cognitive abilities as human beings. In spite of their physical, cultural, linguistic, and religious differences, they are reasonable creatures. Put differently, the encounter with the very "other" Na'vi is a paradigm of the encounter with the other in the liberal, Kantian fashion: at the end of the day, the other is one of us, or can be one of us if he or she, and we, make the effort to communicate and understand each other. Reason is universal and, therefore, justice and morality are universal too.

On the basis of this universalism we can distinguish three ways in which one can encounter other cultures and ethnic groups. The first is

through ambition and imperialistic passion, namely, through the urge to eliminate those who are other, and to take what is theirs. In *Avatar*, this is the way chosen by most human beings: passionate ambition proves to be the main human drive.

The second is through intellectual cognition, whereby one tries to know and understand otherness. This is the way of science and, in the film, of the scientists who conceived the avatar program. In *Avatar*, science creates a simulacrum thanks to which the scope of rational knowledge is enlarged. This simulacrum, or fiction, is presented as a tool that is amoral—i.e., neither moral nor immoral. True, the scientists designed this tool to acquire knowledge for the sake of better social and political cohesion. The *Avatar* scientists wish indeed to live in peace in the world with all reasonable creatures, including the Na'vi.[19] However, knowledge is intimately related to power. Power requires knowledge to give it legitimacy; and knowledge requires power to give it the means to develop. The scientists need the soldiers to bring them to Pandora, protect them, and build the infrastructure of the avatar program. The soldiers need the scientists to provide them with the information that will enable the conquest.

The third way to encounter otherness is open to a very few select people. This is the way of conversion—which, in the world of the movie, is total. Conversion in *Avatar* entails both a physical and spiritual transformation, in which nothing remains of one's previous life. Jack is literally *born again* into his new community—the Na'vi people—in the midst of Nature. This route is available, in the film, only to individuals touched by grace or love. (It is worth remembering that Jack can only become a Na'vi because he is chosen by Eywa, the Nature goddess.) When he becomes a Na'vi, Jack must renounce his previous reality and accept the other's culture totally. In essence he must choose the dream as reality, over reality.

Conversion applies to human beings only. No Na'vi would ever wish to renounce his or her identity. In fact, the "others" have no interest in us (namely, Westerners) and our culture. It is only we who turn to

19 Of course, one can be far more critical as to the pure intention of science and scientists than *Avatar* and other works of fiction allow themselves to be.

them—whether to conquer them, to learn from them, to teach them, or to join them. The political statement of the movie is clear: The Na'vi are better people with a better way of life; it is we who should change, not them. However, it must be strongly emphasized that it is thanks to Western science and technology that Jack discovers the dream world that he finally chooses as his own. Moreover, it is he—a human soldier trained to conquer—who teaches the Na'vi how to defend themselves against the evil humans who try to destroy their land. It is the militarily and technologically trained Westerner, not the "natural" aboriginal, who leads the fight against Western power, in the name of a universal morality applicable to everybody—Westerners and aboriginals together.

What appears here is the paradox of liberalism, which holds self-criticism as the key feature of its ideology. In other words, liberalism never triumphs so much as when it criticizes itself in the name of its own values. The real human (or American) culture is not the cruel and selfish culture that destroys the holy trees of Pandora. It is the culture that sustains the rights of man, the rights of indigenous peoples, the rights of the natural world—all rights and values formulated by humanity (or America)—against the cruel and selfish human soldiers. Hegel got it right when he said it is the self-contradiction inherent in bourgeois liberalism that makes bourgeois liberalism the foremost power of the time—his time and, 200 years later, our own.

However, we can understand that paradox in another way. Or, more precisely, we are dealing here with another paradox, that of modern struggles and revolutions. As emphasized by post-structuralist theorists, modern theories of liberation are based on the very same values and practices as those of the repressive powers. Western culture has succeeded not only in repressing other cultures (and repressing its own minorities), but it has obliged them to defend themselves in a manner created and defined by Western culture. The Na'vi have no chance against the humans if they behave as orthodox Na'vi (as their young leader would like them to do). They must adopt a human strategy, taught by the good human, Jack.

Avatar therefore celebrates US politics and culture no less than it attacks them. It both illustrates and embodies the spirit of our time: it denounces capitalism and imperialism while being a pure product of

Hollywood, the highest-grossing film of all time, and, therefore, one of the main tools for propagation of American culture worldwide. The film does not come down on the side of the Na'vi's connection to nature, but on that of American enthusiasm for the Na'vi's connection to nature. It gives imperialism a satisfying feeling of being able to criticize itself—of being strong enough and moral enough to allow self-criticism—and transforms this self-congratulatory criticism into a public icon.

What appears in *Avatar* is a series of ambivalences: the network protester both participates in the hegemonic culture and rejects it in the name of values that the film both celebrates and criticizes. *Avatar* works at the same time for and against specific policies. As an artwork showing repression and a new kind of protest, and as a product of Hollywood, it is a manifestation of the confrontation between *politics* and *police*. Such a kind of art is part of a general discourse issuing from existing subjectivities and creating or revealing new subjectivities. It is neither lie nor truth; neither pure instrument of liberation nor tool of manipulation and repression. It is part of a game of appearance and disappearance, part of a general economy of norms and cultures challenged by a surplus of political subjects. The fact that it is part of a general discourse in this way is the reason it cannot be unambiguously a tool for social and political criticism.

Art and Testimony

In the last section of this paper I would like to propose another example, that of an artwork that is part of the general discourse but in a different way. Its immediate purpose is not to celebrate and/or reject the political system, but, rather, to *bear witness* to fundamental values in a fictional or, maybe, prophetic way. My example is Cormac McCarthy's novel *The Road,* which, I argue, is a mirror image of *Avatar,* showing the same spirit of the times but from a different perspective.

In *The Road,* humanity has been reduced to the fate that would have befallen the Na'vi had Jack not succeeded in preventing the total destruction of their world. Nature lies in ruins, as do all the distinguishing

features of contemporary civilization—cities and machines. The world we see in the book—explicitly, America—is cloaked in smoldering ashes. Ironically, cosmopolitan mobility is here as absolute as in *Avatar*—the world has shrunk to a road, but it is a road through endless space with no frontiers. People in *The Road* are slow but mobile. Indeed, they walk endlessly. They walk because there is nothing else to do but walk. As in *Avatar*, nothing can stop them except death.

In McCarthy's novel, nothing is left of triumphant technology. Hence, there is an immediate and ontological relationship between humanity and what is left of nature—a painful and desperate relationship. To be part of nature here means to suffer—from hunger, from thirst, from cold, from the rain, from the dark, from other people. The electrical power grid, along with all the other accoutrements and necessities of modern life, is gone. There is no switch, nothing we can plug in (or link to, or bond with) that will light the world and create an appeasing fiction. More painfully, all the links among people have been broken. The characters rarely talk, and when they do, McCarthy reduces the language of their dialogues to a minimum. People no longer share culture or beliefs; instead, they have entered a Hobbesian state of nature, where they serve each other as sustenance of the most fundamental kind. In this world of absolute immediacy, people make use of whatever they find in their path: clothes, cans, or corpses, even to the point of eating the latter. Nor is this behavior considered unjust. As Hobbes wrote, "In this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of Right and Wrong, Justice and Injustice have there no place."[20] Justice has disappeared because all connections that mediate between nature and humanity, or between human beings, have been obliterated.

Like *Avatar*, *The Road* is a dream, but, this time, it is the nightmare of a world in which absolute individualism has overcome all other realities. Absolute individualism means that there is no more policy and no more police, no more protest and no more networks. The book, however, *does* give voice to a new political subject, the *survivor*. The survivor emerges not in his or her ambivalent struggle to be part of a public sphere both desired and loathed—indeed, in *The Road* such a public sphere

20 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 90.

no longer exists. He or she appears as remnant of the *big catastrophe*—which, in current political discourse, regularly appears as environmental cataclysm, atomic disaster, or capitalist calamity (whether collapse of the economic system or, on the contrary, its unlimited triumph). The survivor does not struggle to be heard and seen, to confront current policies. He or she does not even fight merely for life, but for a *life of remembrance*, the remembrance of facts and (holy) values that "once" existed: "Once there were brook trout… On their backs were vermiculate patterns that were maps of the world in its becoming. Maps and mazes. Of a thing which could not be put back. Not be made right again."[21] As a straight answer to Plato, the function of art appears here to be that of a fiction able to reveal the *true* idea of the common good. In Rancière's words, "To investigate something that has disappeared, an event whose traces have been erased […] is a form of investigation which certainly cannot be assimilated to the representative logic of verisimilitude […] On the other hand, it is perfectly compatible with the relationship between the truth of the event and fictional invention specific to the aesthetic regime in the arts."[22] The survivor is a kind of "anamnetic" character, recollecting what our actual political reality has destroyed.

Unlike *Avatar, The Road* does not offer explicit social criticism, but rather bears witness to vanishing values, values that will be lost when individualism triumphs and the war of all against all envelops the planet. What emerges from the literary representation of the devastated world-to-come is, *a contrario*, the remembrance of the possibility of human relationships in a living Nature. *The Road* is an example of these "artistic *dispositifs* that tend towards a function of social mediation, becoming the testimonies, or symbols, of participation in a non-descript community construed as the restoration of the social bond or the common world."[23] Contrary to what Plato thought—at a time when global destruction was neither a political fantasy nor a real political danger—art can be a window onto a truth that *the polis-police* does not take into account: the possibility of its own dissolution. The political subjects rep-

21 Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (London: Picador, 2007), pp. 306-307.

22 Jacques Rancière, *The Future of the Image,* translated by Gregory Elliott (London, New York: Verso, 2009), p. 129.

23 Ranciere, *Dissensus*, p. 194.

resented in such an art-as-testimony do not fight to make their voices heard and redistribute the political space, but to maintain the existence of that space. Art-as-testimony does not give visibility to this or that specific subjectivity, but to the very idea of political subjectivity, at a time when the ambivalence of political struggles casts doubt on the values and sustainability of liberal democracy.

The Politics of Innovation

The Controversy on Republicanism in Seventeenth Century England

Benoît Godin

Innovation has become a word of fashion over the last sixty years, particularly in technological matters. Yet, we may have forgotten it these days but innovation is a political and an essentially contested concept. It began to be used by ancient writers on change and the stability of political constitutions, came into wider usage after the Reformation as a King's legal prohibition, then became a polemical weapon used against every kind of opponent to the established order, including "innovating" princes. More recently, namely in the second half of the twentieth century, innovation became an instrument of governments' economic policies (Godin, 2012a).

Despite this political connotation, there are no entries on innovation in dictionaries of political thought or mentions in studies of political ideas. To be sure, change, under different aspects, is widely studied: revolution, crisis, progress, modernity. Yet innovation as a concept is still waiting for its history to be written. There is not a single article in the literature on the history of the concept nor on the use of the concept in political matters – although historians like J.G.A. Pocock, Q. Skinner

and J. Farr have stressed the conceptual innovativeness of the political theorists. Historians and political scientists may have focused too much on 'classical' authors and theories. Until the twentieth century, innovation was used in a different kind of literature than the classics and theories, that is, pamphlets and tracts.

From the Reformation onward, innovation (whose etymology comes from *in* + *novare*, c.1500) was widely used as a concept in religious matters. The English Puritans accused the bishops of "innovating" in matters of Church doctrine and discipline, using the word as such, thus launching the first controversy on innovation (Godin, 2012b). In fact, it is that specific controversy that contributed to the diffusion of the concept in the following decades. In mid-seventeenth century England, innovation started being discussed in politics, particularly with regard to the Republicans. The (failed) attempt to establish a republic in mid-seventeenth century England was certainly one of the greatest political innovations up to that time and, as Jonathan Scott has suggested, "the innovatory nature of the republic was hard to disguise" (Scott, 2000: 235). In the context of a monarchy, it challenged the established order directly.

Such a context of order has been widely studied by scholars for a long time, and need not be repeated here (e.g. Hill, 1972). What must be stressed is that this context explains the use (or rather non use) of a central concept of the Western world: innovation. Innovation is a bad thing. It threatens authorities. Before the Nineteenth Century, innovation is a concept used pejoratively against every deviant, from the heretic to the political revolutionary and the social reformer.

It was through the discourses of critics of republicanism that innovation entered into politics. The concept served to discredit the political innovator or republican. However, republicans themselves rarely if ever discussed their project in terms of innovation. In fact, few if any innovations of the time were acknowledged as such. David Zaret has aptly called this phenomenon the "paradox of innovation": innovation was everywhere but it was rarely sought after or defended openly (Zaret, 2000).

This paper is a study on the concept of innovation, the extent to which it permeated politics, and the representations that writers de-

veloped on innovation. It will be shown that innovation is a morally-charged concept, and this connotation explains the fate of the concept for centuries (innovation remained negative until late in the Nineteenth Century). To the Republicans, innovation was too pejorative a concept to use to define their project. In contrast, the concept was used without reservation by the Republicans' critics. To the Royalist, innovation points up the Machiavellian designs of Republicans.

This controversy on innovation, the second to occur in mid-seventeenth century England, is more than just semantic. It has many things to teach the student of politics about context (order), self-presentation (image) and political action through persuasion. Words are markers of the social understanding of the world, and reflect social and political values (Skinner, 1988; Farr, 1989). Furthermore, as Reinhart Koselleck, among others, suggests, "in politics, words and their usage are more important than any other weapon" (Koselleck, 1969: 57).

In addition to being a paper on the intellectual history of innovation, this paper is a contribution to the history of political thought. It looks at how innovation as a pejorative and derogatory concept got into political discourses and how, in turn, politics made use of the concept and contributed to its meaning. The paper is not a paper on the history of republicanism or theorists of the republic. Many arguments against Republicanism are well known to experts on political thought.[1] These are studied here to the extent that they contributed to a then (relatively new and) emerging concept: innovation.

The first part of this paper puts innovation in perspective with a brief introductory discussion of the meaning and use of innovation over time. The second part examines the discourse held by English Royalists against the "innovators of State", through a pamphlet published in 1661, the first political pamphlet to use innovation in its title. The third part documents a controversy between the English Republican Henry Neville and his critics, and the use made of innovation to support a case. The fourth part analyzes what innovation meant to people at the time, explaining the use (and non use) of the concept. The final part of the

1 There exist many books on republicanism. As examples, one may consult the works of J.G.A. Pocock, Paul A. Rahe, Caroline Robbins, Jonathan Scott and Blair Worden.

paper studies what effects this representation of innovation have had on the concept in the centuries that followed.

The paper focuses on England for two reasons. One is the fact that English writers were key contributors to a pejorative representation of innovation, particularly from the Reformation onward. Second, England is an ideal case study. In fact, this paper is part of a work in progress that examines representations of innovation over time in several countries (England, France, Italy, Germany and the United States). England is a perfect example of the representations of innovation current in these countries, at least up to the French Revolution.

One important distinction needs to be made from the start. In order to properly appreciate innovation and its meaning over the period studied here, it must be remembered that innovation is distinct from novelty, at least in the vocabulary. Innovativeness is accepted to many extents, often openly, at least in certain social spheres and activities, like those that "give pleasure" and in science, as Aristotle put it. In contrast, novation and innovation refer to introducing or bringing in some new thing that changes customs and the order of things in a non-trivial manner and, because of this meaning, it is feared, forbidden and punished. To anticipate my conclusion: this meaning explains why the concept was avoided by the innovators (Republicans) themselves.

Innovation as a Category

For most of its history innovation, a word of Greek origin (καινοτομία), carried a pejorative connotation (Godin and Lucier, 2012). As "introducing change to the established order", innovation was seen as deviant behaviour, forbidden and punished. It is through religion that the concept of innovation first entered common discourse in the Western world. This occurred from the late 1400s onward (proceedings of bishops, visitations, sermons, trials) and reached a climax in the 1630s in England, leading to one of the first controversies on innovation, between King Charles I and his protégé William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the one hand, and puritans like Henry Burton and William Prynne on the other (Godin, 2012b). Burton accused the bishops

of "innovating" in matters of Church discipline and doctrine, and urged people "not to meddle with those that are given to change", an expression from Solomon's proverbs that, in the decades following Burton's use of it, would be widely repeated against religious innovation. In seventeenth and eighteenth century England, documents by the hundreds made use of "innovation" to discuss religion, using the word as such. Over a hundred of these documents made use of innovation in their titles, a way to emphasize a polemical idea and get a hearing.

During the Renaissance, the concept of innovation shared a place with that of heresy in religious discourses, particularly after the Reformation. It was precisely during the Reformation that the fate of the concept was determined for the centuries to follow. In 1548, Edward VI, King of England, issued a declaration *Against Those That Doeth* ***Innouate***. Trials and punishments followed. A century later, Charles I, while explaining to his opponents why he had dissolved the Parliament, protested against parliamentarians' innovations and proclaimed that he had never innovated himself. Even a King did not innovate.

Table 1. Uses of Innovation as a Concept Over Time

Religious	→	Political	→	Social	→	Economic (technology)

Later the concept came to be equated with political revolutions, as this paper documents. This was only a beginning. Next, it would be the social reformers' turn to be accused of being innovators. Like the religious and political innovator, the "social innovator", as some called the socialists in the nineteenth century, was accused of overthrowing the established order, particularly property and capitalism. The social innovator was seen as being a radical, as many accused French socialists of being on the eve of the revolution of 1830 and after (Godin, 2012c).

This use of innovation in religious, political and social matters occurred many centuries before innovation came to be applied to technology. In fact, technological innovation is only the latest development in the history of the concept innovation. In the 1950s and the follow-

ing decades, governments de-contested and legitimized a centuries-old and contested concept – innovation. Supported by social researchers as consultants, governments made technological innovation an instrument of economic policy (Godin, 2012a).

A Monarch Accepts no Innovation

The reign of King Charles I (1625-49) was one of the most innovative periods in England's history, if one believes what was said by people at the time. From 1628-29, parliamentarians regularly accused His Majesty of "innovating" (using the word as such) in matters of religion ("changing of our holy religion") and politics ("taking or leavying of the subsidies of tonnage and poundage not granted by Parliament") (England and Wales, Parliament, 1654: 206-14). Between 1637 and 1641, puritans accused the King and his *protégé*, Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud, of "innovating" in religious doctrine and discipline.

This was only the beginning. In 1642, the Parliament sent nineteen propositions to the King, asking for a more direct role in the government of the Kingdom, from the nomination of the Privy Council and ministers to the education and marriage of the King's children. As answer, Charles responded: *Nolumus Leges Angliae mutari* (We do not want that laws of England be changed) (England and Wales, Sovereign, 1642: 14). Some years later, the King put some of his thoughts on these propositions, among others, in *Eikon basilike* (1648), which was published posthumously, and stated: I see "many things required of Me, but I see nothing offer'd to Me, by way of gratefull exchange of Honour" (p. 75). "In all their Propositions", claimed Charles, "I can observe little of (...) which are to be restored" but "novelty" (p. 91), "destructive changes", "popular clamours and Tumults" and "**innovating** designes" (p. 82-83).

The worst was still to come for Charles. On January 30, 1649, he was beheaded. Two months later, the Parliament addressed a declaration, claiming: "The *Representatives* of the *People* now Assembled in *Parliament*, have judged it *necessary* to change the *Government* of this *Nation* from the former *Monarchy*, (unto which by many injurious incroachments it had arrived) into a *Republique*, and not to have any more a *King*

to *tyrannize* over them" (England and Wales, Parliament, 1649: 20).

When Robert Poyntz (*bap.* 1588-1665), Knight of the Bath[2] and royalist writer, published his tract *A Vindication of Monarchy* in 1661 on "the danger that cometh by the abuse of Parliaments" (p. 35), the failure of a republic in England was only a few years behind him. Yet, works on republicanism were increasingly produced in the country for over a decade, from John Milton's *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649) and *The Readie and Easie Way to establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660) to Marchamont Nedham's *Interest Will Not Lie* (1659). In turn, pamphleteers increasingly leveled charges against republicans: Milton the "diabolical rebel", James Harrington "the utopian", and republicans as "innovators".

Poyntz was the first to use the concept innovation ("innovators") in the *title* of a discourse entirely devoted to (a reply to) the republicans. He was rivaled only by lawyer and puritan William Prynne, whose use of the concept against the "Matchiavilian and Innovating Republicans" was regular in many of his political writings from the mid 1650s onward. To be sure, the accusation of "innovating" in/of "both Church and Common-wealth" was widespread in the English writings for several decades.[3] However, the concept is used thereafter with explicit reference to the "republican".

In his pamphlet, Poyntz defended the monarchy with references to Roman history, and interpreted innovation as anything against the rules of common law. The argument from history and customs was a commonplace argument learned from rhetoric, and every writer studied here uses it. To Poyntz, "Our fanatick Polititians who teach men rebellion, and to flatter and deceive the People, and to effect their own designes, do say, that the supream power is originally in the People, and habitually inherent in them, and is derived from them, so as they may chastise and change their Kings, and assume again their power (…) do incite the People to rebellion" (p. 155).

To Poyntz, "There are two Pests and cankers, [which have caused

2 Poyntz received this Order at Charles I's coronation.

3 Some royalists like Robert Filmer and John Bramhall made uses of the concept, but only infrequently in political matters despite the large volume of documents that they published.

Parliaments] so necessary for the Publick good, to prove the bane and ruine thereof" (p. 39). One is the King's absolute (and discretionary) power. As might be expected from a royalist, Poyntz spent only a few sentences on this pest. Furthermore, he refers to Roman emperors rather than English history. The other pest is Parliament. This is the pamphlet's main focus. Poyntz discusses this pest under eight headings:

Right of bishops to sit in Parliament.
Associations in Parliament against the King's and people's will.
Sedition and rebellion against the Sovereign.
Principles of **Innovators.**
Principle that the Prince holds its crown from the people.
Principle that the supreme power resides in the people.
Principle of the power of people to elect their Prince.
King's Legislative power.
Prerogative of the King.

Poyntz starts by discussing the right of bishops to sit in Parliament, offering three reasons not dissimilar to what a republican would propose for any representative of the people in Parliament. Bishops need to be part of the Parliament because it is a matter of representation of every part of the commonwealth. People are not bound by laws if they have no voice in Parliament. Second, the bishops' learning and judgment provide for enlightened advice and assistance. Third, bishops pay taxes.

However, Poyntz's main argument is developed with the republicans in view, not the bishops. As a first entry into the matter, Poyntz argues that making associations in Parliament against the King's (and people's) will is unlawful. "Love of liberty and the desire of dominion" (p. 53) is "the most effectual means to disturb peace, to introduce **innovations** in the State, and to weaken all bonds of loyalty and obedience" (p. 49). Although "in these great attempts and dangerous experiments upon a state and Common-wealth" men's designs "do really aime at some good reformation, and intend to proceed upon justifiable grounds and reasons, or at least so seeming", yet "they slip almost insensibly into the use of dangerous and unlawful means" and are driven "to violent motions"

(p. 54). Here is stated Poyntz's understanding of innovation: violence, sedition and rebellion against the Sovereign.

Poyntz devotes a large part of his text to what he calls the principles of republicans as "innovators" of State. First, the principle that a king holds its crown from the election of the people and may be deposed at will. False, says Poyntz. Power is established by God, and "evil Kings are set over us, by which the authority of all Kings is established". The people "are incompetent judges, and not capable to discern a King and a Tyrant; and in respect of their ignorance, they alwayes gave great advantage unto those who were ambitious, seditious, and lovers of novelties" (p. 87).

The second principle of innovators is that the people have supreme power. But, asks Poyntz:

> How can they reconcile themselves with St. Paul, who saith, the Powers are of God (...); with [the doctrine of] Aristotle, and other learned men affirme, that by nature men are subject and servants to others? (p. 111). There is a difference between the powers which are God, and the administration, or the evil execution of those powers. In the beginning were Kings (...) but some people, after they were weary of Kings, governed themselves by their own laws. [This] was worse than the Tyranny of one man (p. 113).

The third principle of innovators is that the people have power to elect their Prince. False, replies Poyntz again. Those who transfer "power unto others, have, after those acts are consummated, no power to deal in any thing appertaining to that Power by them transferred" (p. 122). It is not a delegated power (p. 123), but a "contract" which binds forever (p. 130). Even a tyrant cannot be removed.

> I grant, that there is often an abuse of the Law (...) and there is an abuse of the Regal power and prerogative (...) under the colour and pretence of reason of State. [But] these corruptions and abuses, are not sufficient causes, for the abolishing the good and ancient institutions in Common-wealth, or the proper and necessary rights of Monarchy (p. 145-46).
> Poyntz concludes his pamphlet as follows: "Although the cause of re-

bellion proceedeth not from ambition, revenge, and the like, but from actions of good intention, for reformation of the Church or Common-wealth, rebellion and civil war doth follow" (p. 153). To Poyntz:

> A Civil war, or rebellion doth most commonly produce more pernicious effects in one year than either the insufficiency or Tyranny of a Prince can in an age (p. 155). The People ever desirous of **innovations**, and prone to all licenciousness, when the reins are but slackned, they do expose to the fury of their provoked Soveraign (p. 155-56).

What does Poyntz have to say explicitly and generally on political innovation? Poyntz could hardly ignore that "All human affairs are ever in a state of flux and cannot stand still", as Machiavelli put it in *The Discourses* (I, 6). He had lived through the civil wars, the execution of Charles I, the government of Cromwell, the restoration of monarchy (Charles II) and he had read the discourses by the Republican writers. In fact, Poyntz accepts change because, over time, there is corruption. Things need to be reformed. "By the course of time they [the Church and Common-wealth] are carried through the corruption in manners, defects in government, and in the execution of good Laws, into a stream of abuses, contempt and confusion" (p. 4). However, the corruptions are not "indurable, but removable". Yet, to Poyntz acceptable change is not innovation because "alteration" is dangerous. Change must be limited in scope. Change is better conducted "with a fair, orderly and prudent reformation or temporary toleration, then by (...) **Innovations**, especially sudden". In the latter case, "the minds of men are disquieted, fuel is brought into fiery and turbulent spirits, and the peace of the Church and Common-wealth indangered, if not destroyed" (p. 4).

The Republican Innovator

Poyntz has put into text a conception of innovation that soon led to a controversy. "Before the seventeenth century", so argued Scott, "most English defenders of the commonwealth principles assumed their com-

patibility with monarchy". However, during the mid-century "it became a key republican claim that (…) monarchies in Europe had all in practice become tyrannies" (Scott, 2004: 38). Many arguments were developed in seventeenth-century England to support a republic: references to history (Parliaments are old) and to natural law (a Republic is the best or correct form of government) and the use of models (the Romans) (Scott, 2004: 110; see also Skinner, 1965; 1972; 2001). In every case, it was a matter of defending two principles: the public good (as a government goal) and constitutional government (rather than a government of one person) (Scott, 2004: 36). To some, it was also a matter of providing a basis for stability or a balance of dominion for the prevention of alteration, like Harrington's agrarian law (Scott, 2004: 182).

Republicanism in seventeenth-century England certainly represented a great innovation. But writers at the time rarely if ever acknowledged this innovation. No innovator thought of naming himself an innovator. As a consequence, use of the concept innovation is very rare among the most important Republican writers. Only a few authors – Harrington, Milton, Nedham and Algernon Sidney – used the concept, and they used it only in a few documents (of the hundreds they produced). There is still less use of the concept in key Republican texts such as Harrington's *The common-wealth of Oceana* (1657) and Nedham's *The Case of Common-wealth* (1650), and none among others, like Milton's *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649).

The few uses that the above writers made of the concept were for two purposes, but not for discussing republicanism as innovation.[4] One use continued the tradition of the previous decades, namely for naming changes in religious matters. Such is the case in Nedham's *The Case of Common-wealth* or Milton's *Aeropagitica* (1644) as well as in the latter's *Eikonoklestes* (1650) discussing Charles' *Eikon basilike.* Another use of the concept is in interpreting history. For example, Harrington's *The prerogative of popular government* (1657) discusses how the Florentines were addicted to innovation by changing the Senate (p. 30). He

4 An exception is Milton. He uses the concept twice in a context of republicanism: *A Discourse shewing in what state the three kingdomes are in at this present* (1641: 2-3); *A soveraigne salve to cure the blind* (1643: 23). Yet Milton uses innovation in a negative way and minimizes innovation.

also uses the concept to discuss the (Machiavellian) dichotomy between monarchy and democracy, and the difficulty of conquering the first and keeping the second: absolute monarchy is governed by discipline and command while democracy always innovates or breaks orders (p. 61, 64). Finally, Harrington makes reference to Bacon's essay *Of Innovation* (1625) while discussing the origins of the Agrarian law (p. 101).

The same kind of use of the concept is made by the republican Henry Neville, to whom we now turn. Neville explicitly refused to use the concept innovation to talk about his remedy for the disease of England. In the work discussed below, Neville makes three uses of the concept innovation, all three in a historical context: the Romans not dividing the lands equally (as Romulus did) in conquered Athens (p. 57); the Normans changing the government and invading the rights and liberties of people (p. 113); and the Scots refusing innovations in matters of religion (p. 162).[5] In a conflicting view, two authors engaged in a controversy with Neville, and they did not refrain from using the concept against him. Let's look at the controversy.

Neville (1620-94), a republican, a friend of Harrington and an admirer of Machiavelli,[6] produced the pamphlet *Plato Redivivus: or, a Dialogue Concerning Government* published anonymously in 1681. The text, republished several times in the following decades, is a dialogue between an English gentleman, a Noble Venetian and a Doctor (of State) developing a proposal for the exercise of the royal prerogative through councils responsible to Parliament.

To Neville, there is a disease in the State which arises from the fact that the Prince is a tyrant. He puts his own interest before the interests of his people. The very first governments were instituted "for the good and Preservation of the Governed, and not for the Exaltation of the Person or Persons appointed to Govern" (p. 30). To Neville, "The Cause Immediate of our Disease, is the inexecution of our Laws" because the

5 The first two occurrences serve to support republican principles, but in a negative way, as Milton did. The innovator is an invader of rights and liberties of people.

6 Neville has been associated with the English translation of Machiavelli's works published by John Parker in 1675. In *Plato Redividus*, Neville talks of Machiavel in terms of "Divine Machiavel" (p. 21), "Incomparable Machiavel" (p. 188), "the best and most honest politician" (p. 217).

King thinks (and is advised) that they are against his interest (p. 253-54).

Neville's pamphlet is divided into three discourses (representing three days). On the first day, the speakers agree that there is a problem or disease in England and on the need for a remedy. The English gentleman reminds his interlocutors of the "wise Custom amongst the Ancient Greeks" that "when they found any Craziness or indisposition in their several Governments, before it broke out into a Disease, did repair to the Physicians of State". But "in our days, these Signes or Forerunners of Diseases in State are not foreseen, till the whole Mass is corrupted, and the Patient is incurable, but by violent Remedies" (p. 10).

The second day turns to the causes of the disease. The Venetian asks "What Reasons this Nation [England], which hath ever been esteemed (and very justly) one of the most considerable People of the World, and made the best Figure both in Peace, Treaties, War, and Trade, is now of so small regard, and signifies so little abroad?" (p. 16). The gentleman answers: one of the primary causes

> is the Breach and Ruin of our Government [which] lyes agonizing, and can no longer perform the Functions of a Political Life (p. 20). Our courtiers (...) have played Handy-Dandy with Parliaments, and especially with the House of Commons (...) by Adjourning, and Prorogating, and Dissolving them (contrary to the true meaning of the Law) (p. 20-21).

Turning to the Venetian, the gentleman adds: "your Government, which hath lasted above twelve hundred years, entire and perfect; whilst all the rest of the Countreys in Europe, have not only changed Masters very frequently in a quarter of that time, but have varied and altered their Politics very often" (p. 24). Like Harrington, Neville is looking for stability in the government.

To the gentleman, the government of England is the best form of government: a mixed monarchy. Yet the problem is that the King has destroyed the balance: he has the prerogative to call and dissolve Parliaments, and approve laws as he pleases (p. 111-12). In such a context, asks the doctor, what remains of our liberties or rights?

The third day is devoted to the remedy. To Neville, four powers of

the Crown hinder the execution of our laws (p. 256f): the King making war as he pleases, levelling taxes as he pleases, nominating people to offices as he pleases, and employing the public revenues as he pleases. Neville's remedy is to have "His Majesty exercise these four great *Magnalia* of Government, with the Consent of four several Councils", elected in Parliament, and each year one-third changed (p. 259); together with a Parliament elected every year (p. 269).

Like Poyntz, Neville accepts change. However, unlike Poyntz Neville's "reform of the government" is really innovation: "Bill that make considerable alterations in the administration we have need of" (p. 222). Yet Neville never uses innovation in this context, but rather alteration, reform, rectification and melioration. The stated goal is to help the Prince, not overthrow him. Let's postpone the answer to why Neville refused to talk of innovation after looking at the replies to his position and the controversy it generated.

Plato Redivivus generated two full-length replies that qualified the "libel" as innovation and its author as an innovator. The two replies deny any disease in the State and, consequently, refuse any changes. The first came from an anonymous author (W.W.) and was titled *Antidotum Britannicum: or, a counter-pest against the Destructive Principles of Plato Redivivus*. The pamphlet was published in the same year as *Plato Redivivus* (1681).

Like Neville's, the pamphlet is a dialogue, between Platophilus (Henry Neville) and Britanicus (W.W.), to whom "the Government of England is a rare and admirable mixture of Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy" (p. 6). The entire tract is concerned with portraying republicans as subversive. The main argument of the tract concerns erecting boundaries. To the anonymous writer, "Kings are made by God" and "The people only nominate or designe" their King. "The Vote or Consent of the People is only a *Medium*" (p. 17). It is a fallacious principle "that if the People have the most Property and Possessions in Land, that they must therefore have the most Power". This is a "design" "to make the People hate Monarchy, and to be in love with Democracy" (p. 37). "The Nobles and Gentry in a Monarchy are a great Security to the government while they keep themselves within their proper bounds" (p. 40).

But, replies Platophilus, "the Commons were an essential Part of the Parliament" long ago (p. 56). Perhaps, adds Britanicus, but "They were

rarely Summoned", (p. 57). Platophilus repeats Neville's statement that courtiers have played handy-dandy with parliaments "by Adjourning, Proroguing and Dissolving them" (p. 71). In turn, Britanicus replies that "The House of Commons anciently was Concerned only in Statutes, Grants, and Subsidies, or such like, but of late they claim (...) to be made Parties in all Judgments" which appertain to the King only (p. 79). Parliaments "must keep themselves within their just bounds (...) leaving to the King his undoubted Prerogative" (p. 75).

To the anonymous writer, "It belongs to the King, that those Laws and Customs which he shall think to be just and profitable, that he confirm and cause them to be observed", not "any new law, but (...) the just Laws that are already in being" (p. 114-15). "All **Innovations** in Government are Dangerous", says he. It is "like a Watch, of which any one piece lost will disorder the whole" (p. 172). This is a much-repeated argument in the literature against innovation, since the time of Aristotle (*Politics*, V, iii, 1303a; viii, 1307b). Although sudden and violent, innovation prepares imperceptibly, little by little, by degree.

Three years after *Antidotum Britannicum*, Thomas Goddard, Esq., published *Plato's Demon: or, the State-Physician Unmaskt; Being a Discourse in Answer to a Book call'd Plato Redivivus* (1684). The text is a dialogue (again) between an English gentleman and a merchant. The author's authoritarian sources are Hugo Grotius' *De jure belli ac pacis* and the Bible.

Like the anonymous writer, Goddard starts with sedition. It is our duty, Goddard writes, to oppose:

> the Seditious, Conspiracies, and Traiterous Associations, of Our little, malicious scribling Enemies (...). Among many of that deceiving, or deceived Crew, none seems more impudently extravagant than the Author of a Libel call'd *Plato Redivivus*. [Neville] makes us believe that he is supporting Our Government, whilst he endeavours utterly to destroy it. Any private person, who authoriz'd by our lawful Government, shall publish either by words or writings, any arguments or discourse, against the Constitution of the Government by Law establish'd, is a pestilent, pragmatical deceiver, a seditious Calumniator, and Perturbator of our Peace: His words and writings become scandalous Libels (p. 13-14).

Goddard's first of three discourses is concerned with demonstrating

that there is no disease in the State, but rather "Extreme happiness of the English Nation" (p. 5): a form of government (monarchy) "eternall secur'd from the corruption of Tyranny" and "a Prince so moderate and so just" (p. 6). In the course of his argument, and throughout the whole tract, Goddard develops many conceptual distinctions reminiscent of philosophical dichotomies (substance-accident, form-matter, soul-body) and used them to make a case against innovation. First Goddard distinguishes between the Governors and the Constitution. The former is "subject to weaknesses and infirmities, and (...) may be easily remov'd or chang'd, without destroying or altering the Government" (p. 17-18). But a

> Politician is certainly most unfit for a Prince's Cabinet, or House of Parliament, who finding, it may be, some mismanagement in State-affairs, should presently resolve to pull down the Fabrick it self, I mean Monarchy, and in its place build up a phantastical Commonwealth, then transform that into an Optimacy, then an oligarchy, till having pass [*sic*] through all the misfortunes, which **innovation** and change have generally produc'd (p. 18).

To Goddard, "to alter, nay totally destroy the ancient establish'd Government (...) would have been so much contrary to the Wisdom and judgment of Plato" (p. 24). "No one Polity, or Form of Government or laws whatsoever [meaning ancient Greece], are universally proper for all places". The authority of Plato, Lycurgus or Solon shall "be admitted no farther than their laws are proper or convenient for us" (p. 31). To be sure, the Greeks had good laws, but "the Form of Government [Republic] succeeded as generally all **Innovations** do" (p. 41). "Nothing is left, but some few wandring, remains of old rustick monuments, which serve only to testifie that they once have been" (p. 224). The lesson is clear: "support the present Government by Law established, [so] that we may avoid the Plague of **Innovation**" (p. 46) and "the misfortunes, which **Innovation** generally produces" (p. 47).

Goddard devotes his second discourse to natural law. Neville has attributed the turbulence of the present time, says Goddard, to the constitution of the Government which needs to be altered. Wrong, replies

Goddard. In support of his view, he presents a further distinction. Government is divided into the Material part (the People) and the Formal part (where Power resides) (p. 59-60). According to Goddard, Neville means the formal part needs to be altered, and he is mistaken. Sickness in the body politic resides in the material part (the discontented and turbulent men).

"How comes it then to pass that so many Philosophers, and all Antimonarchical Authors, pretend, That the People were before the Prince, that they are above him, that they made him, and by consequence, may depose him"? It comes "from the Ignorance of some ancient Philosophers, and the impious complaisance of some of our modern Wits" (p. 90), namely those neglecting the history of the Bible. To Goddard, those philosophers (Lucrecius, Hobbes) say that the world was made by chance. "How comes it to pass, that Accident and Chance" have been so fitting to us (p. 94)? "When Men grow fond of their own Imaginations they run over all, and neither Reason nor Religion have any Power to stop them" (p. 108). To Goddard, history "make[s] me capable of defending the doctrine, and the good constitution of our Government, against all hot-brain'd and ambitious **innovators**" (p. 211-12). "Our Author hath not produced one single authority, or one little piece of an Act, Statute or Law, to prove that the Soveraign power is in the people", only private opinion (p. 289).

Goddard's final discourse continues with more history and makes a parallel between Ancient Rome and modern England:

> The *Roman* Commonwealth was one of the *worst Government*, that ever subsisted so long (p. 241). Its chief *default* proceeded from the *exorbitant power of the people* (p. 242). Though they set on foot the popular pretence of Liberty and Property, yet honour and Empire was the true game, which they themselves hunted (p. 252): outward appearance, for the good of the people, but truly for the advancement of his own private designs and Empire (p. 253).

Goddard observes the same in England:

> Many of our own worthy Patriots, who cry up so much for Liberty and Property, and the interest of the people, intend more really their own particular advancement (p. 259). Many privileges may be granted to the people at first for encouragement, which afterwards may be inconsistent with the safety of the Government (p. 248).

Goddard concludes by repeating his belief that since there is no disease, there is no need to "comply with our Authors Popular Government" (p. 314). "Should the House of Commons become our masters, what could they bestow upon us, more than we already enjoy, except danger and trouble", those "fatal consequences, which such a popular **innovation** would induce?" (p. 325).

Popular Innovation

What representation of innovation does one derive from the above controversy? As mentioned already, innovation as a concept was first used widely in religious matters, particularly after the Reformation. It was deviant behavior and meant introducing change to the established order, namely Protestantism (sixteenth century), then popery or new doctrine and new discipline in the Protestant Church (seventeenth century) (Godin, 2012b). It covers a larger range of heterodoxies than just heresy. All deviant people are innovators. When people started using the concept in religious matters, it was to emphasize the broader innovative behaviour of 'heretics' and to make analogies with the 'revolutionary'. However, it was left to others to develop this latter representation of innovation.

Innovation in politics carries essentially the same meaning as introducing change to the established order, in this case the political order. However, innovation includes one more pejorative connotation that gave it bad press for centuries: it is sudden and violent.

The four texts discussed in the previous two sections all start with change, either to propose or deny it. To Poyntz, there is "corruption" which necessitates "reform". To Neville, there is a "disease" with calls for a "remedy". On the other hand, the anonymous writer and Goddard believe that there is no disease and therefore no need of change. To them those who introduce change or reform are innovators, in a pejorative sense.

Poyntz is certainly the author who discusses change most widely. To a certain extent Poyntz accepts change, but limited change. That change is necessary is based on the fact that time corrupts things. Poyntz's first entry into the subject is via religion: "That some Rites and Ceremonies we retain which have been polluted, yea (...); yet (...) pollution and impiety may be worn or wrought out" (p. 23). "If we look for a Church where there are no scandals (...) neither any imperfections and defects, we must go out of the world" (p. 24). To Poyntz, acceptable change has two characteristics. First, it must take context into account, rather than be abstract. Laws, he says:

> May well be made to look forward, and for the future, but they must of necessity be made fit for the present time (p. 12). Although it be true that all the Divine Laws extend not their power of binding in all times, and to all persons; and positive Laws Ecclesiastical must be fitted to the times and manners of men (...) yet great consideration ought to be taken, of the difference of variations of times, and of other circumstances, reasons, and inconveniences, before any new Laws, Orders or Discipline either in the Church or Common-wealth be imposed, or the old and inveterate Lawes and customs repealed and abrogated (...). We ought not onely to look simply upon the nature and quality of the things in themselves, and in abstract, but how they stand in relation, and connexion with old matters and things of long establishment, and of great importance (p. 16). Saint Augustine said, of some evils in the Roman State [that it is better to] observe and keep antient Laws and customes, although they are not of the best (...) especially if the changes and alterations [suggested are] driven on by violent and pertinacious Spirits (p. 16-17).
>
> Applied to political matters, the argument becomes gradualism. This

is the second characteristic of acceptable change to Poyntz: "The alterations in the State and Government (...) if they are not discreetly handled, and affected by degrees in an orderly course, and carried still on with the ease and contentment of the people, they will in short time be disquieted, and either turne back into the old way like sheep driven, or violently run head-long into some new" (p. 18).

Unlike Poyntz, both the anonymous writer and Goddard have very few words about change. To the anonymous writer, when there is no inconvenience there is no need of change. "We ought to defend that Kingdom and Government, which Reason persuadeth us unto, Experience approves, and Antiquity commendeth; when inconveniences in the old Laws are not apparent; and the conveniences to come by the new, are not infallible, it will be perillous to change the Laws, but more perillous when many, and most perillous when fundamental" (p. 215-16). On the frontispiece of his tract, the anonymous writer placed the following: *Res nova non tant utilitate, Proficiunt, quam Novitate efficiunt*. (Novelties do not serve utility; they rather produce more innovation).

Like the anonymous writer, to Goddard there is no disease, but rather "Extreme happiness of the English Nation" (p. 5). "The Subjects of England enjoy a greater Liberty, than was known to any of our Ancestors before us" (p. 321). Goddard finds no fault in the present government that would lead one "to desire any change or **innovation**" (p. 361). "A [more frequent] Parliament cannot make us more" happy than we already are (p. 326). "What can our new masters do for us more than is already done" (p. 368). "We have a King merciful, loving, and tender to us" (p. 372). Goddard's conclusion is "When there is no disease, there can be no cure" (p. 375).

Antimonarchy, Violence and Design

To those at the time, three characteristics constitute innovation. First, innovation, or rather the innovator (because the discourses on innovation are first of all concerned with the innovator), is deviant: unlawful and guilty of "Capital Crime", says Poyntz (p. 58). The innovator is the one who breaks laws. To Poyntz, "**Innovators** are not ruled by any customes and Lawes, but such as please them" (p. 25). Others shared

his belief. The anonymous writer develops his whole argument against innovators based on the violation of boundaries. On several occasions he stresses the duty of people to keep within their just and proper "bounds". To Goddard too, the innovator "has no religion", he is a "dissenter". "I do not think the Papists (...) so dangerous to our Government, as the *Dissenters*" (p. 340). The papists "hath no ill influence upon our Civil Government" (p. 350).

In the present case, deviance means antimonarchy or the "popular" doctrine of republicanism. The pamphleteers put it explicitly as such. To the anonymous writer, *Plato Redivivus* is "a Hotch Potch of antimonarchical Principles" (p. 4) to "infect His Majestie's good Subjects". Goddard calls the republican writers "Antimonarchical Authors" (p. 90) whose principle is "**innovation** of popular power" (p. 367), "*exorbitant power of the people*" (p. 242). To Poyntz, the innovators deserve the name "Patrons of Popular liberty" (p. 136). Of the three royalist authors, no one put it better than the anonymous writer in his preface (no page number): "They who are troubled with the Itch of **Innovation**, cannot but be rubbing upon Majesty". Their "design is to turn Monarchy into Anarchy" and "propagate so many pernicious Maxims and Popular Theorems tending to the Subversion of the established Government". And he continued: "Monarchy is the most sure Basis of the peoples Liberties and the only Staple of their Happiness". If monarchy were replaced by Councils, "it would open a Door to all Calamities, and Confusion". Liberty of conscience introduces "Arbitrary Power in the State". To the anonymous writer, "Novatian himself [the first antipope] was not a greater **Innovator** than these Men".

Secondly, and not its least characteristic, innovation in this view is "violent". This characteristic distinguishes innovation from what it meant before then, particularly in religion. To be sure, in the 1640s innovation in religion was discussed as "dangerous", but due to its consequences on doctrine and discipline, not because it was violent – although it was regularly stressed that innovation leads to wars. From then on, innovation is necessarily sudden and violent. Innovation is 'revolutionary'. It is necessarily great or major change – while 'minor' or symbolic novelties were also innovation to ecclesiasts. This new connotation of violence is fundamental to explaining the fate of the concept

for centuries to come.

The reader has seen plenty of citations in the previous sections that are witness to the 'revolutionary' behavior of the innovator. "Rebellion" and "sedition" are key words used against the innovator – revolution as new beginnings and historical inevitability was not used in this sense at the time. On one hand, the innovator, because of "his fiery and turbulent spirit" as Poyntz put it, leads people to sedition. On the other hand, "inevitable" and "fatal" consequences follow "popular **innovation**", as Goddard stated (p. 325, 367). All authors are unanimous as to these inevitable consequences, from the general to the political: danger and troubles, division and factions, wars and anarchy.

To Poyntz, changes in religion in England went "in an orderly and quiet passage, under the conduct of a Royal power, and a prudent Council of State. Religion changed as it were by degrees and insensibly, all things seeming to remain in the same course and state as before", unlike Germany, France, the low countries and Scotland (p. 31). But "Those **innovators** who try experiments upon a State, and upon the peoples disaffection to the present government, and thereupon lay the chief foundation of their designs, without some other stronger assurance, have often failed, and have found themselves and others with them utterly ruined, through the suddain and violent ebbing and flowing of the Peoples passions and affections" (p. 18). As we have seen above, Poyntz argues for a reform, not innovation; a reform that takes time and circumstances into account, rather than being discussed in the abstract; a reform by degree and order, not by violence. As seen above too, to the anonymous writer, innovation is sudden and violent, but at the same time it often arrives imperceptibly, little by little, by degrees.

A third characteristic of innovation needs consideration. A term that recurs among all three royalists (and King Charles' *Eikon basilike*) is "design". The innovator has a design in mind. The meaning of design is project, a suspicious project – another term that suffered from bad press ("projectors" were the untrusted innovators-entrepreneurs of the time). There is no reference to creativity here, but rather a machination, a subversion, a conspiracy. Poyntz, as we saw above, talks in terms of (dangerous) "experiment".

Design, a key word of the political world in England and America

in the 1760-70s (Bailyn, 1967: 94-159), would continue to characterize innovation in the next century, and then the notion of "scheme" would be added, as in Thomas Bancroft's *The Danger of Political Innovation and the Evil of Anarchy*, 1792. "I trust it may be expected from the good sense of Englishmen that they will reject their suspicious schemes of Reform and **Innovation**" (p. 14).

As much as it may represent a dangerous design, innovation is at the same time reduced (minimized) to a mere popular fashion – "Itch of innovation" (anonymous writer), "Plague of innovation" (Goddard), "love of novelties" (Poyntz) – or to a matter of "eutopia". To the anonymous author:

> There are a Generation of Men (fitter in being Factious to Disorder, than Sober to settle Affairs of State) who make it their Master-piece; to Subvert the best Government (...) and then to present unto the People some *Eutopia*, or imaginary Model of Government (p. 173).
>
> I cannot see but the King and his Privy Council may manage all the Affairs of State, with much more advantage to the Publick (...) than if the Administration thereof were by these *Eutopian* and Popular Councils (p. 217).

For his part, Goddard refers to phantasy and enthusiasm: "phantastical Commonwealth" (p. 18), "Fantastical cure for an imaginary disease" (p. 233), "Enthusiastical follies" (p. 321).

Alteration Yes, Innovation No

Antimonarchy, violence and design: these are the three elements of innovation that make of it a negative concept. It also explains Nelville's relation to innovation. Like Poyntz, Neville agrees with change but, unlike Poyntz, says "considerable alterations in the administration we have need of". Yet Neville does not seek to abolish the monarchy, as revolutionaries do. He would also keep the House of Lords – although one nominated by Parliament and with no control over the House of Commons – rather than suggesting an elected Senate. Neville really of-

fers a "reformation", not an innovation. On one hand, Neville suggests a great innovation (without using the word): "I believe there can be no Expedients proposed in Parliament that will not take up as much time and trouble, find as much difficulty in passing with the King and Lords, and seems as great a change of Government, as the true remedy would appear" (p. 183). On the other hand, he says, "The less change the better (...) great alterations fright Men" (p. 272). In sum, Neville was "not making a [new] kind of Government [like that which exists in Italy], but rectifying an ancient Monarchy, and giving the Prince some help in the Administration" (p. 278).

Why no innovation in Neville? Because of resistance – and therefore a lack of supporters. "We are not Ripe for any great Reform", he says (p. 282), firstly, because we have "a Politique Debauch, which is a neglect of all things that concern the Publick welfare" (p. 282); secondly, because "most Wise and Grave Men of this Kingdom are very silent" (p. 283); and thirdly:

> There is a great distrust [in Parliament] of venturing at such matters, which being very new, at the first motion are not perfectly understood, at least to such as have written of the Politicks; and therefore the Mover may be suspected of having been set on by the Court-party to puzzle them, and so to divert (...). It is the nature of all Popular Councels (...) to like discourses that highten their passions, and blow up their Indignation, better than them that endeavour to rectifie their Judgments (p. 288).

Yet, Neville continues:

> We have one Consideration, which does encourage us (...). And that is the Infaillible Certainty that we cannot long Continue as we are, and that we can never Meliorate, but by some such Principles, as we have been here all this while discoursing (p. 290-91). If you ask me whether I could have offer'd any thing that I thought better than this, I will answer (...) Yes, but that [what I have suggested is] the best, that the People would or could receive (p. 291-92).

Neville's rationale would not pacify his opponents, who would accuse him of innovating. "Our author", as Goddard put it in his Epistle dedication, makes "us believe that he is supporting Our Government, whilst he endeavours utterly to destroy it". At the end of this tract, Goddard repeats his belief as follows, "Our Author augments, or diminisheth, changeth or disguiseth the truth of things, as they make most convenient for his purpose" (p. 273).

Conclusion

It was during the Reformation that innovation became widely used in the Western world, essentially in a pejorative sense (Godin, 2012a; 2012b). The present paper suggests that politics contributed to this pejorative connotation too. The early writers on and theorists of the Republic made no use of the concept. In fact, if the Republicans wanted to make a positive case for their cause, they had to avoid a negative concept. When they use the concept they adhere to its common pejorative representation – the same use (or non use) characterizes every political theorists of the time, including John Locke and Thomas Hobbes. On the other hand, critics of the Republic used the concept widely. Precisely because the concept had a morally-charged tone, they made use of innovation to make a case against Republicans as "innovators of State", adding a new connotation to the concept: innovation is violent, or revolutionary. 'Alteration perhaps, Innovation no' was the commonplace theme among writers on both sides of the debate (Royalists and Republicans).

In this paper I have called innovation a concept. Yet, there was no definition of what innovation is among writers of the time. Neither was there any study or analysis of innovation, particularly regarding how the concept is distinct from other concepts like change, reformation and revolution (Godin, 2013). Finally, there existed no theory of innovation. Innovation was a mere word, a derogatory label used for rhetorical purposes. By casting the Republicans as innovators, their enemies were attempting to undermine their entire argument.

Innovation gradually acquired a positive representation over the nineteenth century, following the French Revolution. That representation as being revolutionary, which had been negative until then, in turn gave innovation a positive meaning and gave a new life to the word. Innovation has acquired real political significance. While until then innovation had not been part of the vocabulary of politics, but rather a derogatory label and a linguistic weapon, it became a catchword in political discourse and an instrument of economic policy in the Twentieth Century.

The changing fortunes of innovation shed light on the values of the times. In the Seventeenth Century the uses of innovation were essentially polemical. It served as a weapon against 'deviants', including the republicans, attaching to the views of innovators a pejorative label. However, from the Nineteenth century, innovation started to refer to a central value of modern times: utility. From then on, innovation got into every discourse, including the political.

The route through which innovation shifted in meaning and use has scarcely been studied. To be sure, there are hundreds of studies on technological innovation, particularly after 1970. Yet this literature takes the meaning of innovation for granted (innovation is spontaneously understood as technological innovation), and it attributes the origin of the concept to Josef A. Schumpeter. In this paper, I have gone further back in time and documented some eminently political connotations and uses of the concept which may, if taken seriously, lead to more reflexive studies of innovation, a concept that has become "naturalized" and "legitimized" over the last sixty years.

It remains to be documented to what extent Machiavelli, the first to talk of innovation as an instrument of the Prince's power and an author greatly esteemed by the Republicans, is responsible for the bad press innovation has had for centuries. As Machiavelli explains in chapter 6 of *The Prince*, a Prince must innovate to establish his power. However, because of the resistance of people to innovation, the Prince as "innovator" (*innovatori*) needs to use force in order to persuade his subjects. Be that as it may, politics (together with religion) made innovation a contested concept. The irony is that the same governments that contested innovation have contributed to de-contesting and legitimizing

the concept: in the twentieth century, innovation became instrumental in economic policy.[7]

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7 Special thanks for Markku Peltonen and Jonathan Scott for commenting on a first draft of this paper. Thanks also to two anonymous reviewers.

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THOMAS HOBBES AND JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU ON LIBERTY AND SLAVERY OF CONSCIENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF CHRISTIAN POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Mika Ojakangas

Introduction

In his recently published *Civil Religion*, Ronald Beiner suggests that Hobbes's intention was not to "detheocratize" but rather to "retheocratize" politics, because only through (nominally Christian) theocratic politics can the sovereign to strip Christianity of the otherworldly teachings that threaten temporal authority. According to Beiner, even Jean-Jacques Rousseau's famous civil confession of faith pales into insignificance when compared to Hobbes theocratic intentions: "Thus Hobbes would no doubt argue against Rousseau's civil religion that it is not theocratically ambitious enough."[1] In this article, I argue that

1 Ronald Beiner, *Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 57.In "Thomas Hob-

Hobbes intention was neither to "detheocratize" nor to "retheocratize" politics, but rather to *depoliticize religion*.Instead, it is precisely Rousseau who introduced a radically "theocratic", or rather, *religious*model of politics, because unlike the Hobbesian commonwealth Rousseaun theory of politics abolishes the liberty of conscience from the body politic.Hobbes was perhaps one of the most obvious anti-liberals among the Reformed political theorists, but he was still able to ask what infidel king was so unreasonable as to put to death a subject whose beliefs differ from the beliefs of the sovereign, whereas Jean-Jacques Rousseau declared that every reasonable sovereign should indeed kill such a person. Mere obedience was no longer enough. According to Hobbes, a private man "has alwaies the liberty, (because thought is free,) to beleeve, or not beleeve in his heart,"[2]but as we shall see, Rousseau demanded that one has to believeand even sincerely love the state and its laws– even in peril of one's life.

In the article, I first briefly examine the history of Christian ideas concerning civil authority, obedience, freedom, and their relationship, arguing that there is apermanent core in the Christian doctrine of politics and that it pertains to the Christian conception of man as a divided being. The Christian man is composed of the inner and the outer man radically separated from each other to the effect that the outer

bes contra Liberty of Conscience," Johan Tralau makes a similar though perhaps even bolder suggestion, as he claims that Hobbes's theory of the state does not entail liberty of conscience at all. Johan Tralau, "Hobbes contra Liberty of Conscience," *Political Theory*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2011), pp. 58-84. Tralau's argument is based on the premise that Hobbes undertakes a fundamental revision of the concept of conscience. In this respect, I rather agree with Mark Hanin who in his recent article has shown that Hobbes's account of conscience is quite traditional. Mark Hanin, "Thomas Hobbes's Theory of Conscience," *History of Political Thought*, vol. 33, no. 1 (2012), pp. 55-85. Although Hanin is also right in emphasizing that Hobbes relied on conscience to establish and sustain civil life, I shall argue that unlike Rousseau Hobbes did not subjugate conscience to the laws of the state. On that his views were again rather traditional and in accord with the Lutheran accounts of the relationship between religion, conscience, and politics in particular.

2 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3.37, p. 306.

man, meaning the body and flesh, is obliged to obey all authorities (Rom. 13), whereas the inner man, meaning the soul and conscience, is free from mundane obligations and accountable to God alone (Acts 5:29). I then analyse Hobbes's theory of the state in the light of this Christian background, arguing that Hobbes's theory of the state is still "Christian"in the sense that the conscience of the Hobbesian citizen is free form the law. He is bound to obey the law, even conscientiously, but not to believe in it in her heart, let alone love it. Finally, I examine Rousseau's civil confession of faith in *Social Contract* and argue that it is here rather than in Hobbes's theory of the state that the dichotomy between the inner self and the state is abrogated, because the distinction between outer obedience and inner faith was transformed into the obedience based on inner faith.

Christian Obedience

In the *Social Contract*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau famously proclaims that nothing is more contrary to the social spirit than Christianity, for it has eradicated ancient liberty and republican freedom from the world. Christianity preaches nothing but "servitude and submission. Its spirit is too favourable to tyranny for tyranny not to take advantage of it. True Christians are made to be slaves."[3] In a sense, Rousseau is right. We know what Apostle Paul says in the Romans 13:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority (*exousia*) except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must to subject oneself (*hypotassō*), not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake

3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. M. Cranston (London: Penguin, 1968), 4.8, p. 184.

of conscience (*diatēnsyneidēsin*).

Although the passage might be an interpolation, it has profoundly influenced subsequent Christian views and doctrines concerning secular authority. In *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas writes: "The order of justice requires that subjects obey their superiors, else the stability of human affairs would cease. Hence faith in Christ does not excuse the faithful from the obligation of obeying secular princes."[4] The doctrine reached its apex in Luther's writings and especially in orthodox Lutheranism. According to Luther, a good Christian always obeys secular authorities. Every Christian is also "under obligation to serve and assist the sword by whatever means" he can.[5] The sword must be served and assisted because authorites are ordained by God.[6] And these authorities must be obeyed and served irrespective of whether they act justly or unjustly: "Christians should not, under the pretence of Christian religion," refuse to obey authorities "even if they are wicked."[7] In subsequent orthodox Reformed circles, this unreserved obedience became gradually a dogma. William Tyndale writes: "The powers that be are ordained by God. Whosoever resists power resists the ordinance of God. They that resist, shall receive to them self damnation."[8] Every temporal power or authority is the minister of God, Tyndale continues, and therefore everybody is obliged to obey him, not out of fear, but for the sake of conscience – both of your own and that of your neighbour. This must be done even if the temporal power or authority in question

4 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*IIaIIae, q. 104, in *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Kenny (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1920), accessed August 24, 2012. http://www.newadvent.org/summa/

5 See Martin Luther, *Temporal Authority: To What Extent it should be Obeyed*, in *Luther's Works in 55 Volumes*, general ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 45 (St. Louis, Minneapolis: Concordia Publishing House, Fortress Press, 1957-1986), p. 95.

6 "What powers there are have been instituted by God." Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, in *Luther's Worksin 55 Volumes*, general ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 25 (St. Louis, Minneapolis: Concordia Publishing House, Fortress Press, 1957-1986), 13:1, pp. 109-110.

7 Luther, *Romans* 13:1, p. 110.

8 William Tyndale, *The Obedience of A Christian Man*, ed. D. S. Daniel (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 36.

were the "greatest tyrant in the world," because even as a tyrant he is a "great benefit of God and a thing wherefore thou ought to thank God highly."[9] In Calvin's *Institutes*, we find plenty of similar passages, but one example suffices here:

Even an individual of the worst character, one most unworthy of all honour, if invested with public authority, receives that illustrious divine power which the Lord has by his word devolved on the ministers of his justice and judgment, and that accordingly, in so far as public obedience is concerned, he is to be held in the same honour and reverence as the best of kings.[10]

Christian Freedom

Yet even if Christianity has preached obedience to earthly authorities, the political aspect of Christianity cannot be reduced to this doctrine. With regard to Christian politics, equally important as the Romans 13 has been the famous passage in the Acts 5:29, repeated time and again by the Christians throughout Western history. Interrogated by the high priest who charged them not to preach in the name of Christ, the Apostles replied as one voice: "We must obey God rather than men." What then has it meant to obey God rather than men? On the one hand, it has meant that men must obey the Church and its representatives rather than civil authorities. On the other hand, it has meant that men must obey their *consciences* rather than the opinion of other men, even if they were the representatives of the Church, as the Church itself preached that it is God who speaks in our consciences and taught that it is sin to act against it. In point of fact, almost all significant religious revolts against the authority of the Church in the late medieval world revolved around this orthodox doctrine: *contra conscientiam agere peccatum est*. In his Sermons, John Wyclif appealed to his conscience in his struggle against ecclesiastical authority, asserting that the final forum of merit

9 Tyndale, *Obedience of a Christian Man*, p. 41, pp. 50-51.

10 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. H. Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 4.20.25, p. 671.

"rests in my own conscience" (*in consciencia mea propria stabilitur*).[11] Similarly, when Jan Hus, in 1415, was accused of heresy for holding Wyclif's doctrine of remanence, Hus refused to recant, not because he held fast to Wyclif's doctrine contrary to the teachings of the Council, but because abjuring something that one has never held would have meant for him acting against his conscience – and to act against conscience is a mortal sin.[12] The most famous case is of course Luther. It was precisely the *contra conscientiam* doctrine that he appealed to when accused of heresy at the Diet of Worms: "My conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen."[13] As a doctrinal source for the religious upheavals of the 16th and the 17th century Europe, this single doctrine was perhaps more important than any of the theological doctrines introduced by Luther himself.

Second, since late antiquity, the theologians had opined that all human laws must be compatible with natural law and if this has not been the case, the human law has no power of binding conscience. People have no obligation, says Aquinas, to obey any authorities whose laws are contrary to natural law.[14] Such a law has no "power of binding conscience,"[15] because "human law cannot impose its precepts in a Divine court, such as is the court of conscience."[16] Natural law is given by God through the creation and we must obey God rather than men:

Laws may be unjust through being opposed to the Divine good: such are the laws of tyrants inducing to idolatry, or to anything else contrary to the Divine law: and laws of this kind must nowise be observed, be-

11 Cited in Paul Strohm, *Conscience: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 16.

12 Jan Hus, *The Letters of John Hus*, trans. R. M. Pope (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), p. 217.

13 Martin Luther, "The Speech of Dr. Martin Luther before the Emperor Charles and Princes at Worms," in *Luther's Works in 55 Volumes*, general ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 32 (St. Louis, Minneapolis: Concordia Publishing House, Fortress Press, 1957-1986), pp. 112-113.

14 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIaIae, q. 94, a. 4.

15 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIaIae, q. 96, a. 4.

16 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIaIae, q. 94, a. 4.

cause, as stated in Acts 5:29, "we ought to obey God rather than man."[17]

Further, he argues that the subjects are not obliged to obey the ruler or his laws if he acts contrary to the purpose of his mandate: if the ruler was appointed to preserve virtue, then for him to command his subjects to perform acts of vice is illegitimate and the subject is not only not bound to obey, but obliged to disobey, "as in the case of holy martyrs who suffered death rather than obey the ungodly commands of tyrants."[18] Finally, Aquinas alludes, quoting Cicero, that slaying such a tyrant is a virtuous act, and maintains that a subject is not bound to obey a law that "inflicts unjust hurt on its subjects," for example by imposing excessive taxes, provided he avoids "giving scandal or inflicting a more grievous hurt."[19] In like manner, Francesco Suárez argues that laws incompatible with natural law, which is "truly and properly divine law,"[20] are null and void. He also maintains that people have an inalienable right to resist unjust rulers who violate divine law of nature reasserting his argument by referring to the sentence in the Acts: "One must obey God rather than men."

Not even Reformed theologians were absolutely categorical with obedience. Luther holds that people are not bound to obey a prince if he commands something that is wrong ("for it is not one's duty to do wrong"),[21] that tyrants are not to be tolerated, and that every Christian is free to use his freedom to oppose them, at least in word:

> Use your freedom constantly and consistently in the sight of and despite the tyrants and the stubborn so that they also may learn that they are impious, that their laws are of no avail for righteousness, and that they had no right to set them up.[22]

17 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIaIae, q. 96, a. 4.

18 Thomas Aquinas, *Political Writings*, ed. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 73-74.

19 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*IIaIae, q. 96, a. 4.

20 Francisco Suárez, *A Treatise on Laws and God the Lawgiver*, in Francisco Suárez, *Selections from Three Works*, ed. Gwladys L. Williams et al., vol. 2 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1944), 2.6.13, p. 198.

21 Luther, *Temporal Authority*, p. 125.

22 Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian*, in *Luther's Works in 55 Volumes*, general ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 31 (St. Louis, Minneapolis: Concordia

Similarly, Calvin admits that God sometimes allows and indeed induces resistance against the fury of tyrants. Quoting Acts 5:29, Calvin proclaims:

> If they command anything against Him let us not pay the least regard to it, nor be moved by all the dignity which they possess as magistrates – a dignity to which no injury is done when it is subordinated to the special and truly supreme power of God.[23]

Moreover, they both defend their arguments by referring to natural law, which is, as Calvin put it, is "the aim, the rule and the end of all laws."[24] The legitimacy of all human laws and institutions, Calvin continues, depends on how they agree with this law and with "conscience which God has engraved upon the minds of men."[25] Similarly, when Calvin's successor Theodore Beza, two years after the St Bartholomew's Massacre, published a pamphlet *De jure magistratum* against tyranny in religious matters, he not only referred to the passage in the Acts, but also used the Stoic-Catholic doctrine of natural law in order to justify his argument – the law so firmly "established and so lasting that nothing which is openly opposed and repugnant to it should be regarded as just and valid between men."[26] According to Beza, magistrates must not be obeyed if what they command is impious or unjust, impious referring to anything contradicting the first tablet of God's law and unjust to anything that prevents or forbids one from rendering his neighbour what is his due "by the law of nature."[27] Althusius in turn argues, like Calvin,[28]

Publishing House, Fortress Press, 1957-1986), p. 374.

23 Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.20.32, p. 675.

24 Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.20.16, p. 664; see Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, in *Luther's Works in 55 Volumes*, general ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, vols. 26-27 (St. Louis, Minneapolis: Concordia Publishing House, Fortress Press, 1957-1986), 5:14, p. 53.

25 Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.20.16, p. 664.

26 Theodore Beza, *De jure magistratuum*, q. 6, ed. Patrick S. Poole, accessed August 24, 2012, http://www.constitution.org/cmt/beza/magistrates.htm

27 Beza, *De jure magistratuum*, q. 3.

28 See Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.20.32, pp. 675-6.

that it is legitimate for the ephors and popular magistrates to depose a tyrant "as quickly as a fire must be dowsed by those who see it," if he despises that law of nature on which the written laws must be based.[29] William Perkins went as far as Aquinas, asserting that if a command of the prince contradicts the Word and the Law of God, "then is there no bond of conscience at all, but contrariwise men are bound in conscience not to obey."[30] In fact, he went further than Aquinas, because Thomas held that the subjects should at least occasionally obey unjust rulers in order to avoid scandal, while Perkins maintains that God's Word and Law is to be obeyed, "though we should offend all men, yea lose all men's favour, and suffer the greatest damage that may be, even the loss of our lives."[31] This was the opinion the Puritan priest William Ames as well. According to him, no human command, whether ecclesiastical or political, can override the law of God: "It is that the Law of God only doth bind the conscience of man," which means that the conscience cannot "submit itself unto any creature without idolatry."[32] Eventually, as we have already seen, the authority of conscience surpassed even the authority of the Word. Because of this wonderful faculty, says Samuel Ward of Ipswich, man no longer needs any external guidance, not to mention external authority. The force and power of conscience is greater than any other power on earth and even the power of angels. Therefore, we must, as the Apostle Paul allegedly suggested, follow the dictate of conscience rather than the dictates of angel, potentate or prelate, "yes, even of the Apostle himself."[33]

29 Johannes Althusius, *Politica: Politics Methodically Set Forth and Illustrated with Sacred and Profane Examples*, trans. F. Carney (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1995), 28, p. 94.

30 William Perkins, *A Discourse of Conscience*, in *William Perkins: His Pioneer Works on Casuistry*, ed. T. F. Merrill (Nieuwkoop: B. De Graaf, 1966), p. 34.

31 Perkins, *Discourse of Conscience*, p. 10.

32 William Ames, *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof* (Leyden: W. Christiaens, E. Griffin, J. Dawson, 1639), p. 6.

33 Samuel Ward, *Balme from Gilead to Recouer Conscience* (London: Roger Jackson, 1616), p. 49.

The Christian Doctrine of a Divided Man

In fact, when Rousseau laments Christianity, it is *not* the Christian preaching of submission that annoys him the most. More disturbing is the Christian teaching that "God cannot and will not permit anyone but himself to rule over the soul."[34] It is this freedom of the soul and conscience that is Rousseau's main enemy. Christianity detaches the soul and conscience from the body politic and its laws and it is precisely for this reason that Rousseau considers Christianity essentially an anti-political doctrine: "This religion, having no specific connexion with the body politics, leaves the law with only the force the law itself possesses, adding nothing to it," that is, without endowing it with such holiness that might bind the "hearts of the citizens to the state."[35] Here Rousseau indeed captures the essential. Christianity, at least before the rise of nationalism in the West, if we are allowed to speak at the same level of generalization as Rousseau, is not only a doctrine of political slavery but it cannot be reduced to a revolutionary political movement either. In terms of politics, it is an ideology of *profanation*. The hearts and consciences of Christians are not bound to the state but to God and this entailsthe relativity of everything present. This is not to say that there would be no Christian doctrine of obedience or that there is no idea of radical freedom in Christianity. As we have seen, they are both part and parcel of this religion, but perhaps the most unique political feature of this religion is the way how it combines the elements articulated in the Romans 13 and the Acts 5:29. It combines them by dividing man in two.

Rousseau is thus perfectly correct: the Christian man is not a unity. It is, as already Paul's theological anthropology implies, a combination of the inner (*esōhēmōn*) and the outer man (*exōhēmōnanthrōpos*) strictly separated from and opposed to each other (2 Cor. 4:16). In the Christian tradition, it is the inner man, meaning man's soul and conscience ("renewed day by day," as Paul says) that has been free from mundane obligations and accountable to God alone, whereas the outer man, meaning the body and flesh ("wasting away," to quote Paul again), has belonged to this world and has been bound by earthly relations and obligations. In other words, it has been the body that has had the duty to observe the Romans 13, whereas

34 Luther, *Temporal Authority*, p. 105.

35 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 4.8, 182.

the proclamation in the Acts 5:29 relates to the soul alone. This distinction is present already in the writing of the Fathers and it can be found in the Scholastics as well. Thomas Aquinas writes: "In matters pertaining to the inward movement of the will man is not bound to obey man, but God alone. Man is, however, bound to obey man in things which are to be done outwardly by means of the body."[36] In medieval and early modern Catholicism, this doctrine was usually restricted to the realm of secular power, whereas the Church, which was not merely a human institution, had power over the soul and conscience as well. With the rise of Protestantism, however, both the authority of the Church and the examination of conscience were increasingly, though not of course entirely, called into question. Now the Word of God replaced the authority of the Church: "We believe and are at peace in our conscience, we run not hither and thither for pardon, we trust not in this friar or that monk neither in anything save in the word of God only."[37] This meant that the Protestants, notably Luther himself, extended the Pauline division between the inner and the outer man to the ecclesiastical sphere as well, arguing that neither secular nor ecclesiastical authorities are entitled to rule over the soul and conscience of man: "Among Christians there shall and can be no authority,"[38] because "every Christian is by faith so exalted above all things that, by virtue of a spiritual power, he is lord of all things without exception."[39] However, it is the conscience of the Christian that is exalted above all things, whereas the outward man, the body, is subjected to all laws and authorities, particularly to the secular ones: "The conscience must be free from the law, but the body must obey the law."[40] John Calvin went along with Luther: "We see how the law, while binding the external act, leaves the conscience unbound."[41] Perkins put it as thus: "Magistrate indeed is an ordinance of God to which we owe subjection, but how far subjection is due, there is the question. For body and goods and outward conversation, I grant all: but a subjection of conscience to men's laws, I deny."[42] Similarly, Bishop Sanderson writes:

36 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IIaIIae, q. 104, a. 5.
37 Tyndale, *Obedience of A Christian Man*, p. 147.
38 Luther, *Temporal Authority*, p. 117.
39 Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, p. 354.
40 Luther, *Galatians* 2:13, p. 114.
41 Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.19.16, p. 142.
42 Perkins, *Discourse of Conscience*, p. 26.

> He who alone knows the inward motions of conscience, He only has a power of prescribing a law to it (for the law never determines or judges of things unknown), but God only, the Searcher of hearts, can discover the inwards motions of the Mind and Conscience; therefore He has the sole right of imposing the law, or laying an obligation upon it. Hence it is that the laws of *men* oblige only the *outward* motions of the body to an outward conformity.[43]

True, these Protestants also held that one must, as the Apostle Paul had taught in the Romans 13, to subject oneself to laws and authorities, "not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience (*diatēnsyneidēsin*)." Yet, for them, the dictum "for the sake of conscience" did not mean that the law extends its power *into* conscience. This may sound paradoxical but for the early Reformed theologians this paradox was not unresolvable. According to Calvin, one is obliged to keep the law conscientiously because it is enacted by an authority and all authority is from God, but individual laws do not reach the conscience, meaning the internal government of the soul:

> The first thing to be done here is to distinguish between the genus and the species. For though individual laws (*loy en particulier*) do not reach the conscience, yet we are bound by the general command of God, which enjoins us to submit to magistrates. And this is the point on which Paul's discussion turns: magistrates are to be honoured, because they are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1). Meanwhile, he does not at all teach that the laws enacted by them reach to the internal government of the soul (*regime spirituel des ames*), since he everywhere proclaims that the worship of God, and the spiritual rule of living righteously, are superior to all the decrees of men.[44]

In a similar vein, Perkins argues that men are subject to magistrates "for the sake of conscience" but not "in conscience,"[45] whereas Sander-

43 Robert Sanderson, *Lectures on Conscience and Human Law*, ed. C. H. R. Wordsworth (London: Rivingtons, 1877), p. 93.

44 Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.10.5, p. 417.

45 Perkins, *Discourse of Conscience*, p. 26.

son believes that if the obligation of conscience derives from the thing commanded, the liberty of conscience is violated, but if it derives from the sovereign's lawful authority to command, then the inward liberty of conscience remains uninjured.[46] Hence, according to Calvin, Perkins, and Sanderson, there is no contradiction between the obligation that the laws and the commands of human authorities be obeyed for the sake of conscience and the idea that these laws and commands do not reach the consciences of men – consciences that are not subject to any other authority than that of God alone.

Hobbes contra Rousseau

It is in this perspective that we must read early modern Protestant political theory, including Thomas Hobbes' theory of the state. According to Rousseau, of all Christian authors Hobbes has been the only one daring to propose a restoration of the unity of religion and politics, without which neither the state nor the government will ever be solidly constituted.[47] This may be true, but unlike Rousseau, Hobbes did not propose to unite the Christian man. On the contrary, like his Protestant fellows, he fully subscribed to the idea that the law obliges the outward man alone, while the soul and conscience must be left intact by power and the law: "There ought to be no Power over the Consciences of men."[48] In other words, he maintains, like Luther and his followers, that the conscience of man is free from all laws. Referring to his contemporary Aristotelian Scholastics, Hobbes writes:

> There is another error in their civil philosophy (which they never learned of Aristotle, nor Cicero, nor any other of the Heathen) to extend the power of the law, which is the rule of actions only, to the very thoughts, and consciences of men.[49]

46 Sanderson, *Lectures on Conscience*, p. 164.
47 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 4.8, p. 180.
48 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4.47, p. 480.
49 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4.46, p. 471.

To be sure, Hobbes also holds that the laws of nature and hence, sovereign's commands, are a "matter of conscience" and one should act as the law commands, not because of the penalty attached to the law but "for the sake of the law."[50] Yet, not unlike his Protestant predecessors, Hobbes thought that the law obliges *in forointerno* because the law is the sovereign's authoritative command, but materially it does not extend its power in men's consciences, "where not Man, but God raigneth."[51] One is obliged to keep the law conscientiously because it is enacted by the sovereign, but nobody is obliged to believe in his heart or to accuse oneself if one's beliefs, thoughts, and opinions do not accord with particular laws,[52] "for mensbeliefe, and interior cogitations, are not subject to the command, but only to the operation of God, ordinarly, or extraordinarly."[53] Admittedly, for Hobbes, the power of conscience was not greater than any other power on earth, as one of the very aims of his theory of the state was to downplay such conception. Yet this does not entail that Hobbes's intention was to "retheocratize" politics, as Beiner suggests.[54] Instead, Hobbes's intention was to *depoliticize religion* and expulse religious zealots and religious feelings from the sphere of politics.

Indeed, if there is a contradiction between the Christian and the Rousseaun republican political teaching, it is not that the former preaches slavery and the latter freedom but rather that while the Christian and especially the Reformed political teaching leaves the conscience intact, the republican doctrine penetrates to its core. In the Rousseaun republic, the law cannot be a mere rule of action. It must bind the hearts of the citizens to the state. Man is no longer divided in two, whereby the conscience belongs to God and the body to the state, for both must now be definitely and entirely subjected to the service of the state. This is the backdrop of Rousseau's famous civil confession of faith necessary in every well-ordered state:

> There is thus a profession of faith which is purely civil and of which it is the sovereign's function to determine the articles, not strictly as

50 Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. E. Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 4.21, p. 64.
51 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 2.30, p. 244.
52 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4.46, p. 471.
53 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 2.26, p. 198.
54 Beiner, *Civil Religion*, p. 57.

> religious dogmas, but as sentiments of sociability (*sentiments de sociabilité*), without which it is impossible to be either a good citizen or a loyal subject. Without being able to oblige anyone to believe these articles, the sovereign can banish from the state anyone who does not believe them; banish him not for impiety but as an antisocial being, as one unable sincerely to love law and justice, or to sacrifice, if need be, his life to his duty. If anyone, after having publicly acknowledged these same dogmas, behaves as if he did not believe in them, then let him be put to death, for he has committed the greatest crime, that of lying before the law.[55]

We can clearly see here the difference between Luther and Hobbes on the one hand, and Rousseau on the other. For both Luther and Hobbes, it was enough that the subjects obeyed the law in their conduct, but Rousseau thought that a citizen incapable of sincerely loving (*incapable d'aimer sincèrement*) the laws of the state and of sacrificing (*immoler*) himself for them is not a citizen at all but an outlaw who could be banished from the state. Here and not in Hobbes we find a conscience that is no longer free in the sense that it can be detached from state regulation. Hobbes asked what "infidel king is so unreasonable" who puts to death a subject whose beliefs differ from the beliefs of the sovereign,[56] but Rousseau declares that every reasonable sovereign should indeed kill such a person. In the Hobbesian state subjects were bound to obey the law, but not to believe in it, while in the Rousseaun state they are precisely men's beliefs and interior cogitations that are subject to the commands. Thus, it was not with Hobbes but with such a republican theorists of the state as Rousseau that the dichotomy between outer obedience and inner faith was transformed into the obedience based on inner faith.

This is not to say that Hobbes would have not called into question the authority of conscience in favour of the sovereign's command in his political theory. In this respect, he was as conservative as Philip Filmer, the author of the famous *Patriarcha*, defending the divine rights of kings. In point of fact, Hobbes' argument in *Leviathan* is precisely the same

55 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, 4.8, p. 186.

56 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 3.43, p. 414.

as Filmer's. In his criticism of Philip Hunton's *A Treatise of Monarchy* in which Hunton, one of the most important parliamentarian pamphleteers in the Civil War, had argued that "resistance ought to be made, and every man must oppose or not oppose, according as in conscience he can acquit or condemn the acts of his governor,"[57] Filmer writes: "Such a conclusion fits well with anarchy," for it takes away "all government and leaves every man to his own conscience." It makes man "independent in state," rendering all authority illegitimate.[58] On the other hand, if we compare Hobbes with Rousseau, it is almost impossible not to recognize a significant difference. It may be true that the Hobbesian theory of the state is the "root of Rousseau's democratic theory," as Reinhart Koselleck claims,[59] but there is still a decisive gap between Hobbes and Rousseau. In Rousseau's *Social Contract*, we encounter a state in which the conscience is no longer an instance which opens up a transcendent dimension within the immanence of political order, as it had been in the Christian tradition, but neither is it an instance which may remain in peace in the private sphere, as in early modern political theory. It is, as it was for Hegel, something that must be incorporated firmly into the immanent political order itself:

> If political principles and institutions are divorced from the realm of inwardness, from the innermost shrine of conscience (*Heiligthum des Gewissens*), from the still sanctuary of religion, they lack any real centre (*wirklicher Mittelpunkt*) and remain abstract and indeterminate.[60]

This is not to say that these philosophers would have rejected religious liberty of conscience. They usually defended it ardently. What they rejected was the Christian-Hobbesian presumption that the conscience and the state can be separated. What they sought was the ab-

57 Cited in Robert Filmer, *The Anarchy of a Limited or Mixed Monarchy*, in *Patriarcha and Other Writings*, ed. J. P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 154.

58 Filmer, *Anarchy*, p. 154.

59 Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), p. 34, footnote 38.

60 G.W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001), p. 52. Translation modified.

rogation of the distinction between the inner self and political institutions, because they, as Niccolo Machiavelli before them, wanted to capture the energy of religious conscience and to put it into the service of the state. Therefore, it is here rather than in the Hobbesian theory of the state that the distinction between the inner self and political institutions is abrogated. Compared to Rousseau and Hegel, Hobbes still remained a "Christian," tied to the Christian tradition of political thought. In this sense, Carl Schmitt was right. Hobbes did not fully succeed in restoring the "original unity" of politics and religion.[61] Perhaps this was not even his intention.

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61 Carl Schmitt, *TheLeviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), p. 55.

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PARLIAMENTARY OBSTRUCTION AND THE "CRISIS" OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS AROUND 1900

Henk te Velde

At the end of the nineteenth century the crisis of the parliamentary system was a hotly debated topic.[1] The later crisis of interwar parliamentary democracy is already well known. The 1920s and 1930s, however, were not the first time the parliamentary system was perceived as being in 'crisis'. Around 1900 the appearance of organized 'obstruction' in European parliaments was seen as the most prominent sign that

1 Cf. the chapter about parliaments in Jan Romein, *The Watershed of Two Eras. Europe in 1900* (Middletown, Wesleyan U.P. 1978); among many other titles Jules Destrée, *La fin du parlementarisme. Discours pronounce à la séance solennelle de rentrée de l'Université Nouvelle de Bruxelles* (Bruxelles 1901). This contribution is a revised version of Henk te Velde, 'Die parlamentarische Obstruktion und die "Krise" parlamentarischer Obstruktion in Europa um 1900', in: Andreas Schulz and Andreas Wirsching ed., *Parlamentarische Kulturen in Europa. Das Parlament als Kommunikationsraum* (Düsseldrof: Droste 2012) pp. 267-283. I would like to thank James McSpadden, PhD candidate in parliamentary history at Harvard, for improving my English style.

the entire system was in danger. An 1882 article entitled 'The Crisis of Parliamentary Government' was devoted exclusively to obstruction.[2] Probably the most impressive comparative study of parliaments of this earlier period was the two-volume *Histoire de la discipline parlementaire,* published in 1884 by the Belgian parliamentarian Auguste Reynaert[3]; this study focused almost exclusively on questions related to obstructionism. Around 1900 Félix Moreau, the French constitutional lawyer who wrote a well-known book in defence of the parliamentary system, was among many who thought that obstruction was at least 'une crise importante', if not a demonstration of 'la faillite du parlementarisme'.[4] With the benefit of hindsight, it is safe to conclude that this crisis was in fact the adjustment of parliamentary politics to changes in the way politics operated in general. This new form of organized and widespread obstructionism made an enormous impression on contemporary commentators.

This contribution will analyze famous cases of nationalist obstruction in the British and Austrian parliaments. It will become evident that nationalists were more violent obstructors than socialists, whose goals were less radical. Finally, the relevance of obstruction for the development of the parliamentary system will be discussed. That obstructionism was important was clear to all the commentators worrying about the subject, and I will start by looking at different views about obstruction that were voiced by contemporaries.

Opponents of the parliamentary system used the violent obstruction in parliaments in Vienna, Berlin, Brussels, Rome, etc., as an argument that the system was doomed.[5] Even the defenders of parliamentarism

2 Frederic Harrison, 'The Crisis of Parliamentary Government', *The Nineteenth Century* (January 1882) pp. 9-28.

3 2 volumes, Paris: Pedone-Lauriel.

4 Review of Henri Masson, *De l'obstruction parlementaire.* Étude de droit public et d'histoire politique Academic dissertation (Toulouse: Bonneville 1902), by Félix Moreau in *Revue du Droit Public et de la Science Politique en France et à l'Étranger* (1902) II, p. 170. Moreau wonders why obstruction emerged in the 'mother of parliaments' and hardly existed in France, which was not considered to be such an example of parliamentary politics. Félix Moreau, *Pour le régime parlementaire* (Paris: Thorin 1903).

5 Constitutionalist and politician Charles Benoist, *La réforme parlementaire*

were discouraged by obstruction. The prominent professor of constitutional law Georg Jellinek, who was of Austrian descent and held a professorship in Vienna before moving to Basel and then to Heidelberg, was deeply pessimistic about the impact of obstruction on the development of the parliamentary system: 'Parliamentary obstruction is no longer a mere intermezzo in the history of this or that parliament. It has become an international phenomenon which, in [a] threatening manner, calls in question the whole future of parliamentary government' (1903).[6] Although it is obvious that the violent scenes in the Austrian House of Representatives were also on his mind, Jellinek was worried most about what had happened in the British House of Commons, the prime example of parliamentary politics, and perhaps to a lesser extent, about the American Congress.

Obstruction was perceived as one of the central problems of the parliamentary system around the turn of the century. Even according to a parliamentarian and future minister in France, one of the countries least afflicted by obstruction, the regime would be in danger if the disorder caused by obstruction continued.[7] Curiously, however, the subject has been almost ignored since the Second World War.[8] Parliamentary historians who have been familiar with this subject confined themselves to the history of their own country, and they seldom addressed fundamental questions related to the parliamentary system. Most likely the reason for this neglect is the disappearance of obstruction from most contemporary parliaments. There is no coincidence that most contemporary literature about the subject comes from the United States, where

(Paris: Plon 1902) p. 30.

6 Georg Jellinek, 'Parliamentary Obstruction', *Political Science Quarterly* (1904) 579-588, quotation from p. 579; German version: Georg Jellinek, 'Die parlamentarische Obstruktion', in: Id., *Ausgewählte Schriften und Reden* II (Berlin: Häring 1911) 419-430 (first published in *Neue Freie Presse* 26 July 1903).

7 André Lebon, 'La réforme parlementaire', *La Revue Politique et Parlementaire* (1894) II, pp. 222-245; p. 224: 'le crédit même du régime sera atteint et compromise'.

8 A recent exception being Barna Mezey, 'Die Obstruktion in der ungarischen Rechtsgeschichte', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 23 (2003), pp. 97-122.

the Senate still has to cope with the threat of filibustering which has an enormous impact on the way the institution works.[9]

Parliamentary obstruction has also been important in the European context. Even if the practice has not attracted much attention in Europe since the Second World War, it nevertheless marks an important phase in the evolution of Europe's parliamentary system, and it says something about the nature of parliamentary debate in general. This wider significance of obstructionism had already been noticed around the turn of the century. In the debate about obstruction, there were more or less four different positions.

First, the obstructionists themselves explicitly or implicitly regarded their work as legitimate, because they defended the rights or demands of their constituency. In their minds, the idea of parliamentary debate was hypocritical as long as an old elite did not make way for newcomers who represented socialist or nationalist outsiders. They believed that parliamentary debate was not an academic discussion but a struggle in which one should use whatever weapon works best.

Second, there was the position of most turn-of-the-century commentators, in particular writers about constitutional law. Besides political commentary, a large number of dissertations and scholarly articles were devoted to obstructionism in many different countries.[10] It was

9 For instance Sarah A. Binder & Steven S. Smith, *Politics or Principle? Filibustering in the United States Senate* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press 1997); Gregory J. Wawro & Eric Schickler, *Filibuster. Obstruction and Lawmaking in the U.S. Senate* (Princeton U.P. 2006); Gregory Koger, *Filibustering. A Political History of Obstruction in the House and Senate* (Chicago/London: the University of Chicago Press 2010).

10 E.g. Henri Masson, *De l'obstruction parlementaire. Étude de droit public et d'histoire politique* (Toulouse: Bonneville 1902); Erich Brandenburg, *Die parlamentarische Obstruktion. Ihre Geschichte und ihre Bedeutung* (Dresden: Zahn/Jaensch 1904); Adriaan Theodoor Louis Allard Heyligers, *Parlementaire obstructie* (Zaltbommel: Van de Garde 1908); Oswald Koller, *Die Obstruktion. Eine Studie aus dem vergleichenden Parlamentsrechte. Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Würde eines Doctors der Rechte der hohen juristischen Fakultät der Universität Freiburg in der Schweiz* (Zürich: Verlag der Academia 1910). Mezey, 'Obstruktion', gives an additional list of literature mainly concerning the Habsburg case.

one of the most popular subjects of public law at the time. Most academic literature saw obstruction as a sign that the parliamentary system was in a serious crisis, caused by the advent of new parliamentary groups that did not belong to the classes for whom parliaments were originally designed. These newcomers did not know how to behave; they did not respect parliamentary rules, and they hampered the purpose of parliament—to hold serious debates.

Third, there was a minority who saw obstruction as a sign of crisis, but a constructive crisis brought about by adjustment to new circumstances. They agreed with the obstructionists that parliamentary debate was a struggle for power, but they came to another conclusion. In an article from 1882 with the title 'The Crisis of Parliamentary Government', the radical British constitutionalist and historian Frederic Harrison argued that obstruction was not the cause, but instead the effect, of a change in government. He argued that Parliament used to be a homogeneous aristocratic club and formed the basis of a government by discussion as 'a deliberative and consultative body'. Now, however, Parliament had to pass much more legislation than it previously did, and it had to work with 'efficiency' and act as 'an executive body'. Its members were also, first and foremost, the representatives or even the spokesmen of their constituency and their party. Debate in Parliament had become more or less a 'formality', because the issues had already been discussed 'in newspapers, in clubs, and in meetings'. It is no surprise that the old rules did not work any longer. A strengthening of the executive was what was needed, Harrison argued.[11]

Many admirers of the parliamentary system did not agree with Harrison's solution, which was a consequence of his radical political views, but his analysis was probably right. The workload of Parliament was growing, many more bills had to be dealt with, which made time more precious, which in turn presented the perfect opportunity for obstruction. Harrison wrote that 'it would be almost impossible to obstruct if a great majority made but one speech, and that speech was simply: "Divide!" [i.e.: Vote!]'. 'It is the extreme pressure of business which is the secret of the strength of the obstructor proper', the liberal leader and prime minister William Gladstone wrote in a confidential government memorandum,

11 Harrison, 'The Crisis of Parliamentary Government', esp. pp. 9-13.

'and which makes it pay him so well to pursue his vocation at all costs.'[12]

There was also a fourth position that opposed Harrison's plea for more executive government. These advocates did not criticize disciplined forms of obstruction, but applauded them. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, a well-known French economic liberal and a political conservative, even went as far as to argue that 'we do not appreciate enough the enormous services rendered by obstruction'. He felt that obstruction ensured the peace and quiet of nations because it prevented radical governments from introducing too much, rash or superfluous legislation.[13]

These four positions differed widely, but they all had in common that they assumed that obstruction was an important feature of the parliamentary system at the end of the nineteenth century. Their main examples were the British Parliament and the violence of obstruction in the Habsburg parliament.

The Beginning: The British Parliament and Irish Obstruction

Like most writers about the subject, Jellinek observed that obstruction was not an entirely novel or modern thing. Nevertheless, everyone agreed that the modern version of the practice dated from obstruction by the Irish Home Rule party in the British Parliament in the late 1870s.[14] Even the word 'obstruction' was new, they said.[15] The attempt by Charles Parnell and his Irish party to bring all parliamentary work to a standstill shocked commentators and public opinion not only in

12 Quoted in extenso in the still useful Edward Hughes, 'The Changes in Parliamentary Procedure, 1880-1882', in: Richard Pares and A.J.P. Taylor eds., *Essays presented to Sir Lewis Namier* (London: Macmillan 1956) p. 295.

13 Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'état moderne et ses fonctions* (Paris: Guillaumin 1890) p. 64. Cf. about him Sharif Gemie, 'Politics, Morality and the Bourgeoisie: the Work of Paul Leroy-Beaulieu', *Journal of Contemporary History* 27 (1992) pp. 345-362.

14 Cf. Michael Rush, *The Role of the Member of Parliament since 1868. From Gentlemen to Players* (Oxford U.P. 2001) pp. 66-69.

15 E.g. Edward D.J. Wilson, 'The Clôture in Parliament', *The Nineteenth Century* 8 (1880) p. 42.

Britain but also in other countries. Josef Redlich, the Austrian author of a famous book (1908) about the procedures of the House of Commons, wrote: 'Parnell was (…) the inventor of a new kind of political tactics [which] has since this time run its melancholy course of victory through nearly every parliament in the world. He was the founder of systematic obstruction.' Obstruction was seen as an attack on the parliamentary system as such. As Gladstone put it in the House of Commons: 'It is the first condition of parliamentary existence, for which we are now struggling, the House of Commons has never (…) stood in a more serious crisis'.[16]

The Irish MPs acted only as representatives of their constituencies and as members of a united and disciplined party. As long as Parliament did not grant Home Rule to Ireland, they considered themselves 'strangers' in the House of Commons.[17] They did not belong to the club at Westminster but belonged instead to their own nation. As was already noted at the time by Henry Brand, Speaker of the House of Commons, and has been commented on since by historians, the Irish were 'strong in numbers, discipline and organisation', as a united party the first of its kind in the British parliament.[18] The socialists in Britain and in other countries were also disciplined parliamentary parties and would sometimes copy the Irish nationalists' behaviour. The Irish were the heralds of a new time when parties would dominate politics, and when politicians would address parliaments but in reality would be speaking primarily to their constituency rather than their colleagues. At least, this is clear in the case of Parnell. He did not obtain his goal of Home Rule, but historians have argued whether that was what he wanted in the first place. According to these historians, Parnell wanted to win popular sympathy in Ireland, and become the undisputed leader of the radical nationalists; this goal he did achieve.[19]

Because Great Britain was the greatest world power and the House

16 Josef Redlich, *The Procedure of the House of Commons. A Study of its History and Present Form* (London: Constable 1908), p. 154.

17 For instance J. Redmond, quoted by Redlich, *Procedure* I, p. 199.

18 Speaker Brand (1881), quoted by Redlich, *Procedure* I, p. 157; Rush, *The Role of the Member of Parliament,* pp. 163-165.

19 David Thornley, 'The Home Rule Party and Obstruction', *Irish Historical Studies* 12 nr 45 (1960) p. 56.

of Commons the most admired parliament, everything that happened there had repercussions elsewhere. As Speaker Brand famously put it in 1880, a year full of obstructionism: 'The power and consequent responsibility of this House are constantly increasing', and 'every nation in the world now treading the path of Parliamentary Government watches our proceedings with the greatest attention and interest. It is, then, the more incumbent on us to set an example of freedom and order in debate, which constitute the life-blood of Parliamentary Government.'[20] From London a new type of obstructionism spread around the world, in particular across Europe. Especially Irish obstruction's technical aspects were copied. Indeed, obstructionism could take many forms. It could be just a means to block one particular law, and in this sense, it had been used before. It could also take the form of violating every rule in the House, by yelling, throwing things and impeding parliamentary business in every possible way. This was what was to happen in the Habsburg Empire.

Obstruction could also be principled, total, and at the same time at least formally obey the parliamentary rules. Irish obstruction stood out by its principled nature: it did not attack one law, but instead challenged the whole system of government in Ireland. It was also distinguished by its technical perfection. The Irish did not literally or formally transgress the rules of Parliament, they used them to their own advantage. That they were able to do so was because of their knowledge of the rules and traditions of the House of Commons. Perhaps they were Parliament's enemies, but they were also regulars and some of them even loved the place, including Justin McCarthy and Thomas Power O'Connor who were journalists and wrote extensively about their experiences in the House. Their dominating leader Charles Parnell, however, did not find 'the least pleasure in Parliamentary debate or in the life of the House of Commons'. [21] 'His parliamentary success was due not to speeches, but to determination, firmness, unconquerable will, and, above all, to

20 Quoted by Henk te Velde, *Het theater van de politiek. Rede* (Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek 2003), p. 11.

21 His previous supporter Justin McCarthy, *Reminiscences* (2 vols; London: Chatto & Windus 1899) II, p. 98.

the authoritarian command he exercised over a docile party.'[22] He had a charismatic but somewhat aloof personality.[23]

Irish obstruction was new and radical not only for its discipline but also in the sense that the parliamentarians did not just want to block one law – that had been done before – but slow the whole system of government. This made an enormous impression, not only in Britain but also everywhere in Europe. In the following decades this model was built on with the far more violent forms of obstruction in other parliaments, most notably in the parliament in Vienna. There civilized behaviour seemed to break down completely. This confirmed the worst fears of pessimistic commentators.

Habsburg Austria as an Extreme Case

In the final years of the nineteenth century, the American author and celebrity Mark Twain was living in the bustling capital of the Habsburg Empire. At that time, he wrote that everybody was talking about politics, and he heard that a parliamentary row was to be expected surrounding the language of the Empire. The German minority was determined to use any parliamentary means at their disposal to keep their language as the official language. The public gallery was crowded and many elegant ladies were present, but as a famous foreign guest Twain was able to secure one of the eagerly sought after tickets to the gallery. He was so famous that most MPs were aware of his presence and some came to meet him, but he described himself as only a spectator of an amazing play. The parliament building was 'a good place for theatrical effects', 'richly and showily decorated', 'its plan is that of an opera-house'. In a number of articles originally published in an American

22 An adversary: William Jeans, *Parliamentary reminiscences* (London: Chapman and Hall 1912) p. 89.

23 Supporter T.P. O'Connor, *Memoirs of an old parliamentarian* (London: Binn 1929) 235: 'Parnell was one of those magnetic personalities, at once so taciturn, so inscrutable, and at the same time so hypnotic, that everything about him, even the most trifling, took your attention, and perhaps set you guessing.'

magazine (but avidly read in Vienna as well), he described the incredible scenes he witnessed.[24]

Twain's piece is a lively contribution to the extensive debate about parliamentary obstruction that took place in European public life and academia at the time. The German party in the Habsburg parliament had a trump card to play. According to a formal agreement, the arrangements defining the relationship within the dual monarchy between Austria and Hungary, called the *Ausgleich*, would have to be reconfirmed within a matter of weeks, or the Empire would formally fall apart. By delaying, or preferably 'obstructing' parliamentary business for a couple of weeks, the German party could thus put the government in real trouble. This is what they set out to do, by using every possible tactic they could find, as Twain illustrates. 'Its [the German party's] arms were the rules of the House. It was soon manifest that by applying these Rules ingeniously it could make the majority helpless, and keep it so as long as it pleased. It could shut off business every now and then with a motion to adjourn. It could require the ayes and noes on the motion, and use up thirty minutes on that detail. It could call for the reading and verification of the minutes of the previous meeting, and use up half a day in that way. It could require that several of its members be entered upon the list of permitted speakers previously to the opening of a sitting; and as there is no time limit, further delays could thus be accomplished.'[25]

The frustrated majority became angrier day by day. One of the most amazing accomplishments of the obstructing minority was a calm and competent twelve-hour speech by Dr Otto Lecher, who succeeded, as was required, in talking all the time about the subject at hand. Meanwhile, the parliament was constantly in an uproar—members were shouting at the top of their voices and insulting each other – 'Die Grossmutter auf dem Misthaufen erzeugt worden', was part of an insult Twain caught amidst all the noise and commotion. Because of this, no-

24 Mark Twain, 'Stirring times in Austria', in: Id., *The man that corrupted Hadleyburg and other stories and essays* (1900; New York: Oxford UP 1996) 296. Cf. Carl Dolmetsch, *"Our famous guest". Mark Twain in Vienna* (Athens/London: University of Georgia Press 1992) chapter 4.

25 Ibid., pp. 294-295.

body heard a word that Lecher said; 'the official stenographers had left their places and were at his elbows taking down his words, he leaning and orating into their ears', in fact Lecher's speech was a 'pantomime'.[26]

Amidst the incredible chaos, the supporters of the government suddenly and irregularly changed the rules of parliament with the so-called Lex Falkenhayn which set limits on the freedom of speech within parliament. When this act became apparent – at first nobody had heard what was being said – the chaos reached a climax. The socialists, who refused to accept the new rules, stormed the seat of the president of the parliament ('one could see fists go up and come down') and were subsequently dragged out of the building by policemen. Twain concludes: 'It was a tremendous episode. The memory of it will outlast all the thrones that exist to-day.'[27]

These scenes caused an even greater sensation than they would have otherwise because of the enormous contrast between the grave 'dignity' of the institution and the unruly behaviour of its supposedly well-mannered and mostly upper-class members. Mark Twain could not understand that 'this convention of gentlemen could consent to use such gross terms'. He even wondered whether 'parliament and the Constitution [would] survive the present storm'. It is not surprising that the complete breakdown of ordinary parliamentary procedure led him to question the stability of the regime.[28]

This tempest in the Austrian parliament was one of the most extreme cases of parliamentary obstruction during this period. It happened in the parliament of one of the great powers of the day, and participants marshalled the whole array of parliamentary obstruction: from simply filibustering with endless speeches to ingenuous use of the rules of procedure, from endless voting and endless motions to shouting, insulting, singing, drumming the parliamentary lecterns, throwing things, ruining the furniture and resorting to physical violence.[29] It was a complete crisis of the parliament's image as the place for the reason-

26 Ibid., pp. 300, 302, 324.

27 Ibid., pp. 338, 340.

28 Ibid., pp. 329, 341.

29 Mezey, 'Obstruktion in der ungarischen Rechtsgeschichte', p. 100, distinguishes between simple (einfache), technical (technische) and violent (gewalttätige) obstruction.

able and dignified conversation of gentlemen which could include the *choc des opinions*, but certainly not this type of shocking behaviour. The Habsburg Empire did not count as a shining example of parliamentary politics anyway, and one German constitutionalist who wrote about the parliamentary obstruction of the time classified the rough type of obstruction described by Twain as 'animalische Obstruktion'.[30] Scenes of yelling, swearing and flinging all sorts of fruit and eggs became infamous, and the throwing of inkpots[31] became proverbial. When an angry Dutch socialist threatened obstruction around 1910, he reminded his fellows MPs of the scenes in the Austrian and other parliaments, where 'inkpots were turned into airplanes' and the lecterns and 'other musical instruments' were turned into a means of applause.[32] Austria was seen as an extreme case, but it contributed nevertheless to the impression that obstruction was the most pressing problem parliaments were facing at the time, and that this was more than just a problem, it was a 'crisis'.

Socialist Obstruction

Irish obstruction served as an example for radical Tories, the radical liberal Lloyd George and early socialists in Britain.[33] It also was an example for national minorities in the Habsburg Empire and socialists everywhere on the Continent. National minorities and socialists were the two main categories of obstructionists in Europe during this period.[34] At first glance, one might perhaps assume that the socialists were the most revolutionary of the two categories, as they still cherished the idea of a social revolution, whereas the Irish and other minority nationalists only wanted independence or Home Rule. Independence, however, entailed a real departure from the parliament to which they still

30 Koller, *Die Obstruktion,* p. 72.

31 Mezey, 'Obstruktion', p. 113.

32 Jan Duys, *Handelingen Tweede Kamer*, 20 september 1911, p. 18.

33 E.g. Brian Harrison, *The Transformation of British Politics 1860-1995* (Oxford UP 1996) p. 110; T.A. Jenkins, *Parliament, Party and Politics in Victorian Britain* (Manchester UP 1996) p. 123.

34 Overview among other things in Masson, *De l'obstruction parlementaire.*

belonged, whereas most socialists eventually decided that they wanted to gain a position within that parliament. Therefore, nationalist obstruction could be more fundamental, as some authors in the period already sensed.[35] Mark Twain had noted the similarities between the fundamentalist nationalist obstruction of the Irish and Habsburg minorities, and even used this comparison to explain the more violent nature of obstruction in Vienna: 'nine nationalities are represented in the Reichsrath; it makes nine Irish parties, so to speak, with all that that means'.[36]

Like the Irish, most socialists complied with the formal rules of parliament and, also like Irish MPs, they obstructed for reasons of principle, meaning their tactics were sometimes violent but in practice more often rather modest. The Belgian socialist party was one of the best organized and self-confident in Europe. In 1894, their leader Emile Vandervelde entered parliament with twenty-eight fellow socialists with the express intention 'to engage head on all institutions of the regime'.[37] Some MPs behaved purposefully in a provocatively non-bourgeois way, and the party used obstruction to prevent the introduction of laws it did not want and in order to wring universal suffrage from the government.[38] These actions were intended to use parliament, not to shut it down, and in practice obstruction was one of the means of reaching the goals the party wanted to achieve. In Germany this tactic was vindicated by

35 E.g. Koller, *Obstruktion*, p. 100.

36 Mark Twain, 'The Austrian Parliamentary System? Government by Article 14', *Lords and Commons* 25 February 1899, as quoted by Dolmetsch, *Famous Guest*, p. 79.

37 Émile Vandervelde, *Souvenirs d›un militant socialiste* (Paris 1939) p. 46: (in 1894) 'Vingt-huit députés socialistes, d'un bloc, pénétraient, comme par effraction, dans le Parlement le plus bourgeois de l'Europe. Ils y entraient avec le propos, nettement affirmé, de s'en prendre, sans ménagements, à toutes les institutions du régime.' Vandervelde also thought that the Belgian party could achieve more than its stronger German counterpart because of the more liberal nature of the Belgian constitution.

38 Jo Deferme, 'Van burgerlijke afstandelijkheid naar volkse betrokkenheid. De politieke cultuur van enkele socialistische mijnwerkers in het Belgische parlement, 1894-1914', *Brood & Rozen (*2004) I, pp. 11-29; Masson, *Obstruction*, pp. 119-127; Maarten Van Ginderachter, *Het rode vaderland. De vergeten geschiedenis van de communautaire spanningen in het Belgische socialisme voor WO I* (Tielt: Lannoo 2005) p. 192.

one of the most prominent (but also moderate) members of the socialist party. When the German socialist party obstructed parliamentary decision-making about one particular law around 1900, the revisionist socialist Eduard Bernstein explained that socialist obstruction differed from the Irish case, and that it was in fact a normal instead of a revolutionary parliamentary weapon.[39] It was hardly surprising that the British parliament had taken measures against Irish obstruction, Bernstein wrote, because this obstruction was directed against all parliamentary business. Socialist obstruction, on the other hand, was only '*Obstruction ad hoc*', directed against a single measure or law. It was not the dictatorship of a minority, on the contrary, it was the defence of legitimate minority claims against an oppressive majority. He even went a step further, by arguing 'that obstruction belonged to the nature of parliamentarism, which is not complete without the right to obstruction'.[40] Obstruction was seen as a weapon of last resort for minorities that were oppressed by a dictatorial majority.

Interestingly, Bernstein even used the power of the House of Lords in Britain as an example to defend his position. He said that by vetoing a measure, the House of Lords could, as it were, force a referendum on a certain issue because only the voters could decide what should happen in case of deadlock between the two houses of Parliament. He referred to the conservative leader Lord Salisbury, who argued along these lines.[41] Bernstein was right; according to recent research, 'the high Tory Salisbury was developing a theory of plebiscitary democracy as a check on an over-mighty executive.'[42] Salisbury came close to the arguments of the fourth position on obstruction laid out at the beginning of this article as defended by the Frenchman Leroy-Beaulieu, who also

39 Eduard Bernstein, ´Zur Bilanz des Kampfes gegen den neuen Zolltarif', *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (1903) I, pp. 1, 35-42, also for the next sentences. Cf. Elfi Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie 1867-1914* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus Verlag 1990) p. 466 and passim, for the context of socialist obstruction and also for the attitude of the socialist parliamentary group in general.

40 Bernstein, 'Zur Bilanz', p. 37.

41 Ibidem, p. 38.

42 Jane Ridley, 'The Unionist Opposition and the House of Lords, 1906-1910', *Parliamentary History* 11 (1992) p. 238.

called for the introduction of a referendum to curtail executive power. The Lords even used the word obstruction, although in order to argue that they did not use it. 'What the House of Lords claimed', said the conservative unionist leader Lansdowne, 'was not the right to obstruct; it did claim and it meant to exercise the right of revising measures that came up to them from the other House of Parliament.'[43] He denied it, but what he said was the same thing socialists meant by using obstruction. Ironically, when the House of Lords used its veto power a couple of years later, it was against the progressive People's Budget of Lloyd George, and the outcome was a severe curtailment of the powers of the Lords.

Even if Bernstein's argument came close to conservative ideas of the same period and it came from one of the least radical socialists, his argument was not exceptional in socialist circles. In practical terms the same argument was used by socialists in the Netherlands in defence of their attempt at obstruction around 1910. They felt an obligation to obstruct, they said, because the majority refused to listen to their arguments in a particular parliamentary debate. The only thing they could do to gain attention was to use the means of obstruction. As they argued later, 'obstruction was the legitimate weapon of an oppressed parliamentary minority' – this echo of Bernstein's words may have been the result of the close connections between the Dutch and the German socialist parties. The Dutch socialist Johan Schaper seemed inspired by the methods of the Habsburg parliament when he threatened that inkpots would fly through the air. In practice, though, he limited himself to the classic means of technical parliamentary obstruction and the obstruction only lasted for a short period of time. He argued that, if it were used abundantly or as a normal political weapon, obstruction would 'denature' the parliamentary system. It was a symbolic protest against the attitude of the majority, and in that sense, it was also appreciated by liberal newspapers that did not normally support socialist politics.[44]

43 Lansdowne in 1906, quoted by Ridley, 'Unionist Opposition', p. 236.

44 Erie Tanja, *Goede politiek. De parlementaire cultuur van de Tweede Kamer, 1866-1940* (Amsterdam: Boom 2011) pp. 107-114; the socialist leader P.J. Troelstra in parliament in 1920; J.H. Schaper, *Een halve eeuw strijd. Herinneringen* II (Groningen etc. 1935) pp. 267-287; esp. 272, 284, 287.

This type of obstruction could only be the work of experienced members of parliament who knew the rules very well. It is probably no coincidence that socialists did not obstruct when they first entered parliament, but only after a while, when they understood the procedures, the atmosphere and the way to use the parliament. At first the question was whether parliament would accept these newcomers at all. In the Reichstag socialists were initially occasionally boycotted, and their speeches were sometimes hampered by the loud noises of their opponents. Although some socialists at first tried to change the tone of parliament by introducing the language and the behaviour of the common people—Wilhelm Liebknecht also famously attacked the 'comedy' of parliament—after a while socialists began to differentiate between the tone of mass meetings and that of the parliament. By using obstruction they wanted to show their adherents that they were still not a part of the aristocratic club and that they were still to a certain extent outsiders. At the same time, they could only use obstruction this way because they had become part of the parliamentary system and understood its rules.[45]

Were their tactics successful? Parnell and his Irish MPs were successful because their head-on collision with the British parliamentary system did not help them in Westminster but boosted their popularity in Ireland. The socialists, on the other hand, selected individual cases with which they could demonstrate the tyrannical nature of the ruling majority. Although they knew how to reach their audience by speaking out of the window, as the German and French phrase ran, and although they perhaps won some seats with their positions, their use of obstruction was not a resounding success. According to Georg Jellinek, the German 'Social Democrats decidedly overestimated the strength and energy of their public backing'.[46] Although even Jellinek acknowledges the socialists had gained many seats in parliament, he was probably right in downplaying the contribution of obstruction tactics to this electoral victory.

45 See besides Pracht, *Parlamentarismus und deutsche Sozialdemokratie,* Andreas Biefang, *Die andere Seite der Macht. Reichstag und Öffentlichkeit im System Bismarck 1871-1890* (Düsseldorf: Droste 2009) and Thomas Welskopp, *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit. Die deutsche Sozialsdemokratie vom Vormärz bis zum Sozialistengesetz* (Bonn: Dietz 2000).

46 Jellinek, 'Parliamentary Obstruction', p. 586.

It is also clear that just pointing out the rude manners of the socialist newcomers from working-class backgrounds (as often happened) was not a valid explanation of obstruction. For instance, Dutch conservative analysts argued along these lines and dreaded aloud about the end of parliamentarism as it was known.[47] This was certainly the way their opponents depicted the obstructionists in many countries. As one of the obstructing Irish MPs said later: 'The comments in the British papers would make their readers think of them [the obstructing Irish] as illiterate rowdies; as a matter of fact, they were nearly all highly educated men.'[48]

That the newcomers lowered the level of parliament with their lack of inner refinement was an argument used to dismiss their criticism, but it is true that the newcomers did not automatically obey the rules of the aristocratic and upper-class milieu that had dominated parliaments during most of the nineteenth century. In the newcomers' eyes there were more important things to consider than the club's culture. The opponents of obstruction were probably right in stressing the importance of team spirit and the culture of the parliament as a club, but this did not necessarily have to do with social class, let alone with personal manners.[49] The literature on the U.S. Senate stresses the importance of the informal, relational club culture which relied on the norm of

47 E.g. W.J. Couturier, *Handhaving van de orde in parlementaire vergaderingen* (Den Haag: Brunt 1914) p. 54; also the remarks about parliamentary culture in Johan Huizinga, *Homo ludens. A study of the play-element in culture* Boston: Beacon Press 1955; original Dutch edition 1938); cf. Henk te Velde, 'Spelers en spelbrekers. De beschaving van de Tweede Kamer', *De Negentiende Eeuw* (2006) pp. 35-47.

48 O'Connor, *Memoirs* I, p. 146.

49 On the importance of the 'club', among other things, Thomas Mergel, *Parlamentarische Kultur in der Weimarer Republik. Politische Kommunikation, symbolische Politik und Öffentlichkeit im Reichstag* (Düsseldrof: Droste 2002); Biefang, *Die andere Seite,* pp. 215-231; Marc Abélès, *Un ethnologue à l'Assemblée* (Paris 2001); Christopher Silvester ed., *The literary Companion to Parliament* (London: Sinclair-Stvenson 1996); Te Velde, *Theater van de politiek*. Cf. on the U.S. also Donald Matthews, *U.S. Senators and Their World* (Chapel Hil: University of North Carolina Press 1960).

reciprocity.[50] The important thing was to know whether MPs regarded themselves as members of an extra-parliamentary party rather than a member of parliament itself. It was much easier to obstruct if you had not completely integrated into the group culture of parliament and had a primary audience outside of parliament. Committing obstruction was also playing to the gallery. This was true not only for the Irish but also for the socialists.

The End of Obstruction in Europe

The type of systematic obstruction introduced by the Irish emerged in the late 1870s and, for the most part, did not survive the First World War. The obstruction by National Socialists and Communists that Thomas Mergel describes for the Weimar Republic is something else than what the Irish MPs introduced.[51] It eventually brought the Reichstag to a complete standstill and was always violent action meant to destroy parliament. It was much more a *by-product* of the social action of these political groups, than the *cause* of social unrest, as sometimes was the case in the late nineteenth century when parliament was more the centre of politics than during the interwar period. Technical and simple obstruction was disappearing, and when it happened, it did not cause the anxiety that Irish and Austrian obstruction had caused earlier but was seen as just an isolated incident. Perhaps the antidemocratic obstruction of the interwar years removed obstruction of any kind as a legitimate parliamentary tool in Europe after the Second World War. In Western Europe the sober post-war parliamentary democracy did not accept obstruction by outsiders.[52]

As a general European phenomenon, violent and systematic obstruction belonged to a phase of the development of the parliamentary system, in which it had to cope with, on the one hand, the increasing

50 Wawro & Schickler, *Filibuster*, in particular.

51 Mergel, *Parlamentarische Kultur*, in particular part V.

52 See about the nature of this democracy e.g. Martin Conway, 'Democracy in Postwar Western Europe: the Triumph of a Political Model', *European History Quarterly* 32 (2002) pp. 59-84.

burden of legislative work and, on the other hand, newly emerging organized political parties. The growing role of the state with all the new legislation this entailed limited open debate. As Harrison pointed out, 'efficiency' was what the state now needed, not endless debates of an old aristocratic elite that saw the House of Commons as the best club in London. The emergence of organized obstruction was, on the other hand, related to the emergence of mass political parties and the broadening of suffrage rights. As the conservative liberal politician Robert Lowe, an opponent of obstruction, put it: 'there is the closest possible connection between the lowering of the franchise and the systematic and organized obstruction which now degrades and neutralises the House of Commons. The lower the franchise the more the voter is inclined to trust to mere numerical superiority, and to dispense himself from the necessity of thought and reflection.'[53] The implicit assumption here seems to be that the lower classes only thought about their direct self-interest, as opposed to the upper class which could stand above the fray. This is a misinterpretation of what really happened, which actually had to do with the change of the nature of parliamentary debate caused by the emergence of party organizations and the development of the government.

That so many lawyers and MPs dreaded the end of the parliamentary system was probably caused by their conception of the nature of parliamentary debate. They felt that this should be a sober but open exchange of arguments meant to find the truth and to reach compromises. The independence of MPs was a precondition for such a debate, and a severe curtailment of speaking time, let alone limiting this to the leaders of parliamentary parties was almost inconceivable, as was demonstrated by the time it took to convince a majority in the British parliament that the only answer to the Irish obstruction was changing the rules and allowing the 'clôture' of debates.

The new parties – of which the Irish and socialists were the most conspicuous examples – had often already decided what they thought about a certain issue before it reached parliament, and plainly said that they wanted to use parliament to reach their end; in their eyes parlia-

53 Sherbrooke (= Robert Lowe), 'The clôture and the Tories', *The Nineteenth Century* 11 (1882) pp. 149-156; esp. 154.

ment was a means, not an end in itself. In fact, at times the newcomers practiced that principle that parliament was a means by using obstruction in order to convince their rank and file that joining parliament was legitimate at all.

The American Practice

In order to further demonstrate that there was a close connection between obstruction and the change of parliamentary politics in Europe it is useful to compare briefly the European and American situations. Already in the nineteenth century, obstruction, or filibustering as it was called in the United States, was not unusual, although it was more of a problem in the House of Representatives than in the Senate. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, when obstruction appeared in European parliaments, it also grew in the American Congress; partly for the same reason as in Europe: because the increasing burden of legislation meant that time was scarce and thus the opportunities for obstruction multiplied. On the other hand, the condition of new and emerging mass political parties was not present, which suggests that, in general, the demands of the executive were perhaps an indispensable precondition for the emergence of the modern type of obstruction.

In the United States severe time limits were introduced in the House, and obstruction disappeared. The Senate maintained rather liberal rules, and when it finally introduced limits to debates, the result was the opposite of what one would expect. The new rules did not abolish obstruction in the Senate, but only regulated it so that eventually one did not even really have to filibuster to get what one wanted, but only had to use the threat of filibustering. This is the reason why a bill in the Senate has for quite some time now for all practical purposes needed a supermajority of three fifths of the members (which is what is needed to vote to end debate) instead of just a simple majority.

The Senate is an upper chamber, like the House of Lords or senates in a number of other countries. Normally these houses are rather quiet, but this is not the case with the American Senate. An important difference is that the Senate is based on a direct vote and on ac-

tive campaigning for a seat. There is thus a close connection between a senator and his constituency. According to recent interpretations, the increase in filibustering around 1900 was due to the rather sudden increase in the size of the Senate which loosened social control and team spirit.[54] Although these reassessments downplay the change in connection with the constituency, closer ties with the constituency after the introduction of direct election in all states in 1913 must also have played their part, at least in the long run. It has always been easier to commit obstruction without strong ties with the fellow representatives, and the urge to obstruct has more often than not been related to strong ties with one's constituency.[55]

Because mass political parties did not emerge in the United States during this particular period, American obstruction was not associated with a crisis of the parliamentary system to the extent that its European counterparts were. It was easier to use obstruction as almost an ordinary instrument of parliamentary politics. The German socialist Bernstein had tried to argue that European parliaments should also use obstruction in this way, but he did not succeed. Nor was the romanticism that prompted a prominent American constitutionalist speak about filibustering as 'physical sacrifice and in essence no whit different from trial by battle, the ordeal, the duel, war itself', ever copied by commentators on the parliamentary establishments in Europe.[56]

Conclusion

Obstruction has been institutionalized in the United States. This confirms Bernstein's argument that it could be a more or less ordinary tool of parliamentary politics. All literature on the subject demonstrates,

54 Wawro & Schickler, *Filibuster*, and Binder & Smith, *Politics or Principle.*

55 Binder & Smith, *Politics or Principle,* 46, say as much by implication about the early Senate which hardly knew obstruction: 'In this environment of low visibility, senators were unlikely to feel public pressure to filibuster measures they opposed. It would also have been difficult to use potential support for their positions to gain concessions from a chamber majority.'

56 Robert Luce (1922), quoted by Koger, *Filibustering*, p. 78.

however, that the instrument should not be idealized; it has almost always been used for party-political and opportunistic reasons. However, this is the nature of parliamentary action in general. In this sense, study of obstruction calls for a new study of the nature of parliamentary debate. What is its purpose, what is the purpose of recounting arguments in a plenary debate when more often than not one will not convince anybody, and also: what is a good *parliamentary* debate as opposed to a good discussion in a debating society? A nuanced answer to these questions would avoid simplicity: the changes at the end of the nineteenth century demonstrated clearly that the assumption that parliamentary debates could or should be akin to the pure playfulness of debating societies was flawed.

Even though contemporaries often interpreted obstruction this way, it was not by itself a sign of the degeneration of the parliamentary system. It was a sign that some functions of parliamentary debates came into conflict with others. Parliamentary debates have to fulfil many functions. They (1) have to come to a timely conclusion because governments need to act, (2) are used to legitimize government action, (3) fulfil the rhetorical function of addressing the audience of voters and party members outside of the parliament and (4) serve the dialectical function of trying to convince the opponents of one's arguments. If we really want to understand parliamentary debates, we have to take into account all of these functions. In the debate about obstruction around 1900, each one played a role. Most critics of obstruction argued that it destroyed function (4), some of them thought that the conclusion should be a strengthening of (1); and the obstructionists themselves took position (3).

It could be argued that parliamentary debate had never been the type of *choc des opinions* the Enlightenment had thought would miraculously lead to the 'truth' because considerations had always dominated the discussion. However, until the end of the nineteenth century, no organized parliamentary party addressed this issue systematically. The obstruction crisis could be interpreted as a sign of a clash between two forms of parliaments' legitimacy: legitimacy by government action and legitimacy by representing the people. Both asserted themselves in a new way at the end of the nineteenth century, the second one by the emergence of

well-organized, disciplined parties within parliaments. These two legitimizing methods conflicted, but at the same time, the combined action of a new type of executive government and the new presence of organized parties set limits on parliamentary debate. These changes both could be interpreted as consequences of growing democracy. In that sense the obstruction crisis demonstrated that the nature of parliamentary debate was changing with the advent of more democracy.

A Renaissance for Random Selection?[1]

Peter Stone

Anthony Barnett and Peter Carty, *The Athenian Option: Radical Reform for the House of Lords*, 2nd edition (Imprint Academic, 2008), 124 pp., £25.00, ISBN 1845401409 (cloth).

Oliver Dowlen, *The Political Potential of Sortition: A Study of the Random Selection of Citizens for Public Office* (Imprint Academic, 2008), viii + 264 pp., £30.00, ISBN 1845401379 (cloth).

Thomas Gataker, *The Nature and Use of Lotteries*, 2nd edition, edited by Conall Boyle (Imprint Academic, 2008), xxiv + 231 pp., £17.95, ISBN 1845401174 (pbk).

Barbara Goodwin, *Justice by Lottery*, 2nd edition (Imprint Academic, 2005), viii + 269 pp., £17.95, ISBN 1845400259 (pbk).

Political decision-making by lot dates back to antiquity. But even in its heyday under the Athenian democracy of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, this practice received little explicit theoretical defense. This intellectual neglect no doubt contributed to the decline of the practice, and for centuries it survived at the edges of political consciousness in institutions like the Anglo-American jury. Over the past forty years, however, the theory of

1 This essay was completed at a writing retreat organized by the Centre of Academic Practice at Trinity College Dublin, February 27-28, 2012. I would like to thank Mindy Peden for helpful comments and suggestions.

decision-making by lot has been explored as never before. This exploration has been matched by experimentation, as reformers incorporate random selection into political processes in new and innovative ways. Witness, for example, the randomly-selected Citizens' Assemblies in British Columbia and Ontario, convened (unsuccessfully) to revise their respective provincial electoral systems. Political lotteries have finally begun to receive the theoretical attention they deserve. The result may prove to be a revival—even a Renaissance—for random selection in the political world.

In 2008, Imprint Academic launched a new series of books that promises to contribute to this revival. The series, entitled "The Luck of the Draw: Sortition and Public Policy" and edited by Barbara Goodwin, promises to explore "the use of randomisation in education, politics and other areas of public policy." The establishment of this series provides a propitious occasion for evaluating the state of play regarding the political theory of random selection. What, if any, political decisions should be made by lot? And why? This essay will examine four of the inaugural titles in the series in order to see what light they shed on these questions.[2]

To say that political lotteries have received little theoretical attention is not to say that the theoretical world has entirely neglected them. The first book to explore the uses to which lotteries could be put appeared in 1619, with a second edition following in 1627. Authored by Puritan theologian Thomas Gataker, *Of the Nature and Use of Lots* created a scandal through its defense of recreational gambling. Out of print for centuries, the book now appears in a new edition edited by Conall Boyle. (Boyle has modernized the title, and much of the text itself.)[3]

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2 The fifth title in the series combines two works under a single cover. The first is a reprinting of Ernest Callenbach and Michael Phillips' *A Citizen Legislature* (first published in 1985), which proposes the selection of the U.S. House of Representatives by lot. The second is entitled *A People's Parliament*. Authored by Imprint Academic publisher Keith Sutherland, this book is a revised and expanded version of Sutherland's *The Party's Over* (published by Imprint Academic in 2004). It perceives in random selection a solution to the partisan abuses of British politics. I contributed an introduction to the new edition of *A Citizen Legislature*; for this reason, I shall not consider the fifth title in the series here.

3 I discuss Boyle's treatment of Gataker in a review of *The Nature and Use of Lotteries*, *History of Political Thought*, volume 34, number 1 (Spring 2013): 172-175.

Gataker distinguishes between three types of lotteries—extraordinary lotteries, serious lotteries, and gambling lotteries (p. 31). An extraordinary lottery is used to appeal for divine guidance, as when Joshua cast lots to determine who had wrongfully retained some of the spoils of Jericho (Joshua 7:11; see p. 161). A gambling lottery, obviously, is used for amusement or recreation. Most of Gataker's book is taken up by his discussion of these two types. Gataker condemns at great length the use of extraordinary lotteries without explicit divine sanction. He also defends, at equally great length, the use of gambling lotteries, at least in moderation. (Despite his Puritanism, Gataker apparently did not consider pleasure to be inherently offensive.) Unfortunately, this means Gataker spends only 44 pages (out of a 202-page book) discussing his third category, serious lotteries—lotteries used for important secular purposes, such as allocating goods or filling public offices.

It is understandable that Gataker would spend so much time on extraordinary and gambling lotteries; his seventeenth-century, militantly Protestant audience was no doubt deeply interested in both God's relationship to the laws of nature and the sinfulness of card games. But most modern readers will readily admit both the legitimacy of tossing dice for small wagers and the illegitimacy of tossing dice to discern God's will. Of Gataker's three types of lotteries, it is the serious lottery that is most relevant to contemporary social affairs, and yet Gataker's discussion of this type is quite brief.

Gataker rests his defense of serious lotteries upon Proverbs 18:18—"The lot causeth contentions to cease and parteth between the mighty" (pp. 62-63; see also p. 82). It is for this reason that Gataker also refers to ordinary lotteries as "divisory" lotteries (p. 31). But there are two problems with this argument. First, if lotteries are effective at resolving contentions—disputes over social resources or political office, for example—it must be because the contending parties regard the lottery as acceptable. But why should they do this? To invoke the lottery's ability to settle disputes is to beg this question.

Second, Gataker effectively asserts that serious lotteries are justified only to the extent that they resolve social conflict. But the resolution of social conflict seems neither necessary nor sufficient for justifying resort to a lottery. At other points in *The Nature and Use of Lotteries*, Gataker acknowledges this fact. At one point, Gataker claims, "It is usual for matters to be put to the lottery by mutual consent, so in this case their own act justly con-

cludes either side" (p. 105). So far, so good; if people consent to a social lottery, then surely social conflict will be avoided. But he also recognizes that while "in private affairs no man is bound to stand by the result of any lottery which he never consented to," the law may certainly enforce some lottery schemes without first obtaining consent (p. 103). And there are times when consent is simply not enough; imagine a person who obtains an even chance of winning a kidney transplant even though he is much healthier than anyone else in the draw. "In some cases," Gataker acknowledges, "It could be a sin for a man to retain something won in a lottery. May a man with good conscience retain a thing which was his brother's by right, which the iniquity of the lottery had, *for quietness sake*, yielded to another" (emphasis added; p. 104)? Quietness may follow from lottery use, but ultimately it is the factors that produce quietness—the factors that justify lottery use—that matter, and not the quietness itself.

Gataker's book occasionally hints at better answer as to what might justify a serious lottery. In one section, for example, he opposes the selection of political officials by lot without regard to fitness. "But," he continues, "where the various competitors are judged equally fit…then however the lottery falls, it cannot alight on an unfit competitor." And if a lottery is used to select between these equally-fit competitors, then "By this means they may all be quieted and someone picked out and pitched upon without disgrace to any of his competitors or discontentment to his friends" (p. 68). To evoke the prevention of discontentment as a reason for using lotteries is once again to beg the question. But to invoke lack of disgrace is to suggest that selection by lot treats the contending parties in a certain way, a way that is more desirable than many alternatives. This treatment involves a kind of equality between the parties involved. This explains why Gataker writes, "Concerning those matters of business where a lottery may lawfully be used the general precaution is that lotteries are only to be used when things are indifference one way or another" (p. 66). If there is no "indifference" involved—if the parties to the lottery are not relevantly equal—then the lottery becomes a means of ascertaining the superior party. And this makes the lottery an extraordinary one; God is being asked to indicate the superior party, and "Expecting any such thing is to presume more than God has promised" (pp. 74-75).

Unfortunately, Gataker never develops these hints further than these passages suggest. As a result, his argument is primarily of historical interest. His defense of the political use of lotteries is at best useful to modern readers as a starting point, albeit one that has been superseded by contemporary work.

Barbara Goodwin's *Justice by Lottery*—first published in 1992 but now revised and expanded—is similar to Gataker's in ambition, though her purview is somewhat more constrained. She devotes little attention to two of Gataker's categories—extraordinary and gambling lotteries—and focuses on serious lotteries. This is precisely the type of lottery most likely to interest the modern reader, and so this limitation makes perfect sense. Goodwin focuses particularly upon allocative lotteries, in which the decision to be made randomly is the allocation of social benefits and burdens. Allocative lotteries represent a method of deciding, in the immortal words of Harold Lasswell, who gets what, when, and how. This is a central—Lasswell thought *the* central—problem of politics, and so Goodwin's project is of great importance.

Goodwin considers the allocation by lot of a vast array of social benefits and burdens—from higher education to work in interesting professions to military service to scarce medical resources to homes in good neighborhoods. These examples are generally interesting in their own right. But Goodwin offers them in the course of a defense of what she calls the "lottery principle," which she defines as "the principle of random selection or allocation" (p. vi).[4] While she never clarifies or elaborates upon this (somewhat sketchy) definition, she does begin the book with a utopian fable about a futuristic society named Aleatoria. This society, which has replaced the United Kingdom, employs a Total Social Lottery (TSL) to allocate virtually all socially significant goods and bads. The motto of this society is "choice for trivial matters, but the lot for weighty ones" (p. 18). I therefore take the lottery principle to state that lotteries are almost always demanded by justice as a method of allocation, at least for goods that cannot be allocated equally to all. This principle places no limits upon the pool of potential recipients. If any good becomes available for distribution, then justice de-

4 The biologist George C. Williams created the term "lottery principle" in 1975 to serve a different purpose. Goodwin's use of the term is completely unrelated to his.

mands that society throw every citizen's name into a hat and then identify the recipient by picking one out.

Stated this baldly, the lottery principle seems absurd. Even if it is appropriate to distribute, say, college admissions by lot, surely it makes sense to screen students first (based upon qualification or the like) when constituting the pool. Goodwin seems to recognize this absurdity, but her response to this recognition varies. Sometimes, she bites the bullet and accepts the more ludicrous consequences of the principle. Aleatoria, for example, employs military conscription in a manner unconstrained by age; its army thus contains "Lotsoldiers" in their 80s whose performance on the battlefield is often disastrous (p. 8). At other times, she embraces the legitimacy of some constraints upon the lottery principle. She admits that only "fanatics" would allocate scarce medical resources by lot, at least with a pool that includes both the sick and the healthy (p. 27). And yet in the end Goodwin seems to regard these concessions as dependent upon considerations exogenous to justice. Justice in its purest form, according to Goodwin, demands absolute equality of distribution. Every member of society should get the same amount of every social benefit and burden. This goal cannot be met whenever a good is both indivisible and scarce—and there will always be many such goods—and so a lottery giving every member of society an equal chance of receiving the good is the next best thing. Any deviation from this extreme egalitarianism—even for purposes such as group survival (p. 176)—requires trading off justice against other values.

Goodwin's defense of this extreme egalitarianism consists of two steps. The first is to defend two principles—the principle of absolute equality of distribution, and the lottery principle—as foundational to justice (ch. 3). The former is appropriate when goods can be divided easily; the latter is suitable for more "lumpy" scarce goods. This foundation establishes a presumption in favor of the two principles. The second is to condemn as unjust any deviation from these two principles that fails to rebut the presumption. And make no mistake—her standard for successful rebuttal is incredibly high. She concedes, for example, that justice might permit those more likely to benefit from medical treatment to receive such treatment in preference to those likely to die despite treatment. But she quickly takes back her concession in the following passage:

> [I]t is perhaps hard to disagree…that a person who is sure to die in a few weeks should not be given a kidney transplant. But "innocent" and self-evident doctrines like this quickly lead us into trouble. What about the sixty-year-old man competing for the kidney with a twenty-year-old biker, who is actuarially likely to die in a road accident or to be maimed for life in the next few years? The cases where people should self-evidently not be treated as of equal worth shade quickly into highly debatable cases where the only just course of action is to treat them of equal worth. So perhaps, for the sake of justice, we…should instead make the stronger claim (pp. 176–177).

In other words, if there is ever any concrete situation in which we might reasonably have trouble distinguishing between people's claims to goods, we ought to draw no distinctions whatsoever, and let absolute equality and the lottery principle reign. If the criminal justice system set the burden of proof this high, our prisons would literally be empty. I have trouble believing justice demands this.

Many of the examples of lottery use Goodwin considers are intriguing and well worth considering. These examples can easily be divorced from her lottery principle. One can believe, for example, not that kidney transplants ought to be allocated by lot, but that they ought to be allocated on the basis of need, with lotteries used to decide whenever need proves indeterminate. Goodwin's book is best read for these thought-provoking examples, and not for her defense of the principle that she believes underlies them. It would be a mistake to allow the implausible extremes of her egalitarianism to overshadow these proposals. A just society may well make extensive use of lotteries even if it never considers adopting the TSL.

Goodwin's lottery principle demands the allocation of all social goods by lot. Political office is one such good, and so Goodwin endorses *sortition*, the random selection of political officials.[5] Oliver Dowlen also endorses this idea, but allocative justice is not central to his thinking. Dowlen's book, *The Political Potential of Sortition*, has "the straightforward aim of identifying what benefits the random selection of political officers could bring to the politi-

5 The terminology employed in the literature varies. Many scholars use "sortition" as a synonym for random selection. Here, however, I shall confine my use of the term to the selection of *political officials* by lot.

cal community" (p. 2). To accomplish this aim, Dowlen identifies the defining feature of a lottery—its "arationality," or ability to make "a decision that is made neither by the human faculty of reason, nor by any other human faculty" (p. 12). He then examines a number of historical examples of sortition— examples from classical Athens, Renaissance Italy, 17th- and 18th-century England and America, and Revolutionary-era France. The purpose of this examination is to distinguish those examples where the arationality of lotteries made a positive contribution from those where this property accomplished little or nothing. In doing so, Dowlen hopes to draw lessons regarding the proper role of sortition in contemporary politics.

Dowlen believes that the historical record of sortition yields one particularly important conclusion. "The most significant and fundamental reason that lot is used in the selection of public officers," he argues, "*is to inhibit the power that any individual or group of individuals might seek to exercise over that process of selection"* (Dowlen's emphasis; p. 221). The arationality that all lotteries possess is ideally suited for this task. For if no human faculty can influence the selection process for a political official, then no political boss or strongman can take control of the political process by installing his minions in key positions. Granted, the lottery also precludes selection on the basis of merit, qualification, or popular approval, qualities considered highly desirable in the leaders of advanced technological societies. The lottery's arationality keeps out both rational and irrational factors. But at times, this tradeoff might well be worthwhile. When it comes to selecting political leaders, one can do better than picking names out of the phonebook, but one can also do much worse.

There is much to be said for Dowlen's case for sortition. The argument should be of particular importance to the cause of civic republicanism. Republicans, after all, have long admired sortition (both Machiavelli and Harrington were big fans), but without producing a clearly articulated defense of the practice. Dowlen has provided such a defense, relying upon assumptions that most civic republicans would readily accept. He presupposes, for example, that free societies are regularly threatened by the corrupt pursuit of personal or factional interest at the expense of the broader body politic. A well-functioning political system guards against this danger by keeping factions under control; once this is done, political office can be left to citizens educated to be impartial servants of the polity. While many of these

ideas are not explicitly spelled out in the book, I doubt that Dowlen would dispute any of them.

Dowlen may make an interesting case for sortition in theory,[6] but his efforts to apply theory to historical practice are at times difficult to follow. He argues, for example, that the relationship between sortition and the democracy of classical Athens has been misunderstood. Sortition was not a "result" of Athens' democratic revolution, he contends, but "a factor that contributed to its development." Its contribution was to help prevent "*stasis* or internal fragmentation" in the newly developing democratic regime (p. 49). So far, so good. But what is the source of this potential fragmentation? To be sure, the average democrat might have feared the rise of a tyrant or oligarchy among the wealthy, and sortition would have been a very effective defense against this possibility. But while Dowlen recognizes this aristocratic threat (p. 51), he goes on to argue that sortition may have served the aristocracy's needs as well. For

> elections by the masses…might have resulted in the removal of loyal aristocrats—good public servants—from office. While lot would have operated against the power and influence of the older ruling caste in the longer term, in the short term it could also have been a means of retaining their participation. It would keep them in the political fold, and guarantee them equality of opportunity in exchange for compliance with the new system (p. 52).

It is unclear to me what aristocrats stood to gain from the use of sortition. True, they might have gotten lucky and gained political office by the luck of the draw, but with tens of thousands of eligible citizens, their prospects would have been pretty remote. It is difficult to believe that their prospects of winning elections would not have been substantially higher, in either the short or long run.

Dowlen further suggests that the lot possessed the ability to "moderate the excesses, or possible excesses, of the democrats themselves" (p. 60). But how could the lot have accomplished this? If some irrational passion were

6 I raise some questions regarding Dowlen's theoretical conclusions in a review of *The Political Potential of Sortition*, *Philosophical Quarterly* 60 (2010): 664-666.

to grip a majority of the *demos*, then that same irrational passion would almost surely grip a majority of any large randomly-selected body. It might be that calm and rational deliberation—deliberation possible in a random subsample of the populace but not in the populace as a whole—could cool down these irrational passions. But then it would not be sortition responsible for curbing irrational excesses, but the reliance upon a smaller decision-making body.[7] And yet Dowlen remains confident that sortition not only stabilized Athens, but contributed to its democracy. The randomly-selected Athenian jury, which enjoyed expanded powers after the restoration of democracy in 403 BCE, "can be understood as a lot-generated body defending democracy *from* the Assembly" (Dowlen's emphasis; p. 54). Dowlen is clearly relying upon some understanding of democracy to make this argument work, but it is an understanding that unfortunately he never articulates clearly.

In the end, Dowlen's study combines both theory and practice. It both lays out an explanation of what lotteries can contribute to political decision-making and examines historical examples of lotteries making, or failing to make, this contribution. The explanation makes a lot of sense, and the historical examples are well worth studying. But there is certainly more to be said about the relationship between the theory and the practice of sortition. Dowlen recognizes that his study is not definitive, and concludes his book by calling for further study of sortition (p. 232). One can echo this call while recognizing Dowlen's substantial contribution to the enterprise.

The last book considered here, Anthony Barnett and Peter Carty's *The Athenian Option*, is the most focused of the books under consideration.[8] Barnett and Carty seek to break no new theoretical ground. Instead, they wish to defend a specific policy proposal involving sortition, a proposal they offer as a solution to one of Britain's most difficult constitutional problems—the reform of the House of Lords. Barnett and Carty would replace

7 Some Athenian offices filled by sortition had more stringent qualifications (such as a higher minimum age) than were needed to vote in the popular assembly. Again, if these offices moderated the excesses of the assembly, it was surely these qualifying factors, and not sortition, that produced this effect.

8 The book originally appeared as a pamphlet published by Demos, a think tank that advocates increased democratic participation. The Imprint Academic edition contains substantial new material.

the Lords with a new upper house composed of Peers in Parliament (PPs). This house would be selected by lot, with stratification employed to ensure proportionality with respect to gender and place of residence (p. 39).[9]

Changes in responsibility for the upper house would accompany the change in selection procedure. The new body of PPs would play no role in drafting legislation; this duty, the authors acknowledge, is best carried on by professional politicians and bureaucrats. Instead, the upper house would be empowered to 1) "reject legislation that undermines the principles of constitutional democracy;" 2) "return non-fiscal legislation that it believes will not achieve the objectives the government claims and to insist that the government reformulates either its aims or its legislation;" and 3) "insist that legislation be drafted in a way that citizens can understand" (p. 37). Such a body would not be intended as a rival to the House of Commons. As Barnett and Carty put it,

> If an upper chamber were given or gained considerable new powers to legislate, or to delay financial legislation, or to prevent the passage of regular legislation, then it could act as a competitor to the House of Commons. Such an outcome is likely to be destructive. The American experience shows how competition between arms of the legislature can result in gridlock that then encourages covert and corrupt practices (p. 29).

Instead, the new upper house would be designed to "*strengthen* an elected House of Commons, to help it propose laws in clear and readable English, that are scrutinised to assess both this and whether they will achieve what they are intended to do" (Barnett and Carty's emphasis; pp. 79-80). The demands of the PPs could save the lower house, both from its own

9 Randomly-selected PPs would serve for four years in the new upper house, during which time they would serve on various legislative committees. Each bill proposed by the House of Commons (which would remain unchanged) would require the selection of a new committee. Alternatively, a new randomly-selected committee could be selected from the entire population for each new bill, thus eliminating any need for an upper house (p. 45). Barnett and Carty are not wedded to either specific institutional formulation. Rather, they call for critically-informed "experimentation" using PPs in order to identify the best working arrangement (p. 38).

mistakes and from the unreasonable demands of the executive.

Barnett and Carty display a keen grasp of the comparative advantages of amateur (randomly-selected) versus professional (elected) decision-making bodies. Their proposal seeks to exploit these comparative advantages so as to produce a new system of checks and balances. This new system is needed because the old system has gone so badly awry. It is hard not to sympathize with what they say. As an American, I am particularly intrigued by the idea of a body of ordinary citizens demanding that the laws of the land be readable. The health care reform bill enacted by the Obama administration is quite tortuously worded at times, laden with bureaucratic jargon and opaque references to other bills. Alternative bills considered at the same time were similarly very difficult to follow. (The ever-marginalized "single-payer" option was a partial exception.) While there is no excuse for the various lies put forth by the Right about "death panels" eager to euthanize grandparents at will, I cannot help but think that such lies would have gained less traction if these bills were easily understood by laypeople.

None of Britain's political parties have taken up Barnett and Carty's call for the "Athenian option." There are no doubt many illegitimate reasons for this lack of interest, not least of which is the interest Labour, the Tories, and even the Liberals share in maintaining the supremacy of party government (which in effect means government by one party's inner circle). But there are also legitimate reasons why this and other pro-lottery proposals remain out of the limelight. These include including modernity's lack of experience with random selection as well as the undeveloped nature of the theory supporting it. But both of these facts, as I noted at the very start, are changing, and the theory and practice of selection by lot are now advancing in tandem like never before. The results thus far have been promising on both fronts. There is no reason to expect this progress to cease any time soon, particularly now that research concerned with lotteries has a natural place to call "home."

TOTALITARIANISM AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: REVISTING A "FORGOTTEN DEBATE"

Olivia Guaraldo

Hannah Arendt was an eclectic thinker, not only by virtue of her complex intellectual biography, but also because she did not refuse to confront her present by engaging in political debates that were not exactly 'academic'. One could even say that in all her political writings - from the analyses of totalitarianism to the critique of Zionism, from the Eichmann reportage to the interventions on American politics (the Vietnam war and the lies of the American government in the infamous case of the *Pentagon Papers,* the students' movement, the civil rights movement, etc.), Arendt was never timid nor 'neutral'. It was she, in fact, who in a conference at the College of Engineers of the University of Michigan in 1968 asserted that the supposedly objective Archimedean Point of scientific thinking was unattainable when analyzing and interpreting the field of the human and the political. Impartial we can be, contends Arendt, but not according to a detached, supposedly 'celestial' perspective (the "Archimedean point") that belies the wordly, terrestrial dimension in which even the researcher, the scholar and the philosopher are born. Our impartiality is always "situated", involved with the human events we try to understand (see Disch 1994, p.128).

As some Arendtian scholars have tried to argue, most of her intellectual production, albeit various, is in a way marked obsessively by

the need to deconstruct the legitimacy of the philosophical, speculative perspective, in favor of a situated, engaged, political one (Benhabib 1990, Disch 1994, Villa 1998, Kristeva 1999, Herzog 2000, 2001). What the tradition of Western philosophy never possessed, she claims in a letter to her mentor Karl Jaspers, was "a clear concept of what constitutes the political, and couldn't have one, because, by necessity, it spoke of man the individual and dealt with the fact of plurality tangentially" (Arendt 1985, p.166). The hostility of philosophy towards politics is, for Arendt, strictly related to philosophy's concern with the universal and politics' constitutive dependency on singularity and plurality. Politics has been, at least since Plato, systematically subdued by philosophy, by its mastering and domineering inclination, together with its constant undervaluation of "the sphere of human affairs". Our tradition is devoid of a theoretical tool able to understand the genuine experience of the *vita activa*. This is perhaps why Arendt often recurs to epic poetry, literature and drama to frame a certain non-philosophical way of understanding politics. Perhaps in a *nostalgia* for the ancient polis – where Sophocles' theatre could tell much more about the polis than Plato's *Republic* - perhaps in search for a language that could help in framing the experience of freedom without translating it into "behavior", Arendt's endeavor can appear unsettling, discomforting, wrong, if the standards are those of scientific academic style and methods. As a matter of fact, she did not want to be considered a philosopher, and preferred instead the title of "political theorist", and moreover her academic title remained, for all her life, that of a Doctor, not a Professor.

Hannah Arendt's legacy – after more than 35 years after her death – comprises a lively set of appropriations of her thought, so lively and multifaceted that the scholarship devoted to her work is by now difficult to map systematically. Yet one of the recurring themes of enquiry, when dealing with Arendt's legacy, has often to do with her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Groundbreaking at the time of its first appearance in 1951, the book has now reached the standard of a 'classic' and is often quoted in encyclopaedias and textbooks as the first comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon that shattered European history in the 20th century.

A recently published book by Peter Baehr, Professor of Social Theo-

ry at the University of Hong Kong - *Hannah Arendt, Totalitarianism and the Social Sciences* - is in fact devoted to re-examine, this time from the viewpoint of her turbulent *Auseinandersetzung* with the social sciences, Arendt's work on totalitarianism (Baehr 2010). Significantly enough, the author sympathizes with Arendt's attitude of refusing the *sine ira et studio* approach of academic scholarship in general and social sciences in particular when engaged in understanding totalitarianism. Rather, Peter Baehr's criticism on Arendt regards her being excessively abstract and conceptual in her formulations: her oversimplification of mass-society through the abstract concept of "the mob", the all too easy similitude between Nazism and Bolshevism, the perentorial statement that totalitarianism is "unprecedented", the rigidity of her category of ideology as "logical consistency", these are only some of the failures that Baehr envisages in Arendt's work. The author examines these failures, so to say, through the lens of Arendt's well-known idiosyncrasy towards what she generally named "the social sciences", which the author attempts to both analytically reconstruct and critically assess.

"Most studies of Arendt are composed by philosophers and political theorists. By disciplinary formation, they tend to share her antagonism to the social sciences, and sociology in particular. My approach is different" (Baehr 2010, p. 4). Baehr, who defines himself "a critical admirer of Arendt", reconstructs the theoretical and political contours of Arendt's vivacious exchanges with three major figures of 20th century sociology: David Riesman, author of *The Lonely Crowd*, "with whom Arendt corresponded in the 1940s about the limits of totalitarianism", Raymond Aron, the famous French thinker who reviewed *The Origins of Totalitarianism* in 1954 for the French journal *Critique* and later elaborated his own notion of what distingushes democracy from totalitarianism, and Jules Monnerot, the French sociologist who was a member, with Georges Bataille and Roger Caillois, of the short-lived Collège de sociologie (1937-39). Monnerot had discussed and polemized with Arendt in the 1950s in the columns of the journal *Confluence*, edited by Henry Kissinger.

Each of these authors entertained in depth critical discussions with Arendt in relation to her views on totalitarianism: Baehr vividly reconstructs them, by referring to both published material and unpublished

one, and the result is a capturing narrative that has the merit of retrieving debates that have been "largely forgotten". Yet the book has also another objective: Arendt considered totalitarianism as "unprecedented", and accordingly affirmed that the social sciences were "intrinsically unable to grasp unprecedented phenomena" (p. 5). Given this premise the book tackles these questions: "what 'unprecedented utterly means' […] How does one recognize things that are utterly strange?" (ib.). This "utterly Arendtian question" is eventually applied by the author to the phenomenon of radical islamism and in the last chapter all the different threads that compose the book are woven into the present, in order to interrogate contemporary jihadist violence and politics. Is there a possible link, asks Baehr, between totalitarianism and radical islamism? To this "utterly Arendtian question" the final chapter tries to give an answer.

2. Arendt, David Riesman and the sociological question

The first intellectual relationship the book examines is that with David Riesman, "with whom Arendt corresponded in the 1940s on the limits of totalitarianism" (ib.). Having developed a specific and documented notion of "mass society", Riesman disagreed with Arendt on the reductive notion she had of it. According to Baehr, she was never interested in the kind of sociology of everyday life that Riesman carried out, and this is why her theory of mass atomization under totalitarianism is not supported by any evidence, and "modern scholarship finds little support for it" (p. 52). Arendt's assessment of mass society under totalitarianism is reductionist, insofar as it creates a general category (that of the mass as an amorphous set of atomized, isolated individuals who had lost all kinds of social and private ties, thereby seeking refuge in totalitarian movement and party) that neglects to account for the complex nature of society and overlooks its multifaceted aspects. Baehr maintains that Arendt was perhaps aware of this situation but "unlike Riesman, she took little interest in it" (ib.). Had she, perhaps her theory would have been different. Yet Arendt did not want to integrate her political analysis with a more sociological one, and in this Baehr perceives "the triumph

of a certain kind of philosophy over sociology" (p. 53). Sociologists like Riesman, instead, were convinced that the reality of mass societies under totalitarian regimes exhibits features that cannot be oversimplified by the category of atomization and isolation. For example, they underlined how through a sociological analysis of society emerged the presence of social networks that had an impact in "mediating, refracting, and impeding the regime's goals" (p. 56). Social processes had, even under totalitarian regimes, a "relative autonomy", and this was precisely the field that Riesman, as early as the 1940s, sought to map out, "as a corrective to the oppressive weight of Arendtian categories [...] Ironically, it was Riesman, the social scientist ostensibly tainted by pseudo-universalistic theory, who was especially sensitive to individual cases and to evidence; and Arendt, supposedly the practitioner of phronesis, who constantly advanced arguments that the material could not bear" (p. 57).

To say that Arendt's *Origins* is a text that ignores reality or oversimplifies it is at least imprecise. First of all because the book is a massive, often contradictory work on many aspects of the totalitarian phenomenon, which, as she tried to recount, was a complex amalgam of elements that eventually crystallized in a novel political form. These elements – imperialism, anti-semitism, racism – are assembled in a narrative form that often recurs to literature to shed new light on how the amalgam came to crystallize (see Disch 1994, pp. 121-125, Benhabib 1990, pp. 184-189). Of the way in which Arendt combined history, politics, literature, anecdotes and facts to assess the complexity – and novelty – of modern racism under imperialism, or modern anti-semitism, Baehr does not say, and it is too bad. He concentrates exclusively on the category of "Totalitarian Regime", its ideology, its actual functioning, neglecting to assess that the parts of Arendt's book dedicated to totalitarianism itself are just the conclusive steps of a tortuos path. In that tortuosity Arendt was for sure imprecise, sometimes contradictory, but not at all "philosophical". Her dismissal of the social sciences in fact has not to do with a refusal to see the complexity of the phenomenon, but on the contrary with the need to forge an understanding of it that would not justify, nor pretend nothing epochal had happened. Her reconstrucion, as a whole, is principled, critical, perhaps biased. It is so because she sought to find ways to judge *politically* the phenomenon: the need to formu-

late a possible political judgment - the judgment which, for example, she accused Adolf Eichmann to be incapable of (Arendt 1963, see also Parvikko 1996, 2008) – on a phenomenon that could not be inserted in the uninterrupted flow of history neither in the *normal* functioning of modern society.

It is surprising that a book that deals with totalitarianism and sociology neglects to take into account one of the most influential works on the matter, namely Zygmunt Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Bauman 1988). In it, the author (a sociologist himself) shows how the rationality which produced gas chambers and implemented genocide is, more or less, the same rationality that is employed in sociology and empirical analysis today (Bauman 1988: 2-3). Therefore, claims Bauman, to understand the history of state genocides means to question the very rationality which is the foundation of the modern state. To understand the history of bureaucratic mass murder also means to criticize bureaucratic rationality. He affirms that no matter how the Holocaust has been interpreted, it has always been inserted within familiar frames of reference, "shunted into the familiar stream of history […] One way or the other, the bomb is defused; no major revision of our social theory is really necessary; our visions of modernity, of its unrevealed yet all-too-present potential, its historical tendency, do not require another hard look, as the methods and concepts accumulated by sociology are fully adequate to handle this challenge – to 'explain it', to 'make sense of it', to understand. The overall result is theoretical complacency" (2-3). Sociology, claims Bauman, pretended that "nothing really happened to justify another critique of the model of modern society that has served so well as the theoretical framework and the pragmatic legitimation of sociological practice" (3). Significantly, Baehr's book reports several sociological pioneering attempts at analyzing totalitarianism and the Shoah – the works of H.G. Adler, Hans Gerth, Theodore Abel and Talcott Parsons among others – and his analyses of those early mainstream sociology works seem to confirm Bauman's position: they were reductive, refused to describe totalitarianism as 'novel', preferred to rely on familiar sociological categories. Bauman's vision of the social sciences is in this case crucial insofar as it formulates, in an explicit methodological frame what, in Arendt's indictment of the social sciences, often remained implicit or poorly expressed. It is a pity that Baehr did not consider it.

3. Arendt and Raymond Aron

Raymond Aron reviewed both *The origins of Totalitarianism* and *Ideology and Terror* (which constitutes Arendt's coda to the book and was added to the 1958 and subsequent editions) and while recognizing the book's importance he criticized its style, which portrayed a "bleak landscape" that reminded Aron of George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Arendt's book seemed to be replete of "hasty, tendentious and factually incorrect" statements (p. 66). Aron also criticized Arendt's *Ideology and Terror* essay harshly: in it she defined ideology and terror as the two elements constituing the "principle and essence" of totalitarian government but did not provide any empirical data for them and thus ended up generalizing excessively the phenomenon, in a philosophical impetus that sociology could not bear. He disagreed on the fact that this combination of violence and ideas was utterly new, since for him, as later expressed in *Démocratie et Totalitarisme* (Aron 1965), both elements were amplifications of revolutionary phenomena. Totalitarianism, in other words, could be understood, claims Aron, as an exacerbation of the revolution, a typical trait of modern politics since the late 18th century. The contrast with Arendt related also to the notion of ideology: for Aron ideology was not, as Arendt maintained, simply the "logic of an idea" that would coherently follow from a given premise. Ideology was for Arendt the triumph of logical consistency, which offered atomized individuals the artificial safe haven of sense in an apparently senseless world. For Aron, instead, ideology had nothing to do with logical consistency but with faith and belief and this is why he coined the term: "secular religion".

Aron was also convinced that the main difference between democratic regimes and totalitarian ones had to do with the role of political parties: for him the most important features of the totalitarian regime – its internal "logic" – could be inferred from the variable of the single party, as opposed to the many parties of democratic pluralist systems. His distinctions are typical of the political scientist, or the political sociologist, and very distant from Arendt's talentuous narrative. Baehr, in this respect, seems to be much more sympathetic with Arendt's work than with Aron's: he maintains that Aron's detached analysis of totalitarianism as determined by the "chief variable" of the political party

"leaves us enlightened but dissatisfied" since it "falls short of explaining the grotesque texture of the totalitarian world" (p. 87). "No theorist has better captured that nightmare quality, or registered the extent of totalitarianism's rupture with quotidian standards of judgement and even quotidian crimes than Hannah Arendt" (p. 88). In spite of the fact that perhaps Arendt and Aron sought different aims in their analyses of totalitarianism, a sentence like this is far more just to Arendt's work than the critiques Baehr moved to her in earlier parts of the book, when he pictured Arendt's theory as "advancing arguments that the material could not bear"(p. 56).

The reader finds it hard, at this point, to grasp or summarize the author's perspective on Arendt's work: critical and sympathetic at once, Baehr's book dwells among the theoretical and ethical dilemmas that have haunted interpreters of totalitarianism for many years, without solving any of them. Yet this lack of onesidedness, the undecidability Baehr himself displays in his book, is testimony of the fact that those dilemmas are, to some extent, unsolvable, even by the social sciences' dissecting analytical tools.

4. Arendt and Jules Monnerot

French Sociologist Jules Monnerot was convinced that the notion of "secular religion" was useful in higlighting certain features of totalitarianism. Baehr describes his positions as follows: "[totalitarian movements] were gripped by sectarian apocalyptic fervor that, in a highly distorted fashion, was reminiscent of medieval millenarism, the warrior culture of Islam, and the zeal of the Protestant Reformation. On the other hand, totalitarian movements aimed not at supernatural transcendence but at immanent redemption. Hannah Arendt recognized these properties. But she was highly averse to decribing them in the language of religion or confusing so-called secular religion with ideology" (p. 94).

Monnerot was convinced that, in order to understand modern society, sociology had to recover a sense of "the sacred" and study "all manifestations of social existence where the active presence of the sacred is

clear" (p. 95). In his *Sociology and Psychology of Communism* he claimed that totalitarian believers were "victims of collective passion…sustained by frequent communion, inflamed by periodic rites, such as meetings, processions and demonstrations, and fed each morning by newspaper and radio" (Monnerot [1949]1960, p. 135, quoted by Baehr, p. 95). In such religious dimension lurks an element of delusion, characterized as it is by "exclusiveness and monomania" (Monnerot [1949]1960, p. 142, quoted by Baehr, p. 96).

To a reader familiar with Arendt's texts this analysis would not appear strange: the language is perhaps different, but the quality of the message convoyed essentially in line with Arendt's depiction of totalitarian movement and ideology. Yet Baehr maintains that "this sort of psychological framework was anathema to Arendt" (ib.). In spite of an apparent "confluence" of the two authors on the perverse nature of totalitarianism, Arendt and Monnerot disagreed fiercely exactly on the use of the term "religion" applied to totalitarian ideology. Arendt, in her essay *Religion and Politics* quotes in a footnote Monnerot's book as a typical social science work that applies the disorienting method of reading totalitarian ideology as a "secular religion" (Arendt [1953] 1994, p. 388, n. 22).

Baehr reconstructs the exchange of opinions between Arendt and Monnerot that eventually occurred in the journal *Confluence* and conclusively affirms: "One can delineate the singularity of both ideology and religion while acknowledging that, under certain conditions, they may be hybridized. Significantly, Arendt seems to have recognized this point without, however, clarifying it or developing its implications" (p. 115). Baehr in fact maintains that in *Origins* Arendt referred to totalitarian propaganda and its style as religious in tones and modes, since it announced "political intentions in the form of prophecy"; or again, she referred to Nazi and Bolshevik rituals as "idolatric" (Arendt 1951, p. 349 and p. 377, quoted by Baehr, p. 115). The most strinking contradiction, according to Baehr, in Arendt's critique of the concept of secular religion is given by the fact that she referred to concentration camps and their different levels of annihilation by recurring to the medieval notions of Hades, Purgatory and Hell (p. 116). Basically Arendt used many religious expressions when referring to totalitarianism in its

many aspects, but refused, Baehr maintains, to substantiate it, to explicitate her method.

Needless to say, this opacity in Arendt's methods, her very free and inventive use of language are hardly acceptable according to the social science standards of international academia. The use of metaphors or other figures of speech in order to describe the unimaginable phenomenon of the extermination camps was, for Arendt, probably the only 'methodology' she could envisage in her pioneering work on them. Yet the question is more complex, and it would deserve more space than a book review can allow. For sure Arendt's language is full of religious elements: after all it was she who dared to call totalitarianism a "radical evil". Is there a more religious expression than that? It was she, though, who after several years modified her hypothesis and re-described evil as "banal": Arendt did not renounce to use the religious-moral word "evil" in order to describe what she discovered was another aspect of totalitarianism. This perhaps means that she relied on the strong rhetorical impact of religious language in order to describe what secular knowledge (be it juridical, sociological, psychological or politological) failed to grasp in its horrible, unprecedented novelty. Yet Arendt contested to Monnerot the systematic, methodological use of the notion of "secular religion" in order ot understand communist totalitarianism, since she believed that religion was something much more complex than simply a functional category for understanding social behavior. There could be, in other words, no "confluence" between a social theorist who expected society – any society – to become transparent to the eye of the researcher and a political thinker who sought to deconstruct the idea that society had its own mechanistic functioning and that men were simply parts of the mechanism itself. The social science language and methods strongly contrasted with Arendt's *Bildung* – one in which the language of philosophy, literature, religion and ancient culture were strictly interwoven to each other and constituted a very rich background from which to draw in order to build paths of interpretation. In the essay *Religion and Politics* Arendt in fact refers amply to Homer, Plato, Tertullian, Dante, medieval religious mentality and its difference with modern religion under secularization, in order to question the use of the term "secular religion" to interpret totalitarian ideology. Her

insights in the problem bring together historical, philosophical, etymological elements in order to contest an oversimplification in the use of the "religious" by the social sciences.

Baehr, following Monnerot, maintains that the concept of "secular religion" is very interesting for a sociologist, since it "alerts us on the hybrid character of its subject matter", namely the fact that social phenomena retain an element of "sacred" that especially under totalitarian regimes expressed themselves vividly through rituals, symbols, beliefs and organization (p. 122). In fact these devices played a crucial role under totalitarianism, since they managed to "enthuse a mass constituency" and Arendt herself did not deny it at all, recongizing and discussing at length, as mentioned above, totalitarian propaganda. Yet in her essay on religion and politics there is, apart form the critique she moves to Monnerot and the social sciences, a crucial political reason why she did not like to abuse of the word 'religion' when speaking of communism as opposed to the free world[1]. Her fear was that by interpreting the contraposition in religious terms not only one denied the specifically doubtful nature of modern religion after secularization (an aspect she very well explains in her essay by recurring to Pascal, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche), not only evaded the true novelty of totalitarian ideology (its being a "scientific" rather than religious ideology), but mostly it risked transforming "our fight against totalitarianism into a fanaticism that is totally extraneous to the essence of liberty" (Arendt [1953]1994, p. 390). This Arendtian sentence is revealing also today, and it tells a lot of those attempts – in which Baehr himself embarks, in the conclusive chapter of his book – to read the contemporary contraposition between the West and Islamist ideology in terms of religion[2]. It should finally be left to the reader to find out for herself if and to which extent Peter Baehr's interesting and challenging book succeeds, in his closing remarks, to offer a satisfactory reading of the contemporary issue of the nature of Jihadist violence and politics, its relationship with possible totalitarian elements, the political response the West should give to it.

1 Arendt's essay *Religion and Politics* was the result of a paper she gave at a Harvard Conference entitled "Is the Struggle Between the Free World and Communism Basically Religious?".

2 For an insightful reading of Arendt's notion of totalitarian terror and its impossible application to contemporary Islamic terrorism, see D. Villa 2008.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH MICHAEL OAKESHOTT – AN INTERLUDE TO OAKESHOTT SCHOLARSHIP

Suvi Soininen

A Companion to Michael Oakeshott (2012). Edited by Paul Franco and Leslie Marsh, The Pennsylvania University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania.

Research into Oakeshott's work really began in earnest soon after his death in the early 1990s. This sudden blossoming of studies, and those published since, have made him both a comparatively famous, as well as controversial, figure of twentieth century conservative political thought. These studies have also put a multifaceted perspective on the many different aspects of his thoughts. In addition to containing work that focuses on his major books (*Experience and its Modes*, 1933; *On Human Conduct*, 1975; and *On History*, 1983) the LSE archives also include letters and other manuscripts which continue to offer valuable material not only for research and posthumous publication, but also a wider audience today. Oakeshott's essays, polemical texts, book reviews, lectures and even radio talks have begun to command growing attention. In this respect, evaluations and interpretations of Oakeshott's overall work have to take into account his views on so many subjects (for example, art, education, history, morality, philosophy, politics and religion), that it becomes no easy task to argue the case for any one plausible perspective over another. *A Companion to Michael Oakeshott* nonetheless sees this variety instead as a positive case for introducing the results of research accomplished thus far, as these results provide the correct starting point for advancing any discussion in the field.

The editors emphasize from the start that *A Companion* is not just a book concerning Oakeshott's political thought, but also his views of "various forms of human experience". These views are covered in part I of the book, while part II is devoted to his reflections on politics and political philosophy (Franco & Marsh 2012, 6). In addition to the variety of themes, there is also a good mix of authors in the book - "some of them long-established authorities, others promising young researchers" (ibid, 1). This suggests there are a number of new contributions to the field which now fall into the 'must-read' category, and this works on a number of levels. *A Companion* gives a good example of how researchers with a variety of leanings, and who entertain very different kinds of methodological and theoretical approaches, fit well together between covers of the same book. The reader is given the impression, not that this is a miscellaneous collection of essays, but instead a proper conversation between authors about Oakeshott's work, as well as their own essays and earlier research concerning it. For the most part, the book is exceptionally elegant in style throughout, perhaps due to the fact that the editing process has been in the careful and capable hands of two prominent figures in this field. Paul Franco is the author of a groundbreaking piece of work called *The Political Philosophy of Michael Oakeshott* (1990); while Leslie Marsh is the founder of the Michael Oakeshott Association.

It is obvious that no single book or collection of essays could ever hope to do full justice to the entire range of Oakeshott research that exists, and nor is it the intention in this collection. For instance, instead of focusing on the commonly held disputes over Oakeshott's claimed conservatism and/or liberalism, the book leaves those in the background, and concentrates instead on other interpretational 'battles', such as those concerning the philosophical coherence of his oeuvre, or the importance and originality of his views on, for example, art, history, and religion. When it comes to the more political part II of the book, the majority of essays concentrate on specific aspects of a topic, such as Oakeshott's conception of law, rather than make sweeping statements about his political leanings, let alone political influence. This kind of editorial policy seems eminently reasonable when one takes into account that there are already a number of profiled, book-length in-

terpretations and collections concerning Oakeshott's political thought. But it also means that this book is best suited for readers already acquainted with primary and secondary sources in the Oakeshott literature, as only then can the reader effectively make use of the views in the book, by comparing them with their own informed opinions. This applies in particular to some of the arguments here which advocate a certain preference towards Oakeshott's 'unwavering' idealism. In my view this preference is over emphasized, and thus somewhat simplifies the nature of his thoughts, as actually there seems to be some tension between the 'detached' Oakeshott in part I - who appears to be more interested in the aesthetic, philosophical and religious aspects of life - and the more 'worldly' Oakeshott in the latter part of the book - engaged in the more practical levels of human experience. However, the collection does not try to gloss over the controversies that exist, but instead offers us valuable insights regarding Oakeshottian research and some of his own thoughts. Perhaps it is therefore best read in conjunction with other collections such as *The Cambridge Companion to Oakeshott* edited by Efraim Podoksik (2012).

The anthology under review here, however, starts with a biographical piece immediately preceding part I itself. This is written by Robert Grant, author of an early, almost canonical biography of Oakeshott. While his book (*Oakeshott*, 1990) focuses more on the 'public' figure and his work, the essay featured here ("The Pursuit of Intimacy, or Rationalism in Love") instead concentrates on Oakeshott's love life, which was rumored to have been complicated and quite possibly also scandalous. This could be one of the texts that create the most strongly divided opinions among readers. In John Kekes' opinion, Grant's contribution is simply an unreliable glance at Oakeshott's sex life and thus it has no justified place in the book (Kekes 2013). In answer to this critique, Grant says that Oakeshott's love life "resembled the abstract utopian 'rationalism' which he so powerfully criticized in politics" and thus there would be some justification for considering the contrast between his private and public life, or at least the practice and thought in his life (Grant 2013). For me, Grant's contribution came first as a slight shock, even if I do not altogether agree with Kekes' harsh condemnation of it. It appears that Grant has had a chance to shed some more light on some in-

teresting points in Oakeshott's unconventional personality, and to correct a few mistakes that he perhaps felt he had made in his earlier book on the man. The latter was based mainly on only one interview with Oakeshott in 1987. It is also true that it is difficult to avoid retrospection with regard to public figures and to avoid making speculations (nowadays online) with regard to their character and personal life. We learn for example that Oakeshott was married three times and entertained an interest in astrology (Grant 2012, 36). This account should be compared with the chronology presented in Podoksik (2012, xvi-xvii). Grant nevertheless makes the case that no matter how much Oakeshott's life may have been at odds with his work, it "doesn't invalidate the work at all" (2012, 38). Still, the essay occasionally contains a certain judgemental tone that does not, in my view, do justice to Oakeshott's work itself. For example, Grant finds it surprising that Oakeshott "ever got any work done" since he seems to have taken love as the centre of his life (ibid, 26). Grant also suggests that perhaps Oakeshott's work functioned as a "necessary anodyne" in such a context, but this would seem implausible considering the division that Oakeshott placed on "work" and "play", and on how he believed universities in general had no (direct) place in the world of utility (ibid**)**.

Part I of the book (or "The Conversation of Mankind") actually begins, after Grant's opening text, with David Boucher's elaboration on what he calls Oakeshott's "indebtedness to philosophical idealism" (Boucher 2012, 47). Boucher intends to place Oakeshott's philosophy in the broad context of British idealism, and sees F.H. Bradley as one of his main influences. Boucher also claims (referring to, for example, W.H. Greenleaf) that Oakeshott never completely abandoned his early absolute idealism, but instead made only slight changes to his vocabulary, which therefore merely nuanced his philosophy (ibid, 48). The significance of Boucher's essay, is to place Oakeshott both within the earlier tradition of idealism, as well as from today's perspective: "Oakeshott's adoption of idealism was not in itself as radical or brave a move as may appear from the present vantage point" (ibid, 66). Although I cannot wholly agree with Boucher's claim that Oakeshott consistently adhered to his philosophical ideals of unity or monism throughout a long career, it is nonetheless clear that Boucher defends his view in a well-informed

and elegant manner. Thus, even if one belongs to the 'party' which argues that there were in fact major changes in Oakeshott's thought over time, one is nevertheless forced to accept the existence of this background idealism, for without this knowledge, Oakeshott's philosophy would doubtlessly appear piecemeal and incomplete.

Kenneth McIntyre agrees with Boucher that changes in Oakeshottian terminology do not directly affect the basic tenets of his philosophy, or views regarding the modes of human experience[1]. McIntyre has thus chosen to investigate Oakeshott's work chronologically, to be able to draw attention to any continuities and discontinuities that might exist (McIntyre 2012, 71). In addition to Oakeshott's idealism, McIntyre also mentions the similarities between Oakeshott, and for example, Austin, Polanyi and Gadamer. Compared with Boucher's analysis, McIntyre's seems somewhat shallower, but I agree with him that Oakeshott can more feasibly be thought of as a philosophical pluralist than monist. Yet, as is the case with other writers in this volume, McIntyre knows his subject profoundly[2], and by choosing to introduce Oakeshott via his three most important works - *Experience and Its Modes* (1933), "The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind" (1959), and *On Human Conduct* (1975) - he also provides an essential introduction for the less-informed reader. But in the final analysis, I cannot agree with McIntyre's main claim that Oakeshott remained committed foremost to the independence of various forms or modes of human experience such as art, practice and science. I concur that Oakeshott defended these forms "against reductionism of any sort", but he also inferred that these forms or "voices" can benefit and learn from each other in a conversational mode (see e.g. Soininen 2005b, 229-30).

In "Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of History" Geoffrey Thomas delivers more of a critique of the man's work than the previous two authors. From the beginning, with regard to his writings on history, he calls Oakeshott a "polemicist" and a "prince of skeptics" (Thomas

1 Unlike Boucher, McIntyre and other writers supporting the 'consistency thesis' of Oakeshott's philosophy emphasize elements of a sceptical, rather than absolute, form of idealism.

2 McIntyre's endnotes are worth a specific attention as they contain much additional information about both his interpretation of Oakeshott, and Oakeshottian discussions in general.

2012, 95). But in a more positive light, he characterizes Oakeshottian history as a form of constructionism in which the "nonreality of the past" can only be constructed in the "reality" of the present (ibid). Ultimately for Thomas, Oakeshott's concepts of history and the role of historians stem from his idealist views, which were presented in their fullest form in 1933. In Thomas's view however, this epistemology is unsatisfactory as a coda for historical research, if the only thing required from a proper historian is to follow certain professional standards in the process of (re)constructing and interpreting the relics of the past (ibid, 116-7). Thomas touches on a number of important points concerning Oakeshott's concept of historical knowledge, but unfortunately his critique falls short in some cases. For example, his coverage of Oakeshott's arguments against the existence of teleological processes and causality in history are all too short and superficial to work as a proper critical treatment of the topic. Nevertheless, within a limited space, Thomas does succeed in raising awareness of the topic itself as well as his own historico-philosophical thoughts on the matter.

Timothy Fuller's thoughtful essay deals with Oakeshott's views on the contingency and radical temporality of human life and the implications these have on the modern moral imagination. Fuller reminds us how *Fortuna* lurks behind every rational plan; this being one of the basic tenets for Oakeshott's critique of rationalism and especially rationalist politics (Fuller, 2012, 125). The desire for ever-lasting peace and ever-increasing prosperity are mentioned as "two great moral aspirations of modernity" which have legacies that go back to Hobbes and Kant (ibid, 128). In a tone reminiscent of Oakeshott himself, Fuller asks if belief in the market economy, science and technology brings about material advancement but spiritual decline at the same time (ibid, 130). In Fuller's view, Oakeshott suggests an alternative means to find respite from the "terrors of the radical temporality of the human condition" by being open to the "voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind" (ibid, 132-3). The non-utilitarian moments of imagination offer momentary releases from the endless "modern project to perfect ourselves in the realm of perpetual peace and infinite prosperity" (ibid, 133). Fuller alludes to how these poetic experiences, images and moments also foster richness in human culture and heritage. Although Fuller does not

actually go this far, the essay could draw the conclusion that friendship (and love), as a form of dramatic, conversational relationship, effectively expands the horizon of our moral imagination beyond the simple pursuit of benefits.

Elizabeth Corey's examination of Oakeshott's religious sensibilities complements Fuller's reflections on human mortality and the poetic imagination. Corey notes that Oakeshott returned to what he called a "poetic" or "religious" way of orienting oneself in the world at various times from his youth onward (Corey 2012, 135). But her more controversial idea is to propose that Oakeshott's practical essays, which always seem to aim at "placing some limits on our hopes and ambitions (especially in politics), can be understood as written in the service of a religious or poetic ideal" (ibid). Oakeshott would thus have placed poetic/religious experience as a kind of counterbalance to the never-ending quest for achievement that human life presents on the practical level. Interestingly, Corey notes that Oakeshott has also called this concept of achievement the "diabolic element of human life" (ibid, 138-9, the quotation appearing first in Tregenza 2003, 147). Oakeshott's early religious writings can be found in the anthology *Religion, Politics and Moral Life* (1993), and it is here that he develops his "existential" view of Christianity and religion, as an orientation towards the present (ibid, 140). Referring to this nowadays popular concept, Corey speaks of "mindfulness" in life, instead of constant anxiety about the future (ibid). According to her interpretation, Oakeshott sees religious experience as something close to a poetic experience - a kind of temporary respite from the practical demands of everyday life. And indeed, Oakeshott's *On Human Conduct* (hereafter *OHC*) does contain descriptions of religious experience in terms of art and poetry: "the fugitive adventures of human conduct [are] graced with an intimation of immortality [...] the deadliness of doing overcome, and the transitory sweetness of a mortal affection, the tumult of a grief and the passing beauty of a May morning recognized neither as merely evanescent adventures nor as emblems of better things to come, but as *aventures,* themselves *encounters* with eternity" (ibid,146; originally in *OHC*, 85). Corey's take on Oakeshott's religious sensibilities is appealing and, I think, quite accurate. Corey does not seek a definite answer to the question as to whether Oakeshott was

Christian or agnostic, but rather draws attention to his opposition to any kind of "rationalism in religion" that might approach it merely as a set of rules (ibid, 140). And yet she also distinguishes Oakeshott from the "great debates over reason and revelation that engaged Strauss and Voegelin" (ibid, 148). Finally, she also tones down her earlier emphasis on the importance of these moments of poetic/religious relief, when compared to practical matters and the bigger picture. To me this seems justified, especially when we consider Oakeshott's production in its entirety: "and yet sometimes those most carefully attuned to the practical are the ones who also recognize the virtue of an entirely different sort of experience, whether that experience manifests itself as philosophy or poetry" (ibid, 149). Oakeshott was not an escapist, but rather he cherished variety in human experience and understanding. To this end, practical "now-existence" is not just a "necessary evil", but also a necessary condition (ibid).[3]

Corey Abel's contribution, concerning Oakeshott's views on aesthetic experience, carries on thematically from the two preceding essays. Abel clarifies in particular the specific nature of poetic images and the poetic voice as being "non-symbolic" and "not pointing to anything else", thereby attaining a fictitious reality of their own (Abel 2012, 156). Most importantly, poetry or aesthetic experience in general has no place in it for any of the concepts of utility. Means and ends are irrelevant - it should be enough that a "poetic image delights" (ibid, 157). Nevertheless, Oakeshott's examples of art are pointedly traditional and representational, with "characters, actions, events: Figaro, Romeo and Juliet, King David" (ibid). To explain this seemingly puzzling relationship between a non-realist epistemology, and representational examples of art, Abel emphasizes the different kind of aesthetic experience that exists. For example, poetry is ultimately not divorced from 'real life', and yet (to take another example) realistic sculptures are not imitations of real life characters (ibid, 157-8). This concept of art and aesthetics must leave room for 'playfulness' and has no place in it for "moralizing", but fiction is as "real as any of the other modal dreams that compose the collective dream we call civilization" and art is not to be judged by the

3 Corey refers also here to Tregenza instead of the original text by Oakeshott which would have been a more reader-friendly solution.

criteria of other modes (ibid, 166-7). Abel's examination is profound and insightful, although I cannot altogether agree that Oakeshott's view of art and the poetic voice continues "the profound skepticism implicit in Oakeshott's modal idealism" in a wholly unproblematic way (ibid)[4]. Abel notes a certain similarity in the views posed in "The Voice of Poetry" (1959) and "Work and Play" (c.1960?) in which for example art and education are seen as leisurely activities as opposed to "work" (compare this with Grant's view). He also admits that Oakeshott connects ancient Greek politics with "poetic" activity, but not with more modern political activity (ibid, 169). Along with Corey, Abel sees religion in terms of "the culmination of practice", as a "place of poetic irruption in the worklike realm of practice" (ibid, 70). He also says that "religion, politics (in one of its modes), love, friendship, childhood" all include "playful and non-instrumental aspects of practical life", adding that what they have in common, is that they are "disinterested inquiries that pursue knowledge in their own way and for its own sake" (ibid). Abel neglects to mention, however, the cases alluded to in "The Voice of Poetry" and realized later in *OHC* where, for example, the conversational meeting point of *all* voices enables real interaction between different human activities; practice, poetry. Moreover, this can be done in less reductionist terms, without necessarily describing the relationship in terms of utility (see Soininen 2005b).

Paul Franco regards the difficulties facing Oakeshott's philosophy of education as representative of the difficulties that "run through his philosophy as a whole". These amount to "formalism, conceptual compartmentalization, and rigid separation of theory and practice" (Franco 2012, 173). Franco then examines Oakeshott's philosophy of education in more detail by moving chronologically through its development, suggesting only that "there are subtle differences" between the texts and their emphases from the late 1940s to the mid-1970s. In other words he claims that Oakeshott's ideas on education did not undergo any particulary radical changes over that period (ibid, 174). Franco begins with a lengthy examination of the essay "The Universities" (1949), which is for the most part a riposte to Sir Walter Moberly's *The Crisis in the University* (1949). The discussion is nuanced and accurate, but here the most

4 Note the difference with Boucher's view, however.

important conclusion made by Franco is that Oakeshott's image of the university as a "conversation" among many different specialized studies contains many echoes of Newman's famous evocation of the university in the nineteenth century" (ibid, 178). While admitting this view is appealing, Franco also points out the elitism and outdatedness that is nonetheless inherent in it, referring as it does to a "leisured class". If this weakness is already apparent in that context, then it is perhaps more so in the present day (ibid, 181). Franco makes it quite clear that the Oakeshottian concept of education is "directed" first and foremost against the overwhelming ethic of productivity. He illustrates this with some advice that Oakeshott was quoted to have said in an undated speech to undergraduates upon their arrival at university - namely, to forget the propaganda that would urge them "to learn how to be a more efficient cog in the social machine" (ibid, 187). I sympathize with Franco's nuanced elaboration on Oakeshott's concept of education, but I disagree with his final analysis that, because Oakeshott is determined "to avoid utilitarianism and instrumentalism", he prevents education having "any sort of moral or practical or societal effect" (ibid, 192). It is true that Oakeshott's concept of "university" is somewhat old-fashioned and perhaps does not adequately address the issues in today's higher education (ibid, 173). Still, his strong arguments against education as a form of "socialization", because it is part of the bigger problematic process of normalization, can be seen as a practical statement' which suggests that learning to "go with the current" should simply be an option, rather than a requirement (ibid, 191).

Part II of the book, entitled "Political Philosophy", starts with Martyn Thompson's interpretation of Oakeshott's views on "the history of political thought". He does this by comparing them to Quentin Skinner's "theory and practice" (Thompson 2012, 198). Thompson argues that "ideal types, for Oakeshott, were the analytic tools of philosophers, not historians" (ibid). He also re-emphasizes the point made by Geoffrey Thomas earlier in this book, that the historical past is constructed by the historian of political thought (ibid, 201). Thompson then makes a comparison between Oakeshott's and Skinner's famous interpretations of Hobbes to clarify their differences. Whereas Skinner is seen as being "Laslettian", in that he considers *Leviathan* as a "partisan politi-

cal tract, albeit a large and ambitious one"; the Oakeshottian view of Hobbes, according to Thompson, would present him more as a great philosopher who is not primarily bound up with the contingencies of time (ibid, p.208). Thompson also discusses Oakeshott's critical remarks (1980) regarding Skinner's *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (1978) and adds that Skinner's response to these (both at the time and more recently) misrepresents Oakeshott's position in a somewhat revealing way. "Skinner read into Oakeshott's criticism much of the unhistorical or antihistorical baggage that marred the theory and practice of the history of political thought at the time he and John Pocock began revolutionizing the field in the 1960s" (ibid, 213). Suffice to say, without going too far into the details of this interpretation, Thompson would appear to be on the right track. Namely, Oakeshott actually made a distinction between ideology and philosophy by referring to whether the writer has a political or philosophical perspective foremost in his mind. The text never totally "escapes" the contingency and the "predicament" of time, but it can at least be intended to be read foremost as a philosophical treatise, a platform for thinking on a constant journey (to use Oakeshott's terminology from the 1970s), or as an aspiration towards unconditional thinking in a conditional world. In a way, Oakeshott's thought is therefore closer to Skinner's views on (the philosophy of) history than is perhaps usually thought.

The essay after this, by Noel Malcolm, proceeds in a similar thematic direction, but with a more extensive evaluation of Oakeshott's interpretation of Hobbes. Malcolm combines a close analysis of those texts by Oakeshott, which have Hobbes as their main topic from 1935 right up to the 1975 version of his "Introduction to *Leviathan*". The latter contained significant conceptual differences when compared to the original version from 1946 (see also Gerencser 2000; Soininen 2005a). The main point of Malcolm's essay is however, to show a disparity between Oakeshott's interpretation of Hobbes as "non-teleological and anti-teleological in his entire pattern of thought", and his perhaps wilful oversight of the very rationalist features in Hobbes's philosophy (Malcolm 2012, 223). In particular, the 1975 revised version of the "Introduction to *Leviathan*" presents far more of an Oakeshottian view of Hobbes than what had been generally accepted up to that point. Malcolm adds that

"Hobbes's whole cast of mind was much closer to that of the rationalist - as portrayed in Oakeshott's essay on 'Rationalism in Politics' - than Oakeshott seems to have been willing to admit" (ibid, 230). Malcolm's interpretation is plausible, but there is not much that is novel in it. Examining the relationship between instrumentality and non-instrumentality in Hobbes's concept of state has been done before, especially with regard to the notions of peace, authority, and the transfer of rights when founding a state (ibid, 227-30; compare with, e.g., Gerencser 2000).

"The Fate of Rationalism in Oakeshott's thought" by Kenneth Minogue finds its kindred spirit in Fuller's earlier essay concerning the radical temporality of human life. Like Fuller, Minogue emphasizes the notion of contingency, and examines it in Oakeshott's work, whilst simultaneously using Oakeshott as a platform for his own thinking. In particular, Minogue relies on Oakeshott's separation between the "politics of faith" and the "politics of skepticism". Whereas the faith position seeks "salvation" from the contingencies of life, in the form of rationalist planning and the concept of teleological progress; the sceptical one bases itself on rules, in terms of politics, style of government and the state (as a form of association). Minogue accordingly ponders why Oakeshott chose not to publish *The Politics of Faith and the Politics of Scepticism* (1996) in his lifetime, and ends up with the credible conclusion that Oakeshott possibly found this dichotomy between faith and scepticism too simple (Minogue 2012, 243 & 246). Political life (and most political thought) is unavoidably ambiguous, but the poles between which it oscillates can be described in several other terms. Minogue's own conclusions on the modern condition seem to be faithful to those of Oakeshott's, and I cannot but agree with the view that we, at least in Western countries, perhaps find ourselves in a "rather paradoxical situation, in which for all our valuing of freedom, increasing numbers of Western people come to be subject to forms of supposedly enlightened despotism" (ibid, 241). Oakeshott's concern for the ever-increasing emphasis on "socialization" in child care, education and elsewhere also seems topical (ibid, 243).

In this collection, Leslie Marsh's presents a genuinely fresh stance on Oakeshott's philosophy, albeit one he himself has held for a while (e.g., Marsh 2005). He compares Oakeshott with another critic of rationalism,

Friedrich Hayek, in terms of their views on cognitive science and the "philosophy of mind" (Marsh 2012, 248). Marsh draws attention to the concept of a "situated mind" and to constructionism in both theorists (ibid, 249). His essay ends up with a qualified defense of both theorist's "libertarianism" and, although I would not use that particular terminology, I must admit that his argumentation is appealing. Marsh points out the irony that is inherent, for both Hayek and Oakeshott, in the concept of tradition "as advanced cognition" (ibid, 251). In other words, what we call a "free market", for example, contains knowledge suspended in "traditions and practices" (Oakeshott) and "within a network as spontaneous or complex adaptive orders" (ibid, 251). But Marsh also seems to suggest that we should have a certain trust of the market since "individualism", and liberty in its truest sense, are based on humility and the constraint inherent in the very cognitive nature of the human condition (ibid, 262-3). With regard to Oakeshott's political philosophy and view of human intelligence and history however, Marsh's view seems to lean perhaps too much on Oakeshott's "libertarian texts" which are few in number and date mainly from the 1940s. Yet the comparison between Hayek and Oakeshott is creative, in a positive sense, and it contains seeds for a fruitful, new examination of Oakeshott's *oeuvre* in particular. Perhaps Marsh's perspective would allow Oakeshott's *critiques* of socialization, and the very concept of "social" to be combined, for example, also with his critique of "capitalism", but this is not explicit and the reader is left wanting Marsh to elaborate further.

Robert Devigne's text on Oakeshott's conservatism demonstrates an altogether more conventional kind of interpretation; however it defends its place in the book by warning the reader from associating Oakeshott too closely with Burke or Burkean conservatism. Devigne believes that "Oakeshott's political philosophy moves in a decidedly more liberal direction" (though not "libertarian"), when we compare his earlier views in the 1940s with those of the 1970s (Devigne 2012, 273). Additionally, while "is" generally means "ought" to Burke, for Oakeshottian political philosophy the "is" should not be defined in terms of either good or bad (ibid, 272). And yet it is also clear that Oakeshott's conservatism "centers on the realization that in modern European history the "is" approximates the "ought" and this "is" and "ought" are well worth un-

derstanding and preserving" (ibid, 282). The paradox contained in the last two sentences is, for the most part, due to Oakeshott's inability and unwillingness to maintain the boundaries that he set out for himself, for example in his essay "Political Education" (1956), between levels of political thinking such as ideology and political philosophy. Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, this contradiction in his work no longer exists as it once did. However, my interpretation is that he sees political *theorizing* as similarly conditional to other forms of knowledge and activities, but at the same time something quite distinct from a "philosopher king" style of instructing. The aspect that separates philosophy or theory from other "modes" or "voices" in the conversation of mankind, is the philosophical aspiration towards *unconditional* knowledge, but not its (im)possible attainment (e.g., *OHC*, "Talking Politics" (1975), and "The Vocabulary of Modern Politics" (1975)). Oakeshott's accounts of contemporary modern politics and its probable future are also rather dark, so although not he is not a 'Straussian' in any sense, Devigne's emphasis on modern European history largely as a "source of political good" in Oakeshott's work seems somewhat misplaced to me.

Noël O'Sullivan's essay on the Oakeshottian concept of civil association, in my view, gets the closest in this book to presenting an accurate description of Oakeshott's political philosophy. O'Sullivan alludes to the "qualified sympathy" expressed by Oakeshott towards British idealism but emphasizes how he was "so disillusioned with the condition of modern political science as generally practiced at the time of World War II that he dismissed it as an almost entire disaster" (O'Sullivan 2012, 293). O'Sullivan also points out that Oakeshott never denied that the modern state more or less inevitably bears features of not just civil, but also "enterprise association". Taxation and, more darkly, wartime are presented as examples of the latter, i.e., the state being directed for a purpose (ibid, 296). O'Sullivan describes the structure of (the ideal type) of civil association as being rule-based, and paying attention to its own shortcomings, and he speculates on the future of civil association in Western mass democracies (ibid, 310). O'Sullivan sees deep pessimism in Oakeshott's view of the future, in terms of civil association, and he connects these aspects of his thought to the work of Ortega y Gasset and Huizinga (ibid, 309). Along with the trend that sees a diminuation of playful activities in

our culture, O'Sullivan aptly asks if Oakeshott "may have clarified the requirements of civil association at the very time when the course of history has begun to turn decisively away from them" (ibid, 310).

The book ends with Steven Gerencser's examination of Oakeshott's concept of law. This viewpoint is also relatively new and rare. Gerencser uses both philosophical imagination as well as thorough knowledge of Oakeshott's work to deal with this difficult topic, since all that Oakeshott says about law is closely associated with his "many other ideas" (Gerencser, 2012, 319). The basic dilemma for an interpreter of Oakeshott lies between the "traditionalist Oakeshott" who focuses attention on the traditional elements of a community and who is suspicious of attempts to create new arrangements, and the "formalist Oakeshott" who reflects on human conduct, agency and freedom in universal terms (ibid, 313). The conflict seems, in other words, to be between Oakeshott's earlier and later works. Gerencser elaborates on the earlier decades (especially the 1930s and '40s) by creating an imaginary essay "Rational Jurisprudence". Oakeshott's later view of law meanwhile, is examined in the context of civil association as a system based on authoritative, non-instrumental rules (ibid, 323). Gerencser provides both a convincing description and critique of Oakeshott's concept of law, and he concludes his essay and indeed the whole book by bringing politics to the foreground because this represents Oakeshott's own way of "resolving" the conflict between his traditional and formal understandings of law. Politics provides the possibility of conducting a *creative* activity in civil association. In other words, it consists of thinking about the arrangement(s) in *respublica* in either a new, *or* a conservative way. Thus, politics is one way to "adapt" to the changing circumstances of human life and its environment. At its best, politics contains a playful element in it while simultaneously giving - and saving - room for other human activities.

In all, *A Companion* is an ambitious endeavour, aiming to cover different aspects of Oakeshott's philosophy and largely succeeding in this, by both covering the results of Oakeshott's research and simultaneously raising awareness of their differences, which in turn leads to new questions. But for those who are interested mainly in Oakeshott's understanding of *political* activity, or his *political* philosophy and thought, it

seems a bit curious that the following Oakeshottian thought is neglected almost entirely: he later alluded to politics being an activity which required such a "focus of attention and so un-common a self-restraint that one is not astonished to find this mode of human relationship to be as rare as it is excellent" (*OHC*, 180).

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Review

Reinhart Koselleck: *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2010, 388 s.

Koselleck's Untimely Meditations

Even though the edition itself never explicitly states this point, the latest volume of historical essays by Reinhart Koselleck, posthumously collected and published by Carsten Dutt, engages in a dialogue with another work, by another author, which was published almost 140 years ago. The work that comes to mind is, of course, Friedrich Nietzsche's *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen*, which came out in four parts between 1873 and 1876 and which has seen a number of English translations: *Untimely Meditations* (Walter Kaufmann), *Thoughts Out of Season* (Anthony M. Ludovici), *Unmodern Observations* (William Arrowsmith). On the level of titles the idea of the untimely is retained in one of the most elegant and original essays in the present volume, on *Goethes unzeitgemäße Geschichte*, "Goethe's untimely history". As everyone who has read Nietzsche knows, however, his essays were not *unzeitgemäß* in any traditional sense of the word, except in the way they strayed from the well-trodden path of the *Zeitgeist*; on the contrary, they intervened quite directly in the most urgent and immediate questions of the time, namely the uses of theology, history, philosophy and music for the purposes of cultural and intellectual refinement and progress.

Returning to the recently published collection of Koselleck's essay, the title of the volume, suggested to the editor by the author himself (365), doesn't only echo the more or less forgotten, intriguing work by Theodor Lessing, discussed in the title essay, *Geschichte als Sinngebung des Sinnlosen*, from 1919, but also – and for most readers, primarily – the second of Nietzsche's untimely meditations": *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben* from 1874. In his comprehensive discussion of Nietzsche's text, Koselleck points out how Nietzsche in his attack on the reigning, "modern" idea of history as inherently meaningful reintroduces the classical rhetorical-philological concept of *historia* – a plu-

rality of histories about various topics written for specific purposes. To Nietzsche, however, *historia* is not life's teacher, as in the topos *historia magistra vitae*, but rather its humble servant; similarly, life itself isn't made up of a series of intentions and actions, but is the manifestation of a vital force or energy. As Koselleck reads him, Nietzsche's arguments amounts to a full-fledged attack on the four axioms governing the modern notion of history: that it moves forward towards a goal (*causa finalis*), that it moves by necessity (*causa efficiens*), that it has an inherent principle of justice, and that it progresses in accordance with the ages of man (25-27). And he concludes: "Nietzsche's real achievement was to expose through epistemological arguments history as a pluralistic field of action, which can only be analyzed to the extent that it is freed of all constructions and presuppositions of meaning" (28). To have recognized this distinction between history as a field of actions and events, on the one hand, and the representations and narratives of these actions and events, often of a teleological, deterministic, legitimizing or anthropological nature, on the other, is an experience shared by the 19th century philologist and philosopher and the 20th century historian alike.

If we were to look for a common topic for this collection of essays by Koselleck and thus be unfaithful to the confession of the editor that his only the ambition has been "to make substantial contributions – *Gehaltvolles* – accessible in a appropriate format" (365), the link to Nietzsche's *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen* might give us a first clue. Even though history as event – *Ereignis* – and narrative – *Erzählung* – have been a major topic in all previous collections of Koselleck's essays and articles, *Vergangene Zukunft* from 1979, *Zeitschichten* from 2000 and *Begriffsgeschichten* from 2006, the present volume offers a broader perspective, reaching across all four main fields of his work: historical semantics, theory of history, social history and the practices of memory. For those who have followed the republication of Koselleck's essayistic work at Suhrkamp and who for some time have been waiting for the planned volume on political iconology and the practices of memory, this book might be something of a disappointment, since the essays concerned with these particular topics are not included, but are saved for a separate volume to be published some time in the future. In the meantime there are lot of comfort to be found in this volume of "untimely meditations",

criss-crossing through more or less Koselleck's entire work, adding different nuances to old and well-known questions and even raising some new ones.

The essays selected for the volume have in common that they have been published in rather unknown and inaccessible journals and books, or in a few cases, not at all. As stressed by the editor, who wants to avoid the impression that he has given himself to what Koselleck himself referred to as "editors looting the *Nachlass* of a dead author" (367), the four previously unpublished texts were all prepared for print by the author. If there have been any additional criteria at work in the selection process, like relevance, originality or – on the contrary – coherence with the existing work, is left in the dark. Surely, this kind of editorial self-reflection, situating the texts within the larger body of published and unpublished works, will be required in future volumes from the Koselleck *Nachlass* in the Marbach Archive. In this volume the integration of the texts in the volume with other, older and newer contributions, chronologically and thematically, remains the task of the readers.

More than anything the implicit and explicit dialogue with Nietzsche's work from the 1870s serves to highlight the notion of the untimely, *das Unzeitgemäße*, as a prism for understanding the essays. There are at least three kinds of untimeliness at work in the volume: first, the untimeliness of the publication itself, due to the de- and recontextualization of texts previously published or held as lectures in a period from 1971 to 2006; second, the untimeliness of the authors and works discussed, as in the case of Goethe, but also exemplified by Preussian history and historiography, which play a major role in the genesis of Koselleck's longtime enemy of choice in post-war historiography, the idea of a German *Sonderweg*; third, the untimeliness of historical time, in a phenomenological sense, which can be said to constitute one of the most significant and central topics in Koselleck's work as a whole, often represented in the chiastic form of the *Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*.

The volume is organized in three parts: *Theorieskizzen*, "theoretical drafts", which contains six essays of different length and ambition, adding to the theoretical discussions going on in the already published volumes; *Zeitbilder*, "images of time", which is made up of essays discussing the temporal and spatial conditions for historical experiences,

as well as their historiographic representations in concepts referring to epochs, centuries, nations, empires etc.; and finally, *Porträts and Erinnerungen*, "potraits and memoirs", in which the editor has brought together a series of biographical essays, about both colleagues and historical figures, from Johann Chladenius and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to two of Koselleck's teachers, Werner Conze and Hans-Georg Gadamer.

Compared to the volumes from 2000 and 2006, *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte* give the impression of a rather random and disparate selection of essays. Still, there is something fundamentally adequate and appealing about the reluctance of the editor to separate the philosophical from the historical, the theoretical from the empirical, the studies of concepts from the studies of people and events. Undoubtedly, the essence in Koselleck's thinking is to be found in the meandering movements between these different fields and topics. The importance of this communication between disciplines such as history, linguistics, philosophy and sociology is stressed by the author on several occasions – not least in the previously unpublished essay on interdisciplinarity, given as a lecture in Tokyo in 1978, long before this concept – "interdisciplinarity" – emerged as staple and a prime concept of movement, prognostic on the brink of utopian, in debates on research policy.

This particular essay on interdisciplinarity, however, also serves to remind us of the dangers of republishing essays written for a particular audience and a particular pragmatic context. Repackaged in a new format, a hardcover book, some of these texts – a lecture written for a guest professorship in Tokyo in 1978, another held at a literary conference in Düsseldorf in 1978, a *laudatio* and a memorial speech – unfold an almost erie, untimely quality. Indeed, they *are* untimely, in the most banal chronological sense of the word, because they are republished more than thirty years after they were written. Reading them today, we might get the feeling that some of these texts were indeed not, to use a famous Koselleckian distinction, meant for the slowly unfolding time of historical and philosophical knowledge, but for the considerably faster, even accelerating time of political and biographical events.

In the already mentioned essay on interdisciplinarity Kosellecks presents his experiences from the establishment of the *Zentrum für interdisziplinare Forschung in Bielefeld (ZiF)*, where he was one of the direc-

tors, for a Japanese audience. In the light of recent discussions on the need for interdisciplinary research, as a way for the human and social sciences to emerge from their current financial and ideological crisis, Koselleck's experiences from the last wave of interdisciplinarity, in the 1970s, might seem a bit outdated. He ends his essay with the following invitation to all other sciences on behalf of the historians: "Why should the philologists be our only partners, because they can help us read an interpret the written sources? It should be all sciences, because none of them can exist without their historical dimension." (67) Today, this naive optimism on behalf of the historical dimension can only serve as a reminder of some of the dramatic shifts that have taken place within the European universities during the last thirty years, breaking up the slow institutional cycles of repetition and turning traditional disciplines into cultures of innovation, which are more than happy to forget their own history. In this sense the untimely, oudated character of Koselleck's experiences with interdisciplinarity might help us to better understand and historicize our own situation.

In a similar way the hommages to Karl Jaspers, Werner Conze, François Furet, Shulamit Volkov and Hans-Georg Gadamer, written for specific occasions, such as Gadamer's death, the awarding of the Gundolf-Preis to Volkov, the Arendt-Preis to Furet etc. , belong to a different kind of temporality than the theoretical and historical essays. Not that they are uninteresting or without important insights, but they don't have the strong, relentless focus and the theoretical complexity, which made John Zammito compare Koselleck to the intellectual type of the hedgehog, who "worries his big idea over and over again" (Zammito, 126). Masterpieces of the epideictic genre, they take the reader back to the rhetorical situation in question and invites him or her to join the crowd of celebrators or mourners. Outside of this situation they are less powerful and one can ask if they really belong in a book together with essays which will take up a seminal place in the reception of Koselleck's works. One surprising and interesting effect of collecting these untimely texts in the same volume, however, deserves to be mentioned in its own right: Read together, the essays on Jaspers, Conze, Volkov and Gadamer draw up a history of how scholars coped with the Third Reich, both during and after – from Jaspers's discussion of col-

lective guilt, to Conze's shift from *Volksgeschichte* to *Strukturgeschichte* after 1945, to Volkov's strictly analytical and comparative studies of German antisemitism, and finally, to Gadamers infamous Herder-lecture in Paris 1941, in which certain passages were later revised. In the way he lays out dilemmas and confronts accusations Koselleck employs the epideictic genre, which, contrary to general opinion was never meant only to praise, but also to criticize, in accordance with the best Aristotelian traditions.

Untimeliness, however, is not only a quality of the essays themselves in relation to their present and future contexts, it is also a historical topic in its own right, which comes to the fore in all three parts of the volume, most prominently in the second and third. Among the biographical essays are three texts on three very different historical figures born in the 18th century: Johann Martin Chladenius, the godfather of hermeneutical and historical method, Adam Weishaupt, the founder of the order of the Illuminati, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the supreme giant of German literary and intellectual history. In these three essays, among the best in the volume, Koselleck highlights how these men were in their different ways untimely, out of sync, asynchronous with their own time. Chladenius is seen as the "a last crown witness of the prehistoric, premodern world" (272), while Weishaupt was the first, who attempted to put modern philosophy of history, *Geschichtsphilosophie*, into political practice. The true symbol of untimeliness, however, is Goethe, who, according to Koselleck, always avoided, even actively resisted to be made a representative of the so-called "history". In Goethe's case being untimely didn't mean to be conservative in a political or social sense, even though his aversion against the revolution in France often has been interpreted in this way. Goethe, Koselleck argues, was untimely due to his language, which resisted all kinds of reductionist labels, conservative, liberal, progressive etc. by producing "an added value, which can neither be fully understood nor fully exploited" (291). Across a wide range of genres, annalistic diaries, far-reaching chronicles and reflective memoirs Goethe were able to reflect on his own historical situation, the temporal paradoxes of his own time, and thus, to "historicize himself" (293). As opposed to many of his contemporaries, Goethe didn't identify with history, write himself into it, but was able

to keep a certain analytical distance, observe the temporal breaks, analyze and describe them. In this sense, Koselleck concludes, in a way that makes us suspect a certain degree of identification between the historian and his object, Goethe was both timely and untimely: "Our present perspective depends on whether we assume his perspective, which exposes that which repeats itself or that which lasts, or if we give in to political enthusiasm, which can only guide us from one day to the next" (303-4). I think there can be no doubt where Koselleck's own preferences lie.

Among the other studies dealing with the historical condition of non-synchronicity, non-contemporaneity, of untimeliness, are two essays on Prussia, *Lernen aus der Geschichte Preußens?,* "To learn from the history of Prussia?", and *Zur Rezeption der preußischen Reformen in der Historiographie*, "On the reception on the Prussian reforms in historiography". In the first Koselleck asks what kind of lessons can be drawn from the history of Prussia, the only dominating power in modern European history which "has later disappeared", as he puts it (151). In historiography as well as in public memory the history of Prussia has been linked to militarism and cultures of subordination, except – one could add – during the recent process of rebuilding Berlin as the capital of the united Germany, when the Prussian inheritance has come to represent urbanism, tolerance and liberal principles. More generally, however, and especially in the foreign perception of German history, Prussian militarism has constituted one important aspect of the alleged German *Sonderweg*, complementing the political immaturity of the German Idealist tradition. The idea of the *Sonderweg*, either in its original exceptionalist or in its later more analytic form, is another way of conceptualizing Germany's untimeliness, its asynchronicity with other national histories, especially Britain and France, and with the development of European democracy in general. But, as Koselleck never fails to address, the whole idea of a German *Sonderweg* is absurd, because it presupposes that there could be something like a standard path, or in temporal terms, a standard rhythm of European history, when in reality all European histories are *Sonderwege*. In the historiographical reception of the Prussian reforms from 1800 and onwards, historians such as Droysen, Treitschke and Mehring, have used Prussian history to support

their own political programs, liberal or conservative. How, then, is it possible to learn from the history of Prussia, without either uncritically inheriting the idea of the *Sonderweg*, or by – just as uncritically – turning it into a field for political battles?

As every Koselleck-reader knows, much of his work is dedicated to showing how the rhetorical *historia magistra vitae*-paradigm collapses and is replaced by an idea and an experience of history as movement, as constant change. As a consequence, past events cannot tell us anything , or at least very little, about what is going to happen in the future – the two are, as Koselleck puts is, "asymmetrical" (Koselleck 1989, 366). There is, in other words, no way we can learn from history. Nevertheless, everything Koselleck has ever written, seems to belie this very same claim, constantly exploring the ways in which the past can yet inform the present and the future, how history can still be a source of normative and prognostic knowledge. In the process the *historia magistra vitae*-paradigm is replaced by another paradigm, which is best summed up in the formula of *die Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*, non-contemporaneity or asynchronicity, or, in Nietzschean terms, untimeliness – all referring to the experience that in social and political processes there is always more that one time, one temporality in play: "Faced with the plurality of historical connections", Koselleck writes, "one must separate analytically between different levels, which are addressed methodically in different ways": first, the "singular histories", *Einzelgeschichten*, which can only give rise to historical lessons to the extent that some of the factors involved, political, social or psychological, are presumed to be constant; second, "the longer-time conditions for possible singular histories", which remains the same and thus repeat themselves from day to day, from year to year, for a longer period of time; and finally, the "long-time processes, which in their turn change the structural conditions" and thus the possible singular histories (170-171). As an example of these deeper processes of change and repetition, Koselleck analyzes the successful establishment of the customs union, *Zollverein*, as a paradigm for European integration, from which lessons can still be drawn – but only, he emphasizes, if one also recognizes the fact that Prussia acted as a hegemonial power, openly or in secret, in a very different way than any of the European states in the post-war era.

In the two final essays in the second part of the volume Koselleck discusses how the cultural and historical practice of learning from history is linked to the recent turn to memory, to the "memorial turn", to quote a much-used phrase in today's human and social sciences, in a field to which Koselleck, especially in his later years, have made important contributions. However, as already mentioned, only two of these contributions appear in this volume, which both discusses the problem of "negative memory" – how to remember crimes and catastrophes, so prominent in German history. "To commemorate the sufferings and the dead, for which we as conquered nation must take responsibility, is a task of decency and honesty towards the survivors, which we shouldn't let anybody take from us" (261), Koselleck writes, reminding us of the immediate relevance and possible effects of his theoretical claims.

Indeed, it is rather unusual that a collection of rather disparate essays, like this one, also offers substantial theoretical insight, inviting us to rethink or at least refine some of the most central topics in the work as a whole. But in *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte* we can find such insight, particularly in the first part, *Theorieskizzen*, and particularly in what turned out to be the last essay Koselleck published in his lifetime, entitled "Structures of repetition in language and history", *Wiederholungsstrukturen in Sprache und Geschichte* from 2006. The powerful idea of "structures of repetition", which brings to convergence Koselleck's intellectual training within German *Sozialgeschichte* and his philosophical engagement with theories of time and experience in the tradition from Heidegger and Gadamer, has – at least to my knowledge – never been as consequently spelled out as in this essay. On the other hand, the seminal and continuous importance of this theoretical figure is also anticipated by the oldest essay in the collection, *Wozu noch Historie?*, "Why do we still write history?", dating back from 1971.

Much of the criticism directed at Koselleck, most recently and poignantly in a book by Kathleen Davies (Davies 2008, 97-95), concerns his way of privileging modernity, the *Neuzeit*, in terms of a historical period completely set off and different from everything that precedes it. In this critical approach Koselleck is turned into a full-fledged and rather one-eyed theorist of modernity, and, as a consequence, his work on multiple and contrasting experiences of time into a theory of peri-

odization. But is this really what Koselleck's "theory of historical times" is about, to epitomize modernity and the modern experience of history in terms of a force moving from the past, through the present an into the future?

This can only be – at best – half the truth. In several of Koselleck's essays there are attempts to bridge, or may be rather, to blur this gap between *Neuzeit* and Antiquity, Middle Ages or Renaissance, to mention only three of the labels in question. Thus, on the one hand Koselleck posits the collapse of the paradigm of *historia magistra vitae*, but, on the other hand, he never fails to express a normative preference for this use of history, or rather of histories, in plural, to the self-fulfilling prophecy of modern *Geschichtsphilosophie*. In a similar way, Koselleck never hesitates to point out how certain characteristics of a typically modern idea of history can be found already in Greek constitution history, in Augustine and in Bossuet, in different, but still recognizably related forms (Jordheim 2011, 460-461). This idea of a continuity between the premodern and the modern is summed up at the end of the essay *Wozu noch Historie?*, where the theory of periodization is replaced by a much more sophisticated and complex theory of multiple and multi-layered historical times: "The epochal difference between 'history as such' – the space of experience of historicism – and the old style histories […] can only be bridged if we ask for the temporal structures which might be particular for both history in singular and histories in plural" (50). In this way, Koselleck continues, the question of temporal structures opens up the entire field of historical research, prior to and beyond "the semantic threshold of experience around 1780" (ibid.).

Rather than a theory of modernity, or more generally, a theory of periodization Koselleck presents us with a theory of untimeliness, or, as he often puts it, a theory of *die Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen* (51). History is never really synchronous with itself, but is made up of contrasting and competing temporal structures, "structures of repetition" – ranging from total repetition to total innovation, neither of which exists in their pure form, but always "mixed in different ways" (99). All actual changes, the slow ones, the fast ones and those that go on for a really long time, he claims, "are linked to the variable interplay between repetition and uniqueness": "In this way it is possible to show what in our

so-called *Neuzeit* is really new and doesn't repeat anything of what was before – or what was really always there and only comes back in a new shape" (98). And thus, history can avoid falling victim to periodizations, between 'old' and 'new', which says little or nothing about historical reality, what Koselleck refers to as *wenig oder nichtssagende Periodenbestimmung* (ibid.).

Indeed, this is the most innovative and decisive contribution of this latest volume *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte*: to make a first and still rather preliminary draft for a systematic theory of the structures of repetition. In his draft Koselleck distinguishes between five different structures, or, as he often puts it, four different *Zeitschichten*, layers of time: first, the non-human conditions for our experiences, mostly of a cosmological nature, such as the earth's movement around the sun; second, the biological conditions for our lives, differences between the sexes, procreation, birth and death, but also anthropological structures such as hierarchies, exclusion/inclusion, generations, or, in his own words, *Oben-Unten, Innen-Außen* and *Früher-Später* (103); third, the structures of repetition typical of the human condition, particularly institutions, like law, religion and work; fourth, those repeatable elements that are inherent even in unique events, which can be illustrated by comparing the American, the French and the Russian revolution and identifying the common patterns and which manifest themselves in prophecies, prognoses, and plans for the future; fifth, the structures of repetition in language, both in semantics, syntax and pragmatics, though at very different speeds.

It goes without saying that these five types of repeatability are never completely synchronous, they don't move at the same speed, they cannot be reduced to periods or to absolute differences between old and new. To identify, explore and discuss this kind of asynchronicities, these instances of untimeliness, and their cultural, social and political conditions and effects, beyond traditional periodizations, is among the most important legacies of Koselleck's rich work – made even richer and even more important by this last volume of collected essays.

Helge Jordheim

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Review

Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2009, pp. 299 (ISBN 978-0-8223-4725-5)

The Promise of Happiness is Sara Ahmed's most recent foray into discussions of affect. While her earlier book, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004), focused primarily on supposed "bad feelings" – fear, disgust, hate, shame, and anger – in this book Ahmed turns her critical attention to the allegedly "good feeling" of happiness (14). 'Happiness' has become – and remains – something of a voguish area of study. The immediate prompt for the writing of *The Promise of Happiness*, according to Ahmed, was 'the happiness turn' in science and popular culture beginning in the mid-2000s, which led not only to the appearance of numerous books and courses on how to be happy but also to the commissioning by various governments, including the British, of happiness indices to sit alongside GDP as an indicator of performance; indeed, the first results of the British version of this test were published in July 2012. The net result of these developments has been the emergence of 'happiness studies' as a distinct academic field of study.

As Ahmed acknowledges, however, the 'science of happiness' has a much longer and diverse history than this. And so in *The Promise of Happiness*, she tracks happiness through fields as varied as philosophy, positive psychology, political economy, political theory, as well as literature, film, and television. Although there is a definite downside at times in dealing with such a wide array of sources, in that some of the readings on offer are limited in scope and detail, what this approach enables Ahmed to demonstrate is the ubiquity of calls for happiness over time and, more importantly, how those calls connect to particular ways of being in the world.

Happiness more than any other affective state, Ahmed contends, is widely taken to be '*the* object of human desire… as being what gives purpose, meaning and order to human life' (1, my emphasis) or, as defined by the great German philosopher Immanuel Kant, as 'the wish of every finite rational being' (cited by Ahmed, 1), the assumption being that we all want to be happy. What interests Ahmed is what is being

consented to when the individual consents to happiness. What, in other words, is at stake in pursuing the promise of happiness? And, moreover, in what does that promise consist?

Challenging the distinction between good and bad feelings alluded to above Ahmed sets out to show that happiness is not necessarily, or even, a simple social good. Instead, she provocatively suggests, happiness is so entangled with particular norms of behaviour and specific life choices that to be happy effectively rests on making the 'right' choices, in being directed towards specific 'happiness objects', and in following certain happiness 'scripts'. On Ahmed's reading therefore, we are not, as we may believe, free to decide what makes us happy. Rather happiness is directive, in the dual sense that we are expected to be happy *and* to be made happy by particular things. *The Promise of Happiness* thus focuses on happiness as a mechanism of discipline or governance that fosters oppression and inequality. The important question in this context is not what happiness *is* but rather what it *does*.

To address this question, Ahmed focuses on unhappiness, which she suggests, in a classic deconstructive move, 'remains the unthought' in discussions of happiness. Her explicit goal is 'to give a history to unhappiness' (17). Drawing on what she terms the 'unhappy archives' that permeate feminist, queer and anti-racist histories, Ahmed proposes to rewrite the history of happiness from the perspective of those who have been, and continue to be, excluded from it; indeed, who are frequently seen as causing unhappiness: the feminist killjoy, the unhappy queer and the melancholic migrant. It is the plight of these 'affect aliens' and the political possibilities opened up by them that Ahmed traces in chapters two to four. In Chapter Five, her work takes a different direction as Ahmed examines revolutionary forms of political involvement as a way to think about the (happy) future.

Chapter One, 'Happy Objects', establishes the groundwork for her later discussions. Picking up on ideas developed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Ahmed conceptualises affect as 'sticky'. It is 'what sticks' or connects values, ideas and objects (230 n.1). To be affected by happiness requires certain things –'happiness objects' – to be in place that dispose us to be affected in one way (as happy) rather than another (as, say, angry or afraid). Happiness, for Ahmed, is thus not merely an emotional

or affective response. Instead, drawing from phenomenology it involves affect, intentionality *and* evaluation or judgment. Happiness is better thought of, therefore, as a learned mode of bodily orientation towards specific objects, objects that have already acquired positive value as social goods because they are allegedly productive of happiness. One such, according to Ahmed, is the family – or, more specifically, the 'happy family'.

The trope of the happy family is first introduced in this chapter as an example to illustrate the profound ambivalence of the injunction to be happy. Happy families, as characterised by Ahmed, are not merely an assumed site of happiness (where and how it occurs); they are also, she suggests, a 'powerful legislative device, a way of distributing time, energy and resources' (45). To belong to a 'happy family' is to be oriented towards specific objects as the cause and expression of that happiness. These objects might be displays of family photographs that produce the family as a happy object or, as her brief discussion of Laurie Colwin's novel *Family Happiness* illustrates, occupying a particular place at the 'kinship object' that is the family table (46). It is in the family, moreover, that the child learns the right happiness habits, where it is disciplined to live a particular kind of life. Being part of a happy family depends, in other words, on doing the right thing in the right way; it is thus conditional upon specific kinds of objects, choices and orientations. In Ahmed's view the family can be a 'happy object', therefore, only 'if we share this orientation' (48). But, of course, not everyone does.

The foundation of the happy family is conventionally assumed to be a happy marriage. Indeed, within happiness studies (heterosexual) marriage is routinely regarded as one of the primary indicators of happiness. In Chapter Two, 'Feminist Killjoys', Ahmed turns her attention to the figure of the happy housewife in both the guise critiqued by earlier feminist writers, such as Betty Friedan, and in its more recent incarnation as a reaction against feminism. What interests Ahmed here is two-fold. Tracing through the discourse of the happy housewife from Rousseau to *Mrs Dalloway* and *The Hours*, she explores what the figure does; how, in particular, it operates to secure a particular racialised and classed version of happiness available only to selected women. Just as importantly, she also probes how the rejection of the myth of the happy

housewife fosters the connection between feminism and unhappiness, or in the case of feminists of colour of the association of feminism with anger. She shows, in what is to be a recurrent theme of the book, how particular individuals or groups (feminists, in this chapter, and queers and migrants in later ones) are constructed as problems because they refuse to seek happiness in the 'right things' (60). This results in their being vilified or castigated for their behaviour – causing trouble – rather than criticism being levelled at the society that attempts to strait-jacket them in ways of life that they reject.

The discussion in Chapter Three moves onto the relation between (un)happiness and queerness. In a discussion that ranges from the film *If These Walls Could Talk* 2 to the novels *Rubyfruit Jungle* and *The Well of Loneliness,* Ahmed sets about disentangling what it means to be a 'happy queer' from what it might mean to be 'happily queer'. As with the argument about feminism, Ahmed suggests that unhappiness allows for (perhaps even is itself) a social critique of normative happiness. To be a happy queer requires the queer subject to minimize their signs of queerness and to approximate as far as possible those social forms that are already inscribed as 'happiness causes' (112): the family, marriage, straightness and so on. To be happily queer, by contrast, is to embrace unhappiness in order to expose what, to use a different lexicon, might be called the heteronormativity of the world. Or, in Ahmed's own words: 'to explore the unhappiness of what gets counted as normal' (117). Where killing joy is imperative for feminist politics, so the 'freedom to breathe' (120), which characterises queer politics, depends on exposing and renouncing 'happy homonormativity' (114).

In Chapter Four Ahmed turns her attention to questions of nationhood, citizenship, multiculturalism, and immigration, focusing on the figure of the 'melancholic migrant'. The chapter begins with a brief discussion of the history of empire, centred on the relationship between imperialism and utilitarian philosophy, a conjunction that led in Ahmed's view to the construction of the history of empire as a history of happiness. Here she exposes the coercive side of imperial and multicultural happiness: that is, how empire was justified as '*liberation from abjection*' (127) secured through teaching 'the natives how to be happy' (128) and how happy multiculturalism requires fidelity to established

national ideals, like playing football. What follows is a really fascinating discussion of the contemporary experience of British Asians, examined through the films *Bend it Like Beckham* and *East is East*, and the writings of Meera Syal (*Anita and Me*) and Yasmin Hai (*The Making of Mr Hai's Daughter: Becoming British*). Two aspects of this discussion are particularly noteworthy. The first, drawing from Freud, focuses on the 'risk of melancholia' (138). This is embodied in the narrative of the migrant (usually first generation) unable to let go of the hurt of racism and integrate fully into British society, and whose anger or pain is seen by others, including wider society, not just as threatening their own happiness but also that of their children and even of the nation. The second example explores what it means when second-generation immigrants try 'to put racism behind' them (143), and assimilate into British society: the disavowal of their culture, customs and perhaps even their language, as well as embracing the 'happiness duty' (158) not to speak of experiences of racism or of the violence of colonialism, all in order to gain proximity to whiteness.

A persistent question that surfaces throughout the book is whether, and if so how, it might be possible to overcome the differential allocation of un/happiness that it charts. In Chapter Five, 'Happy Futures', Ahmed considers the relation between alienation, revolutionary consciousness, and the possibility of (revolutionary) change in the future. Focusing on so-called 'happiness dystopias' (163), most notably the film *Children of Men*, she investigates how political radicalisation might be made possible by unhappiness and how the ability to be affected by unhappiness might facilitate political freedom, here understood as the 'freedom to be affected by what is unhappy, and to live a life that might affect others unhappily' (195), not in the sense of deliberately causing them unhappiness but through challenging the injustices and exclusions of the present. Unsurprisingly given her theorisation of happiness as a technology of governance, Ahmed refuses the idea of happiness as *telos*. Instead she favours an orientation towards the future that she describes as one of 'hopeful anxiety' (183), tied to what she terms a 'politics of the hap' (223).

The idea for such a politics draws on the etymology of happiness. To be happy originally meant to have 'good "hap" or fortune" (22). Happiness was thus understood as contingent – the result of chance or

good fortune – a view diametrically opposed to contemporary apprehensions of the term where happiness is usually conceived of as the effect of what we do. Picking up on the chanciness of the 'hap', Ahmed thus conceives of a politics of the hap as one that uses unhappiness as a prompt for political action and, in so-doing, makes things happen. It is a creative not merely a reactive politics.

There is no doubt that *The Promise of Happiness* offers plenty of food for thought about the operations of happiness in contemporary society. To be sure, some of the arguments Ahmed deploys are already familiar from feminist and queer theory: about the (hetero)-normativity of marriage, the privileging of particular racialised and/or sexualised modes of being over others, and the gendered scripts that determine what constitutes recognisably feminine behaviour. Moreover, her discussion of freedom, characterised as 'the freedom to breathe' (120), with breath tied to possibility, together with her characterisation of queer politics as the 'struggle for a bearable life' (120) recalls very strongly Judith Butler's earlier discussions in *Undoing Gender* (2004) of freedom as possibility and her notion of the 'liveable life'. What is distinctive about Ahmed's work, though, is that it deploys happiness rather than norms or power as the lens through which to view these facets of sociality. Furthermore, it does so in a way that also distinguishes it from that of other affect theorists who often underplay the potential oppressiveness of allegedly 'good' affects or feelings.

Ahmed is surely right that tying happiness to certain forms of behaviour or social institution is normalising (though she tends not to use this word). Indeed, this is one of the most powerful insights of the book. The contention that unhappiness might, nevertheless, be a potential well-spring for challenging the values and orientations that one is expected to conform to is also largely persuasive; that unhappiness or anger might be a catalyst for change rather than affective states that inhibit action as they are so often typified. Nevertheless, there are aspects of Ahmed's argument that trouble me. First, it is not clear if she is opposed to happiness *per se* or only to normative happiness. Her argument often appears to incline to the former because of the constant stress that she places on the immanent coerciveness of happiness. *If* this is her contention, and it is not entirely clear that it is, then it would seem to

indicate that *any* experience of happiness will necessarily be oppressive. By implication, this further suggests that 'happiness' as such cannot be transformed in more productive directions and that affect aliens cannot pursue or develop alternative forms of happiness – because happiness itself is the problem. Although Ahmed demonstrates *very* effectively the deficiencies of 'normative' happiness, I am unconvinced it follows that happiness *itself* as an emotional state has to be construed as inherently inappropriate or in need of renunciation.

Next, one of the most provocative and compelling features of Ahmed's discussion is her consideration of those social forms (such as family, marriage, whiteness) that have already acquired the status of legitimate or recognised happiness-causes. In Chapter Three, Ahmed offers a reading of the final film in the three-part movie *If These Walls Could Talk 2,* which tells the tale of two women, Fran and Kal, who want a child together. The thrust of Ahmed's interpretation is that their desire to have a child to be recognized as a family requires that they must minimize their queerness. In turn, this generates a form of homo-normativity based on queer families approximating 'happy heterosexuality'. This appears to suggest that the *family* form is irredeemably heterosexual and, as such, cannot be converted or reshaped in any way. What would be required, if this is the case, is its complete rejection and the development of alternative, queer *kinship* forms.

What is not clear is whether, because of its imbrication in narratives of normative gender (the happy housewife and mother) and heterosexuality (happy families), the desire to have children is to be regarded itself as *always* a problem and whether queer reproductive happiness (assuming such a thing is possible) depends on its utter repudiation, because it purportedly advances social forms 'in which other queers will not be able to participate' (112). Or, whether it is possible to desire children in an 'unhappy' or a 'happily queer' fashion, and, if so, whether such queer reproductive desire is able to avoid generating constraining affective norms of its own; where being 'happily queer' means desiring children in an appropriately queer way.

Ahmed does not, of course, only contest the privilege given to 'happiness', she also actively seeks to champion the political potential inhering in unhappiness and other purportedly negative emotions, most especially the anger of black women (see also Lorde 1984). I am deeply

sympathetic to this approach. First, because it requires that we acknowledge what is at stake in the delegitimation of certain affective responses: in what is enabled by dismissing feminists as killjoys or black women as angry or queers as spreading unhappiness. Secondly, and equally importantly, because it works against a recent trend in affect theory that privileges the role of positive sentiments, such as generosity, in advancing political struggles (specifically democratic struggle). It does so by drawing attention to the capacity of negative affects to mobilise action and to drive political demands.

Nevertheless, there is a difficulty here if the happiness-unhappiness binary simply posits happiness as problematic, because aligned with oppression and normalisation, and unhappiness as positive, because tied to (the potential for) contestation and freedom. It merely reverses the dualism that Ahmed is justifiably critical of: where happiness is cast as a good feeling that allows for openness to the future, while unhappiness is presented as a bad feeling that consists in an inability to let go of the past. This risks overlooking both the fact that unhappiness itself might be normatively encoded – that there might be *right* and *wrong* ways historically of being unhappy – and that there will surely be occasions when collective unhappiness closes down futural possibilities rather than opens them up.

In the introduction Ahmed states that her aim is explore 'how happiness makes something things and not others seem promising' (17). Despite the reservations noted above, the success of the book is to do precisely that. Its strength is that it challenges the reader to reconsider why it is that we believe that pursuing certain objects rather than others will lead us to happiness. For this reason, *The Promise of Happiness* offers an important intervention into the general debate on affect, and forges new and original paths of inquiry in the study of happiness. It is a book that will be widely read for a considerable time to come.

Moya Lloyd

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Review

Michael J. Shapiro: *The Time of the City: Politics, Philosophy and Genre*, Routledge 2010

Reading Michael J. Shapiro's *The Time of the City*, one enters the space movies, literature, bodies and forms: an urban space. The complexity of the urban experience, of the urban structure and its poetic politics is the topic of Shapiro's work. The framework is outlined in the first chapter of the book. After that the reader is on their own, with the author's narratives of American cinema, literature, and finally visiting Berlin and Hong Kong, simultaneously.

Following Shapiro's train of thought is entertaining: eloquent references, drawing together themes and theories – some familiar, others less so. Lack of conclusive conclusions makes me float from one artefact, one story, one narration in Shapiro's voice to another. Contempt. This is a great book, and once I finally got hold of it, I first was reading it in Bologna, Italy – without a shortage of sunshine or refreshments. Yet, a nagging voice asked disrupting the pleasure: you are actually reviewing this book. What is it about?

Is *The Time of the City* about the city or about cinematic or literary reflections? It is about micropolitics of cities – the definite form does not apply here – or more precisely about urban encounters, which offer glimpses to urbanity. Films or literature are but texts or images about the city. The problematic of the book relates to "the struggles of marginalised people to manage their life worlds and rhythms of moving bodies in, though, and out of urban spaces" whose politically-relevant problematics do not gain disciplinary recognition (p. 4).

In short, Shapiro turns to "novels, films and 'the arts'" to offer an "alternative approach to the power-city relationships." (p. 4). Rather than urban theory, this generates "ways to think 'the political'." (p. 4) However, Shapiro criticises political theory for avoiding modernity, being nostalgic about the Greek polis, going for harmony rather than fragmentation, and working on basic concepts of participation when engaging with the micro level. Quite rightly, he concludes that geographers such as Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift have a more elaborate perspective to the matter. (pp. 5–6) No wonder, an

increasing number of us political theorists and scientists, including myself, have found our second if not first home among the geographers. For us, what matters in urban politics is not only the simple access to "who decides": the primacy rests on the political rather than the urban or spatial.

The method or "strategy" is outlined in the last two pages of the first chapter: Bourriaud's concept of "relational aesthetics" treating the city in terms of 'the states of encounter' it 'proposes' but politically and philosophically framed. Here Shapiro draws from Casarino's "methodological manifesto" the concept of "philopoesis", that as Shapiro quotes Casarino "names a certain discontinuous and refractive interference between philosophy and literature", where "philosophy [is following Deleuze and Guattari] 'an art of forming, inventing, and fabricating concepts'", "while the arts […] involve "the production of a 'bloc of sensations … a compound of percepts and affects'." (p. 23)

Shapiro manages to develop Deleuze's methodological concept of interference into one with political value with Casarino, and Rancière. He names two key concepts which disrupts the familiar divisons of knowledge: "The indisciplinarity or 'poetics of knowledge' of Rancière and Casarino's 'philopoesis'." Again, rather than urban theory, Shapiro is offering "poetics of the city, a series of interventions that figure the city by composing encounters between artistic texts and conceptual frames." These seek to "illuminate aspects of the actual encounters that constitute the micropolitics of urban life words". (p. 24)

In Chapter One Shapiro discovers "the global contacts between the Los Angeles' surveillance and policing practices and the city's Latino presence", the "temporal rhythms, which operate outside of territorial enforcement", the political temporality as increasingly securitizing that seeks to inhibit the flow of immigrant bodies, a globalizing economic temporality" (p. 41), in short the global city, with politics that form a contrast "to neo-Hegelian fantasies of the end of history and the end of contentious global politics". (p. 44) In Chapter Four Shapiro engages with *film noir*, *neo-noir*, and gendered spaces of the city through Wachowski brothers' film *Bound*, that works on the "dichotomy between domesticity and public life in a city" through micropolitical encounters. (p. 89) It seems impossible to summarise the chapters, results of long associative thought ranges – for me or, as often, for the author himself. It would do violence to the thought process.

I love films. We all do, us intellectuals. But what makes films such a special point of reference for a political or cultural theorist? Shapiro's Cinematic Geopolitics is itself an answer to question. Still, at times I have doubts of these references, maybe in the same vain as I hate reading about the chosen film right before entering the cinema. Theoretical cinematic references I often find exhausting, even though they can be illuminating – and still, in the fragmented global existence, films have become nodal points of our collective existence. They are modern day sagas, revisited, retold, with the possibility of eternal repetition of the story captured on film and ever more often available in bit-based formats online. Shapiro not only makes us (re) visit films, cities and spaces, with characters struggling by. In the preface he cites a critic, who "complained that 'the author seems to think that it goes without saying that she/he can analyze novels and films'." (p. xiv) His aim is not merely to analyse films, but engage with storytelling.

Reproductions are designed not merely to document but to provoke, and that applies both to the artistic production, a film, literature, and Shapiro's academic writing. Furthermore, narration is never straightforward. Derrida's concept iterability notes the contingency of those moments of repetition, every reading of those films may slightly differ. Analysing the films or literature to his readers, Shapiro engages in an exercise of iterability, which is never "mere" repetition. In Shapiro's readings, the film triggers thought rather than containing thought. This is the crux of his analysis. In this sense, Shapiro works as a Benjaminian *flâneur*, browsing the city, in this case through filmed images. He relates these to past experiences and thoughts, projecting for future. He shows a fragmented urban life world, through fragments: narrated by others or artefacts themselves, in manner not completely dissimilar from Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project*. The framework of analysis legitimates the aesthetic forms, continuities and disruptions as an object of study.

Talking about genres – and repetition that I have added to the table: if films, why not TV-series? Are TV-series not in their repeatability-iterability, something that crucially forms our life-worlds? Meeting the same characters time and again, often in the same settings. What do they tell us about the time of the city? Apart forming generations series also bring together generations. Some of them have movie-like character, with extensive plot or no longer shoot in one or two settings such as a living room and a café.

Well-made series such as the Game of Thrones (HBO, based on George R.R. Martin's series of fantasy novels) and the Danish political drama Borgen have been compared to extended movies, in the same vain as movies with sequels have become more like extended series. These encounters are not as singular and intensive as the cinematic, but could we not make a similar comparison between a parliamentary term and elections, for political theory?

Literature is much present in Shapiro's work. For example, in Chapter Seven of *The Time of the City* he engages with Walt Whitman, the 19th century poet voice of New York. "Fulfilling both the Deleuze and Guattari's and Benjamin's post Kantian construction of an embodied subject, Whitman extols the city as an inter-penetration of body- and image-space and deploys haptic mode of perception as his I-subject become an engaged body and his Kantian fixation on consciousness, so evident in many of his poems, is displaced by a bodily charge he receives from other bodies." (p. 145) Shapiro contrasts Whitman to John Yau, an "ethnic poet", who equally as Whitman crosses Brooklyn Bridge, but while Whitman shows how this is something generations share, for Yau the Bridge becomes an ethnic boundary. Both Yau and Whitman for Shapiro capture the "rhythms of city life", yet for Whitman, an I-centred poet producing an "I-subject" (an I-poet as opposed to iPoet?), is however "less focused on specific venues and moments" it is "more concerned with himself than with the vagaries of other lives", which makes Shapiro turn to Bakhtin's ideas of the role of the poet versus a prose writer and polyphonic novels. (p. 145)

After realising the limits of the political apprehensions in the grammar of his address, this leads Shapiro to look for the Whitman effect in Richard Powers's novels *The Time of Our Singing* and *Gain*. The latter features a passage from Whitman's famous Brooklyn Ferry poem, which a terminally ill mother helps to open up for her son – and which for her is telling something important whether she realised it or not. "While Whitman's single-voiced poem is pregnant with potential significance for a variety of profound personal and interpersonal experiences, a realization of that potential is effected through the novel's polyphony, its staging of a dialogic encounter between mother and son [in Powers's *Gain*], mediated through yet a third voice, Whitman's." (p. 149)

Whitman is not a "psychosocial type" but a "conceptual persona", Sha-

piro argues borrowing concepts from Deleuze and Guattari: "their movements or acts of perception reveal […] 'thought territories;' they are vehicles for thinking". These are different for Whitman, who "issues in a single-voiced chant about New York's increasing ethnic diversity" in 19th century New York, and for Powers, who in *Time of Our Singing* presents alternative voices, of an inter-ethnic couple, who met in 1939 and whose cultural (dis)harmony is staged through musical matchmaking. (p. 149) "It is evident that Powers's 'our' articulates a more complicated (or contrapunctual) subject than does Whitman's singing, I-subject", Shapiro argues (p. 150) and moves to another theme: time.

Or perhaps to timelessness: "Yet despite his 'acute temporal sense,' [noted by Paul Bové] Whitman sees human nature as timeless. […] Further, Whitman, despite his polemics against slavery, presumes a homogeneous social space from which all observers, even unto future generations will see and feel 'as I feel', as he suggests in 'Crossing Brooklyn Ferry'." Shapiro quotes Philip Fisher's reading: "the politics of any aesthetics within a democratic social space requires that there exists experiences across time that not only will happen in identical ways but will be noticed – that is arouse attention – and will even produce the same feelings within people living centuries apart." (p. 150) Powers's *Time of Our Singing* the "city-body relations" deal with the "modes of becoming-racial experienced by the Daley-Strom children" whereas Whitman's poesis "concerns the changing status of the homoerotic body". (p. 151) The crucial observation made by Hortense Spillers is reaffirmed by Powers, Shapiro notes: "ethnicity and race achieve their reality through the freezing of time." (p .152) While Whitman tries to construct a "democratic time" with "ethnic beings" and individuality, Powers's time is finite historical time with ethnic bodies that music only stress.

After reflecting in a separate section on Langston Hughest, "the best known Whitman-inspired 'Black-poet'" (p. 154), and the Nuyorican poets, and Shapiro moves to Colin Harrison's Whitman-inspired novel *Bodies Electric* of Euro-American-Puerto-Rican experience. "Harrison's novel is *about* New York. In addition to creating such city scenes, it contains a drama surrounding a relationship between Jack Whitman, a fictional descendent of Walt Whitman, living in Brooklyn and working in Manhattan and the young, temporarily homeless Puerto Rican woman, Dolores Salcines, whom he meets on the subway." (p. 159) The plot, which Shapiro quickly

alludes to, is secondary to the narration of contemporary New York with its boundaries. Jack's office building turns out to be one of those Deleuzian "societies of control", marked by "vertical separation" and in Jack's words "each floor […] marked with certain degree of fear" (p. 160). In contrast, the subway and chaotic streets offer changes of encounter, "a place of contingency where 'quotidian humanity,' show up, introducing each other to an 'alterity'", as Shapiro notes.

Concluding the chapter on the difference between Harrison's and Whitman's poetics, Shapiro notes that "Harrison's poetics goes beyond the side-by-side idioms and monocular and optimistic (often dissensus denying) point of view that dominates Whitman's riffs of the city." Harrison's is a "cacophony of voices and realistic model of the contingencies of the encounter, which offers both promise and possibility of catastrophe." (p. 162) This leads Shapiro to finish the chapter with a Spinoza-inspired quotation from Deleuze, where bodies encountering one another may "combine to form a powerful whole" or to decompose, destroy the coherence of the other's part (p. 162). What the reader is left with is bodies, encounters – and contingency.

In the final chapter, Shapiro takes us to Berlin, to the Berlinale of 2007 – where, I also went, he made me remember. Berlin gets entangled with the analysis of the movie *Eye in the Sky* set in Hong Kong. Shapiro negotiates a "dual spatiality", "consuming the historical city", timing for access to the festivals, eating, transport. At the crux there is control: former control of the historical Berlin, the controlled festival with set time limits, and finally the film about control. "Just as I was continuously involved in timing my movements within the rush of the city, one of the film's main protagonists, the head of a theft ring, was also busy timing Hong Kong's movements. My film experience thus involved movement from one tension-filled temporal habitus to another. In addition, both the city that was the locus of my viewing and the city of the film are newly configured. Berlin, now a united national capital after a significant political reorientation, also like Hong Kong's took place in a highly politicized context - in Berlin's case, an attempt at 'an architecture of civil society,' of 'public space' and of 'democratic transparency'." (p 167) It is almost impossible to talk about architecture, film, transition and the Berlinale in the space of one chapter, but it all flows well. Shapiro's point is to connect and in that also to arrest thought,

disrupt the dwelling on the same topic for too long. This is related to the critical capacity of the method, and it is at the basis of flanerie.

Sometimes, reading Shapiro and others, I wonder about the value of mediated artistic processes. Yet works of art have the virtue of providing iterable experiences. Reading a book or watching a film we are a step closer to experiencing a similar poetic moment as the analyst whose text we already read. Still, thoughts of the one watching, produces another unique poesis, where the present, past and future get entangled. The previous readings, the current settings, the subsequent readings and recallings flash by in the experience of the reading-watching-reflecting subject. It is not evident that we end up with the same moments of interferences. Yet, unlike a truly unique first-hand experience that we ourselves cannot stage again, we can try to repeat the experience, even if it would lead to dissimilar conclusions. For example, Colm Toibín's novel Brooklyn (2009) made me ponder on time and space from a more trans-Atlantic perspective than Shapiro's urban reading in this book. Furthermore, reality *is* mediated, and analyzing art can be equally insightful as analyzing factual events. As Shapiro alludes to in his discussion of Harrison's Jack Whitman in New York, we do not have access to those first-hand experiences, whether temporal or spatial. We cannot enter those worlds or witness those struggles, although they or something similar exist.

Shapiro demonstrates throughout the book the mastery of reflection on these processes. He highlights a crucial aspect of the academic endeavour: as theorists or analysts we ought to make visible ourselves when despite the increasing calls for critical distance "when doing science" and for a repeatable method, which does not account for iteration, the singularity of each repeating moment and the possibility of the revelations that this experience, encounter would entail for reflexive processes or analysis. Furthermore, his work affords value on the encounters between seemingly separate (in terms of genre or time) micro level struggles and macro level theorising. Shapiro leaves us in Berlin, but the flânerie – of a reflexive, political Benjaminian flâneur continues.

Emilia Palonen

THE LIFE AND WORK OF REINHART KOSELLECK

Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural. An Introduction to the Work of Reinhart Koselleck*. New York: Berghahn Press 2012, 338 p.

Reinhart Koselleck has become a popular research topic after his death in February 2006. Two volumes of his articles, *Begriffsgeschichten* and *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte* been published by Carsten Dutt (for the latter se Helge Jordheim's review in this volume and my review in *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6:2, 2011). Books around the work of Koselleck have recently appeared (see in particular Hans Joas & Peter Vogt eds., *Begriffene Geschichte*, 2010, Javier Fernández Sebastián ed., *Political Concepts and Time,* 2011). To them we can now add a monograph, Niklas Olsen's *History in the Plural*.

The book goes back to a history dissertation written for Bo Stråth at the European University Institute in Florence. In his book Olsen tries in a classical German style to combine *Werk und Person*. Koselleck was, of course, a remarkable personality. He was, above all, a typical *Universalhistoriker* that is difficult even to imagine to rise in today's university. He told himself a lot of anecdotes on persons he had known – this was his own contribution to his 80th birthday party in 2003 – and from his former students and colleagues we can hear also additional anecdotes on Koselleck himself. It is without doubt that Koselleck's life, including his experiences as soldier of the *Wehrmacht* and prisoner of war in the Soviet Union, also has shaped his work. The question is, however, how far we should use this biographical perspective for the interpretation of an author's work?

Although Olsen title refers to Koselleck's "work", the genre of the book is rather an intellectual biography that relies strongly on Koselleck's personal experiences as sources for his scholarly work. For Olsen Koselleck "presented his work as personally motivated attempts to grasp the historical background of the modern world, in particular World War II, including how it was experienced, and how it could be understood and coped with." (p. 13). Or, his interest in the book lies in the "making of the historian" Koselleck (p. 4). This is, of course, an

entire legitimate perspective. It offers us a background for Koselleck's research interests and for his stands in the debates within the polity of West German historians since the late 1940s.

Despite emphasising that Koselleck was since his undergraduate days in Heidelberg indebted to Carl Schmitt's and Martin Heidegger's concepts and style of thinking, Olsen rightly insists that he did not share their political views or situational analysis. With good grounds he sees that the tendency to understand Koselleck's *Kritik und Krise* as a conservative critique of the Enlightenment, a view that was expressed soon after its publication in a review by Jürgen Habermas and persists among many scholars until today, misses the point of the book (p. 81-87 and notes).

Olsen's strength lies in the discussion Koselleck's profile as a relative outsider among historians that raised more interest abroad than in Germany. With his book Olsen joins in this respect the company of for example Melvin Richter, Helge Jordheim and myself. Through his work we can also know much about the West German academic and political culture and its shifting trends during the recent decades.

Koselleck's former students regularly tell anecdotes on his Bielefeld antipode Hans-Ulrich Wehler. Olsen contextualises this intra-faculty dispute and tries to do justice to its parts (see esp. 205-211, 242-250). To insist on the opposition between the respective styles of research with political implications, he first quotes Paul Nolte's view on Wehler: "Moral against distance, Enlightenment against skepticism, linearity and progress against plurality and decentralisation". Olsen then formulates himself the opposite pole: "Koselleck focused on the possibility of crisis, conflict, and war, on change and contingency, and he nurtured a much deeper scepticism toward every kind long-term planning, morality, and belief in societal progress" (p. 16). This difference can also provide a support for Koselleck's thesis that the losers in the ongoing struggles may turn to be better historians than the winners when the disputes concern the craft of the historians themselves.

As a Weberologist I always recommend a one-sided accentuation of a definite perspective. However, for Olsen the personality Reinhart Koselleck tends to dominate all too strongly over the textual corpus written by Reinhart Koselleck. In particular, a detailed analysis of the arti-

cles written or co-written by Koselleck to the volumes of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* is strangely missing (see my review article in *Redescriptions* vol. 10, 2006).

How can Olsen deal with Koselleck's concept of history without even mentioning the article *Geschichte, Historie* in the second volume of the "GG"? How can he defend "history in the plural" without confronting it with Koselleck's thesis that since late eighteenth century the German concept *die Geschichte* refers to a *Kollektivsingular,* to a "history as such", as opposed to particular histories? Olsen takes up the notion in the context of Koselleck's 1967 article *Historia magistra vitae* but sees its aim to "undermine notions of history in singular and to confirm the existence of histories in the plural" (p. 175). Koselleck's point in this essay and in the GG article from 1975 is, however, that the formation of the collective singular *die Geschichte* also constituted a new phenomenon, "history as such". Such reconceptualisation of the way to speak about the past also marked a horizon shift for historians that led to an entirely new agenda of research.

Koselleck refers to Goethe's interesting attempt to avoid this new concept of history, but he presupposes that contemporary historians still work within the collective singular. In this sense, when Olsen sees Koselleck's Goethe essay as a self-portrait as an outsider in the discipline (p. 254-256), he tends to miss the radical break that Koselleck identifies in the formation of *die Geschichte*, although he is critical of elevating this break into a veritable philosophy of history.

We can perhaps speak of a Hegelian and a Nietzschean manner of responding to the conceptualisation of history as such. For the former "one history" also requires a philosophy of history, as opposed to perspectivism in historiography that characterises the latter. Koselleck seems to symphatise with the Nietzschean side. Along this line he also takes for example stand for Weber's concept of *Kultur* against Hegel's *Geist* (in his contribution to Frühwald et al. *Geisteswissenschaften Heute*, 1991). In dealing with the world wars and their conceptualisation Koselleck supports the plurality of histories by opposing to all higher historico-philosophical meaning (*Sinngebung*) in the name of collective entities (see the title essay in *Vom Sinn und Unsinn der Geschichte* and my review in *Contributions*) to compensate the death of individuals.

One of the traps of intellectual biographies lies in the anachronistic mythologies of coherence and of prolepsis, to put it in the terms of Quentin Skinner. The biographical approach tends to emphasise "formative years" at the cost of later shifts, turns and transformations in the work. Olsen's work on Koselleck is here no exception. He uses a classical tool of biographers, an unpublished letter of Koselleck to Schmitt on 21 January 1953, before submitting his dissertation *Kritik und Krise* in the autumn of the same year. Olsen tends to detect in this letter the entire Koselleckian re-thinking of the concept of history and the corresponding research programme for historical studies "as solutions to the scientific and political crisis hat in his eyes marked the early 1950s"(Olsen p.58). Koselleck's main target is 'historicism', in the sense illustrated by Friedrich Meinecke's *Die Idee der Staatsräson in der neueren Geschichte* (1924), a study against which Schmitt turned in the 1920s. With good grounds Koselleck turns against Meinecke's unhistorical use of concepts in the letter as well as in *Kritik und Krise.*

I have formulated the difference between histories of ideas and concepts so that the former tend to detect roots, precedents, or programmes as early as possible, while histories of concepts tends to insist on discontinuities and to date the breaks as late as possible. With his claim that Koselleck more or less formulated his entire revision of historiography in the letter to Schmitt from 1953, Olsen rather practises history of ideas than that of concepts. Such an approach is surely legitimate, and probably he has right – against my view in *Die Entzauberung der Begriffe* (2004) – that the anthropological dimension or the "ontology of history" (p. 64) can already detected in this early stage of Koselleck's work. This is an inherent part of his debt to the German tradition of "philosophical anthropology," as practised by such authors as Max Scheler, Helmuth Plessner, Arnold Gehlen or Hans Freyer, but in a wider sense also by Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt and Carl Schmitt himself. Olsen insists that it is an anthropological reading of the work of Heidegger and Schmitt in particular that lead Koselleck to an anthropological "foundation" of his *Historik* and theory of historical times (see esp. the essays from 1980s in *Zeitschichten*, 2000).

For Olsen this "anthropological way of bringing in social considerations with the counter-concepts aimed the criticize and undermine the

very foundation of historical philosophies, the idea of an unified and universal history, and to replace them with a framework that thematized how human history unfolds in different ways, as histories within the described historical space" (p. 66). In other words, he claims that it is the 'spatiality' of history that guarantees its pluralism. The spatial opposites, such as up and down, or the limits of temporality, such as the finality of life and the possibility to end it, seem for him to provide a guarantee against the Hegelian type of founding one united History with capital H. In this sense the anthropological vision of history is that of a disillusionment, which Olsen counts as a typical attitude of the "sceptical generation" of German scholars born around 1925.

How is this anthropological space-dependence of human activities then related to the fact that just Koselleck is a theorist of temporalisation of concepts and experiences? Are not Schmitt, Heidegger and Arendt ultimately phenomenological essentialists in the search of a true meaning of concepts and, correspondingly, unable to understand their radical de-spatialisation and de-naturalisation of concepts and experiences à la Koselleck? Does not this temporalisation of concepts and experiences lead to possibilities of politicisation in the sense of rendering ever-new layers of allegedly 'natural' phenomena contingent and controversial? If understood in this sense, the temporalisation of concepts and experiences would rather invite to more devastating critique of unified histories à la Hegel than the anthropological disillusionment. Conversely, is not the looking for an anthropological basis for the theory of historical times a sign that – following Werner Conze's early plans for a conceptual historical lexicon – also Koselleck was longing for something unchanging, although perhaps merely in order to render the historical changes better intelligible (see my review in *Contributions*).

Olsen directs the attention to a new conceptual instrument that Koselleck thematised in an article from 1995 and used as a title essay of his *Zeitschichten* in 2000. "With its assumption of history as an open, diverse, and contingent process composed of various *histories*, the notion of *Zeitschichten* softened up the more schematic account of history as composed by radically different epochs found in his earlier work" (p. 229). Is this an appropriate view of the main point of Koselleck's new concept?

I would rather insist that temporal layers refer to the language of agents. The one and singular horizon shift in the formation of *die Geschichte* cannot be relativised to a shift in conceptual layers in historiography. The narrative and constellation of the articles in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* might sometimes exaggerate the radicalism of conceptual shifts. In cases such as *Geschichte* or also *Politik* we, however, have good grounds to emphasise that a new concept and a new manner to think was constructed, which also led to resetting of the research agenda for scholars. To sum up, I share Olsen's view on Koselleck as a defender of "history in the plural" but on different grounds than he does.

This does not diminish the value of Olsen's work. He has for example well understood that Koselleck was no system builder, that "he saw no reason to integrate the notions into a systematic and unified framework or to explain the exact relation among them" (p. 231). The recent interest in the work of Koselleck might well be due to this non-systematic character of his work that never makes reading his writings boring and predictable.

This leads to my final point regarding the character of Olsen's work, namely its subtitle "An Introduction… ". What is the scholarly value of such introductions? Do we need them? Are the old Collingwoodian arguments in *The Idea of History* against the "text-books" written for readers *in statu pupillari* strong enough against writing introductions?

Niklas Olsen has approached the problematic pragmatically. This work is an introduction in the sense of presenting an overview of Reinhart Koselleck's *œuvre* to non-German readers by setting it to its own historical context and looking for Koselleck's moves to act in this context of debates. Olsen's own decisive move in the genre of introductions is that he has translated all quotations from Koselleck into English, without presenting the originals, without allowing the readers to see Koselleck's own words at the same time.

This has some unfortunate consequences. The readers who do not understand German are held in the *statu pupillari*, that is, they must rely on Olsen's translations rather than are encouraged to learn German themselves, as a condition to become a first rank conceptual historian. The German readers remain, as always when not easily available corpora of the works quoted are at hands, suspicious of translations. To take

one example: "According to Koselleck, historical philosophy proved extremely effective as a political weapon?" (p.51). When referring to *Kritik und Krise* and to the Enlightenment, we can guess that the original word must be *Geschichtsphilosophie*. But should it rather be translated as "philosophy of history"? Or does Olsen refer by "historical philosophy" to something else, to a philosophy including a historical dimension? If this is the case, how does it differ from "philosophy of history"?

My final point is to share the Collingwoodian polemic. Olsen's book is a genuine academic piece of scholarship. It should not be devaluated into an "Introduction". Correspondingly, it should respond to the scholarly requirement of presenting the key quotations that are analysed in the book also in the original language of the author. One of the main points of conceptual history is obviously that it is not "ideas as such" but their formulations that matter in order to grasp their point and their context. The formulations would also allow the readers to do their own analysis.

This is at the same time a polemic against the increasing provincialism of the mono-lingual Anglophone publication industry. When books like Olsen's hardly can be a commercial success, why to devaluate their content and quality by making misleading concessions to the publisher in omitting original quotes?

Kari Palonen

Review

Ilie, Cornelia (ed.), *European Parliaments under Scrutiny. Discourse strategies and interaction practices*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Discourse Approaches to Politics, Society and Culture –series 38, Amsterdam/ Philadelphia, 2010, 378 pp.

Besides their legislative and government control functions, modern parliaments still have their classic role of being an arena for parliamentary deliberation. As the etymology of the word parliament indicates (*parler – parlement*), parliaments are forums for political talking, discussion and deliberation. This specific perspective to parliamentarism has been recently (re) acknowledged by certain number of researchers. In addition to institutionally and constitutionally oriented parliamentary studies, the focus has been increasingly turned to rhetorically, conceptually and linguistically oriented parliamentary research.

Cornelia Ilie edited the book "European Parliaments under Scrutiny, Discourse strategies and interaction practices" and proposes a new contribution to this, yet rather limited field of research that highlights parliamentary language. But as Ilie points out, the renewed interest in the roles and discourses of national parliaments lately has grown along with the rising role and powers of the European Parliament.

The starting point of Ilie's book is to value parliamentary arena as an institutionalised forum of open deliberation and dissent in which opposite points of view are discussed and political solutions reached through interaction between political adversaries. Through parliamentary discussion, that is "by negotiating ideas and opinions, proposals and counter-proposals", Ilie argues, "parliamentarians are discursively (re) shaping and (re)framing current conceptualisations of values, identities and relationships that lie at the basis of collective decision-making" (1). These processes lead to polyphony of parliamentary discourses that "do not only reflect political, social and cultural configurations" but also "contribute to shaping these configurations linguistically and rhetorically". (1) Therefore parliamentary discourse analysis is brought into play: in order to better understanding of parliamentary rules and prac-

tices, parliamentary interaction and a use of parliamentary language.

Ilie's book is comprised of 11 different articles focusing on parliamentary discourse as well as on 11 different European parliaments including some post-communist parliaments and the European Parliament.

The book regards parliamentary discourse as a particular genre of political discourse which has a number of sub-genres. As parliaments are arenas of institutionalised use of language, i.e. parliamentary discourse is formalised, ritualised, monitored and rule-bound, the sub-genres refer to these institutionalised forms of speech events such as debates, interpellations or oral or written questions which all have different institutional functions. The authors, whose articles comprise the volume, deal with various parliamentary sub-genres and analyse their corpus-based parliamentary data through different theoretical models from the fields of linguistic and discourse analysis.

In most chapters the secondary background literature concentrates on the recent, so-called interdisciplinary-studies on parliamentary discourse done by scholars from different linguistic sub-disciplines. Among these scholars Cornelia Ilie's studies are frequently referred to but the research of scholars such as Ruth Wodak, Teun A. van Dijk, Paul Bayley or Paul Chilton who have inspired many writers is also prevalent.

Even though the articles that comprise the book are mostly based on the workshop papers on European Parliamentary Discourses [1], they are well grouped and provide mutual dialogue to some extent. The chapters of the book are divided in four parts, each of which focuses on particular topics. Part one deals with political identities in parliamentary debates, part two concentrates on ritualised strategies of parliamentary confrontation, part three introduces procedural, discursive and rhetorical particularities of post-communist parliaments and part four concentrates on contrastive studies of parliamentary rhetoric and argumentation.

The first part of the book focuses on parliamentary roles and identities. In his article, Teun van Dijk discusses discursive formulations of political identities and analyses them through various fragments of par-

1 Language in focus: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Södertörn University, Sweden, 11.-12. November 2004, ASLA Conference.

liamentary debates in Spain and in the UK which related to the war in Iraq. His framework is a new theory of context which regards contexts as mental representations or models. [2] After a detailed theoretical discussion about social identities and political identity as a specific one "in the domain of politics," his analysis of parliamentary debates reveals that political leaders such as Tony Blair and José Maria Aznar can display multiple political identities in just a few minutes.

In the next article, Cornelia Ilie furthers the discussion of identity co-construction in parliamentary confrontation. She includes the role of the audience in her analysis of parliamentary interactions and represents a typology of parliamentary participants. Her multidisciplinary approach to the complexity of parliamentary interplay and her examples of the Prime Minister's Question Time in Britain reveals multiple politically interesting details and confirms once again the witty practise of parliamentary language within Westminster.

Maria Aldina Marques' article concludes the first part with its discussion on the public and private spheres represented in the Portuguese parliament's interpellation to the government debates. She analyses how the first person pronouns (we and I) are used in these debates but without paying any attention to the *topic* of the interpellation, which could affect to these formulations (whether the question in interpellation was about social and labour policies or about abortion).

The second part of the book highlights ritualised strategies of parliamentary confrontation from the viewpoint of three different parliaments: the Italian, Austrian and French. In their article on Italy, Donatella Antelmi and Francesca Santulli compare Romano Prodi's and Silvio Berlusconi's speeches as new prime ministers presenting a new government to the Italian parliament. The authors' well-written argumentation shows that the two leaders of opposite parties shared similar concepts and *topoi* but different linguistic strategies and discursive styles in the same institutional context.

In the next article, Elisabeth Zima, Geert Brône and Kurt Feyaerts

2 See e.g. Teun A. van Dijk: Text and context of parliamentary debates. In Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Parliamentary Discourse. Ed. by Paul Bailey. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2004.

discuss interruptive comments in the Austrian Parliament and bring out interesting viewpoints about this as yet under-researched topic. According to the authors' quantitative analysis, the unauthorised interruptive comments (referred to as the icing on the cake of parliamentary debates) are adversarial in nature. Therefore "speakers in the adversarial discourse type of parliamentary debates opportunistically parallel and exploit linguistic input that is brought into the speech situation by political opponents at different levels of linguistic organisation." (161) The political significance of these findings, though, could have been further analysed.

The last article of the second part examines the government control function in the French National Assembly. Clara-Ubaldina Lorda Mur focuses the *Questions au gouvernement* sessions in 2002. Contrary to the British Question Time, the French sessions are, according to the author, lifeless and unimaginative mostly due to the speeches written in advance and then read aloud by the MPs. Lorda Mur states that the MPs' behaviour is reminiscent of football fans in a stadium: "they cheer for the goals scored by their team and they attempt to drown the cheers of the other team." (188) Nevertheless, contrary to football matches, in these parliamentary sessions "*le coeur n'y est plus,"* as the author puts it.

The cultural variations in parliamentary cultures become convincingly visible in the third part of the book in which post-communist parliaments' procedural, discursive and rhetorical particularities are scrutinised. Cornelia Ilie opens this part with her article on dissent and interpersonal relations in the Romanian parliamentary discourse. Ilie shows how the discourse of these recently emerged democratic parliaments in Central and Eastern Europe are under-researched. Therefore this section is of special value. Ilie indicates the tendency towards consensual behaviour, to keeping the degree of disagreement and confrontation under control and maximising agreement in parliamentary debates. She demonstrates that in this fairly new parliament in a reform-oriented post-communist society, there are less formalised and ritualised regulations concerning parliamentary interaction but, instead, more emphasis is put on hierarchical position and status (and politeness) than in older European parliaments.

Yordanka Madzharova Bruteig discusses Czech parliamentary in-

teractions in the debates, speeches and interpellations of the present Czech parliament and of the post-communist Czechoslovak parliament. Bruteig's findings about negative relationship towards parliamentary confrontation are similar to what Ilie described in the previous article. According to Bruteig, "a style of parliamentary communication based on confrontation between political opponents is still not accepted as beneficial by Czech citizens." (286) She sees this as symptomatic of the current Czech political culture and states that contradiction is regarded as something negative that reinforces citizen scepticism in the parliamentary institution. The reasons for this reluctance towards confrontation are two-fold: the influence of the monologic and non-conflictual parliamentary discourse of the communist regime and "the lingering reflection of the idealised and consensus oriented democracy blooming in the first years after 1989." (297)

Cezar M. Ornatowski's article addresses Polish parliamentary discourse and its transformation after the political transition of 1989. He examines the changes in the verbal and non-verbal behaviours of Polish MP's in the lower chamber, the Sejm, by concentrating on interruptions, turn-taking, selection and change of topics, obstructions in the conduct of debate and in applause and humour. Ornatowski's analysis departs from the thesis that parliamentary discourse is related to its historical, political and cultural contexts. He argues that the assumptions about parliamentary discourse connected to the paradigmatic model of the British House of Commons or other stable democracies, cannot be applied to the Polish parliament in the period before the fall of "real socialism". Ornatowski considers the confrontational aspect inherent to the structure of parliament, which makes the Polish parliamentary discourse adversarial today. However, this was not the case between 1947 and 1989 when the parliament was under the control of the ruling party and parliament's existence was to guarantee party's political leadership as well as to maintain the pseudo-democratic facade.

The same is true with the rules and ritualised conventions of parliamentary behaviour which were not "valid" in the transitional new parliament. After the political change, Polish MP's (many of whom were novices in both parliament and politics) faced a demand for a new style of doing politics as well as understanding it as a novel rhetorical situ-

ation. Ornatowski indicates that seemingly "background" or unparliamentary behaviours such as laughter or applause constitute an important aspect of the political dynamics in the chamber and therefore are also valuable to highlight the understanding of their roles in periods of political change. According to Ornatowski, "changes in verbal and non-verbal behaviours *functionalized* emerging pluralism, both helping MPs to work within it, all within the specificity of the Polish historical context." (261)

Ornatowski interprets the fragments taken from parliamentary records. His analysis of details is historically and politically contextualised and his argumentation does not stay merely on empirical or theoretical level but consistently leads to broader conclusions. Therefore he links his observations regarding the behaviours of MP's to their political functions and significance "within the context of change in the chamber and in the broader polity" (226).

Ornatowski's personal familiarity with the Polish political culture and language is evident which is especially enjoyable from the reader's point of view. In section seven of his article, which deals with the changing role of humour within Polish parliament, he analyses the evolution of humour in the Sejm after 1989 and argues that similarly to other behaviours in the chamber, humour is related "in complex ways to ideological and 'global domain' political context". (259) The appearance of humour in parliamentary discourse has been one of the most visible signs of political change since the socialist-era parliament in which humour had no role in the chamber.

Compared to Ornatowski's article, some of the other articles in the book remain more on the technical level of linguistic-theoretical analysis without attempting to connect the empirical data to wider politically and historically oriented contexts and conclusions. It seems that some linguists, who are using political and parliamentary material as their primary sources, remain satisfied with their linguistic findings and therefore their argumentation ends at the point where politically interesting questions about the findings just begin to manifest. Sometimes it is also questionable if the straightforward application of linguistic theories to parliamentary debates is fertile, especially when no historical significance concerning the specificity of parliamentary style of speak-

ing is taken into account (e.g. parliamentary proceedings as a model for other forums of speaking). Undoubtedly, this is simply a question of perspective, since the book's framework of linguistic theories, models and concepts are not self-evident for a political scientist. Nevertheless, without being that familiar with the linguistic or discourse analysis theoretical framework, a historically or politically oriented reader is able to find fresh point of views to parliamentary sources. One of the main targets of the volume is to provide an interdisciplinary contribution to the field of parliamentary research.

The last part of the book focuses on contrastive studies of parliamentary rhetoric and argumentation. H. José Plug discusses ad-hominem arguments in the Dutch and the European Parliaments and aims at determining politicians' strategic manoeuvring in parliamentary debates when staging direct personal attacks. He considers whether institutional characteristics of parliamentary debates affect the way in which Dutch MPs and Members of the European Parliament use these attacks. Although he discusses the rules of procedure of both parliaments in his analysis, it would have been fascinating if he could have included a broader consideration of the institutional differences between the Dutch parliament and European Parliament in terms of the principle of parliamentarism and the role of opposition that affect the discursive cultures of these parliamentary arenas.

In the last article, Isabel Iñigo-Mora deals with rhetorical strategies in the British and Spanish parliaments' discussion of the Iraq conflict. She does this through the framework of discursive psychology, and shows similar interpretations in style and discourse practices in each parliament. Iñigo-Mora concludes that besides similarities, there are also striking differences between the British and the Spanish parliamentary discourse practices: British MPs used a less exaggerated style than Spanish MPs.

In sum, *European Parliaments under Scrutiny: Discourse strategies and interaction practices* provides a warmly welcome contribution to parliamentary studies that has a language based perspective to representative assemblies and their proceedings. For readers who are not that familiar with modern parliamentary structures, it gives essential and basic information about parliamentary proceedings within different parliamentary

cultures in Europe and thereby also renders intelligible the overall role of talk within any parliamentary framework. It can also serve as an opportunity to enlarge a reader's purely institutional perspective of parliaments. For such a reader, Ilie's book offers a fresh angle to review parliamentary day-to-day decision-making practices through various multidisciplinary linguistic analyses about MP's discourses, behaviours and interaction.

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