

Wiesner| Roshchin | Boilard [eds.]

In Debate with Kari Palonen

Concepts, Politics, Histories



Nomos

Claudia Wiesner | Evgeny Roshchin
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Claudia Wiesner/Evgeny Roshchin/Marie-Christine Boilard

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In Debate with Kari Palonen: a Journey across Concepts, Politics and Histories

Marie-Christine Boilard, Evgeny Roshchin & Claudia Wiesner

This book is not a classical anthology. On the contrary, it is meant to break with academic conventions and offer the reader a set of new perspectives with which to reflect upon the diversity of perspectives on concepts, politics and histories provoked, directly or indirectly, by the work of the Finnish political science scholar Kari Palonen. Only a handful of occasions, however, provide the opportunity to mobilise the intellectual resources necessary for writing such a book. Although Kari Palonen's retirement will certainly not prevent him from pursuing his academic activities, the occasion gave us, nevertheless, the momentum to act and make this book a reality. We sought to discuss principles and methods and question concepts and theories of which Kari Palonen has been a keen protagonist. We also sought to draw attention to some major intellectual entanglements between the work of our contributors and the main subject of this volume, namely Kari Palonen's academic journey and oeuvre. In this respect the book is an appreciation of Palonen's uncompromising endorsement of rigorous, and at times even fierce, academic debates. However, on this occasion it is *his* work and intellectual trajectories that have been brought into the spotlight of academic discussion.

As the editors of a book on such a subject, we aimed to meet two important criteria. On the one hand, the book should not simply repeat or summarise Kari Palonen's work (for not only could he himself have achieved this goal, he has already done so in the past). On the other hand, the book should illuminate how a particular constellation of ideas and individuals have been developed and nourished, both by his active engagement in academic debates during the past four decades and in a more general sense. To fulfil these criteria we had to create a literary space for people who have had the opportunity to collaborate or interact closely with Kari Palonen. We therefore opted for short essays guided by a set of open questions, in which individual authors were given the opportunity to express what Kari Palonen and his work has meant for them in a way which other more conventional forms of publication would not have permitted.

This book assembles a collection of essays that we hope will enable the reader to learn about Kari Palonen's academic journey and oeuvre through the perspective of others, developed in the course of their personal interactions and scholarly exchanges with the academic persona and his work. The authors of these essays sometimes engage with Kari Palonen's work, sometimes take a distance from it, and in other instances take his ideas into foreign territory. They also illustrate how people were inspired by their academic encounters with Kari Palonen to explore new topics, or discover old ones anew, through the lenses of concepts, politics and histories. The appreciation of debate and the ability to see things from different sides have been the enabling factors for these perspectives to unfold in their multiplicity. In our view, this resonates with the perspectivist stance adopted by Kari Palonen in his work. The volume highlights how he has kept the debate open at all times and all costs, which is something that allowed his ideas and theories to continually travel, to be taken in new directions, and be transformed in the process.

This collection of essays illustrates the ways arguments made by Kari Palonen were engaged with, reflected upon, criticised or developed by people from a great variety of fields of research, ranging from the studies of parliamentarism, to the European Union, African development policies, and the United Nations. The book comprises essays from various disciplinary and theoretical perspectives, providing the reader with a multi-faceted picture of the direction in which Kari Palonen's arguments and theories developed and the promise they contain for further impact. Thus, for those familiar with the concept, the book probably presents some traces of a *Wirkungsgeschichte*, as the contributors of this book all collaborated with Kari Palonen in different contexts, some having crossed paths with him, while others have been directly engaged with him at the time this book was written.

The nature of such a volume inevitably mixes the academic experiences of individual authors with personal ones. As a result, the reader will learn about both the academic persona of Kari Palonen and themes that are central to his various academic projects. The essays, however, have yet more to tell the reader, namely how numerous researchers have been stimulated by their encounter with Kari Palonen in breaking new ground with their work or exploring new avenues of research. In this sense, the present book is of notable intellectual curiosity as it provides an opportunity to observe cross-generational intellectual reactions to some of the many ideas and debates that Kari Palonen has initiated or contributed to.

Kari Palonen's name often prompts our interlocutors to invoke an image of the 'Jyväskylä School'. Thus, this book cannot but reflect the fact that several generations of scholars formed their research agendas at the University of Jyväskylä. The heterogeneity of the scholars, however, already manifests itself in the different turns taken in the essays assembled in the book. Another aspect of the kind of research conducted at the University of Jyväskylä makes the use of the term 'school' problematic: despite the figure of Kari Palonen, research projects generated in Jyväskylä are and have always been of a cooperative nature that has allowed independent scholars to come together with their own *distinct* research interests. Most of the studies, however, have been and continue to be focused around the mission statement of the *Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in Political Thought and Conceptual Change* (CoE PolCon, 2006–2011) and the independent Research Centre that succeeded it: 'The guiding principle [...] is thinking, reading and analysing phenomena politically. The concept of contingent activity and the contested, controversial and historical character of concepts serve as the heuristic core of the studies conducted [...].' The Centre until today has provided both an organisational framework and an administrative basis, as well as a locus of intellectual encounters and discussions for its members. Thus, intellectual controversies and dissensus have been key features in its academic events. This is possibly one of the most distinct attributes of the 'Jyväskylä School', should one prefer to think of it in terms of a school.

Not only the topics, but also the approaches that are discussed in this book can therefore differ considerably, but they have at least one crucial point in common: they are all unified by taking language and concepts as something eminently political, implying that the use of language and theory is always perspectivist and associated with either a *pro* or *contra* stance on a subject. History, Kari Palonen emphasises, is never simply 'History', but always 'histories' in the plural—including the history of losers (i.e. those whom history has elided) that researchers must be particularly careful to reconstruct—drawing attention to the plurality of perspectives in which even a single historical event may be interpreted. This volume indicates how this common understanding may be relevant for conducting research not only in various sub-disciplines of political science but also in other disciplines and, hence, it genuinely appreciates the meaning of 'interdisciplinarity' that is often attributed to the research field of conceptual history.

The styles and themes of the essays in this book cogently suggest their division into three general sections: 'Concepts', 'Politics' and 'Histories'.

This division not only reflects the subjects the contributors chose to dwell upon, they also reflect a conceptual triptych that Kari Palonen has been assembling throughout his academic career. Thus, many of the essays pick up core concepts in Kari Palonen's work, while others look at past and contemporary political institutions, processes and constellations through these lenses, and yet others situate Kari Palonen himself within a history of debate as well as identify shifts in his work as it has developed.

The book's first section, *Concepts*, comprises a number of essays that reflect on key concepts related to Kari Palonen's perspective on politics and political theorising. Concepts are always contested and controversial in their usage and their meanings. Nonetheless, both political analysis and political life itself centre around concepts. Some of the contributors to this volume explore the perspectivist dimensions of such concepts as 'politics', 'dissensus', 'debate', and 'time' itself, and the implications these interpretations may have for the understanding of 'parliament', the studies of 'rights', the developments, often subversive, in various disciplines, or for conceptual history itself. Other essays focus on the style of arguing about a subject from a different perspective that relates to the parliamentary paradigm of politics that Kari Palonen has been defending in the recent years. Several essays also treat the concept of parliamentarism itself, while others touch upon how to apply the approach of conceptual history and the categories of parliamentarism to the European Union. Finally, a number of essays in this section also show attempts to appraise Kari Palonen's combination of theoretical premises elaborated by Max Weber, Reinhart Koselleck and Quentin Skinner, and how such a combination translates into a political theory that could carve out a place of its own in a wider domain of political sciences.

The second section of the book, *Politics*, contains a handful of essays that examine the limits, constraints and constitution of 'politics' and 'the political'. The essays highlight a number of aspects: 'The political' is an autonomous sphere, it is related to and enables political action, and it is amenable to both collective and individualist interpretations. 'Politics' and the 'political' can be found anywhere: phenomena and practices designated by these terms extend into different arenas, and take different historical forms. The realm of politics is a realm of action and a realm of change, where a contingent manifestation of human action is always possible. With regard to the classical division in the Anglo-American tradition of political science where politics is divided into 'policy', 'polity' and 'politics', Kari Palonen contributed a decisive extension: he added the notions of 'politicking' and 'politicization'. His temporal reading of politics accentuates the character of

politics as an activity as opposed to a sphere, something that is both acknowledged and discussed in the second section of this volume. The essays relate to both classical and contemporary aspects of politics, including the practices of modern democratic regimes and critical perspectives on them. Many of the essays underscore the political nature of language employed by political actors. Some of the essays examine how the arenas Kari Palonen analysed in his studies have been changing—the most notable change being in his shifting focus on the political, from studying ‘Piazza’, i.e. citizen’s activism, to ‘Parliament’. Finally, several essays contain examples employing Kari Palonen’s ‘parliamentary’ lens for the analysis of unconventional sites of debate, while others take a critical stance by explicating the limits of a ‘parliamentary’ perspective on politics.

For their part, the collection of essays assembled in the *Histories* section offer unique reflections on personal encounters and experiences their authors had with Kari Palonen. They highlight how their attitudes towards method and approach became enmeshed with personal relationships and thus give us invaluable insight into contemporary intellectual history. In this sense, the book contributes to our understanding of what the writer in focus *was doing* in writing his texts, or simply underscores respective modes of thinking and acting politically in various spaces and with a variety of personalities. In addition, many of the essays collected in this volume, particularly those found in the last section, illustrate Kari Palonen’s unique way of applying the principle of *fair play* to academic debates and academic exchanges for advancing thinking and research, by giving equal opportunity to participate irrespective of the fact that one is a doctoral student or a senior researcher. Finally, these ‘histories’ highlight characteristics that feature in the more private persona of the academic in question: a passion for train travel (a visit to the Conceptual History Conference in Korea was a welcome occasion to take the Trans-Siberian Railway), crime stories (usually read late on a Friday afternoon) and football (of which participants in any academic events would immediately become aware should an important game take place around the time of a conference dinner).

The task of collecting and combining these essays was a daunting one for the editors, not only because the constellation of scholars who collaborated with Kari Palonen in one way or another is vast and cannot be properly accounted for within the confines of a single book, but also because time in this case proved to be more of a constraint than a resource. As such, it prompted us to act more like politicians who have to make choices in an environment where time, resources and information are always limited. We

asked a lot from our contributors and confronted them with the unavoidable deadlines that are necessarily linked to such a project. We remain deeply grateful to all those who managed to contribute to this book or supported the project by other means. Without this moral, practical and material support, the project would have never materialized.

In conclusion, we hope to have mapped, although fragmentarily, some of the debates mediated by Kari Palonen at venues such as the History of Political and Social Concepts Group (recently renamed to History of Concepts Group), the European Science Foundation networks, the European Consortium for Political Research conferences and workshops, the Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in Political Thought and Conceptual Change, the Academy of Finland projects, the academic journal *Redescriptions*, and last, but certainly not least, the University of Jyväskylä. In doing so, we meant not only to reflect on the contributions and impact made by our interlocutor, but also highlight the prospects for synergistic inter-disciplinary research in the near future.

Concepts

Political Theory of a Different Sort

Evgeny Roshchin

I met Kari Palonen and came to know his work only about a decade ago. Then a postgraduate student in political science at the European University in St Petersburg interested in the formation of Russian political vocabulary, I was starting to explore approaches to the history of concepts. My entry point to this literature happened to be the essay 'The State' by Quentin Skinner, which had by that time been translated into Russian. However, it was Palonen's 'Quentin Skinner' book (2003) that offered me a valuable overview of Skinner's work and helped me to relate it to political theory. This latter link motivated me to join the so-called 'Jyväskylä School', renowned for its studies in the history of concepts and rhetoric, as Palonen's student and to subsequently stay on at this university after my dissertation. Perhaps, the meaning of the term 'school' is somewhat overstretched when applied to the group of scholars affiliated with Jyväskylä, but the scope of studies carried out under Palonen's supervision, united by shared methodological commitments, is indeed impressive as it ranges from studies in the concepts of voting, citizenship, and asylum to the studies of procedural aspects of debates and the parliament; it even ventures into the field of the international. To some extent the latter was achieved by my own work on the concept of friendship in international relations (Roshchin 2009) inspired *inter alia* by the technique of constructing *topoi* in Palonen's monumental study of politics (2006).

Curiously, while the Jyväskylä identity, at the heart of which lies Palonen's own work, is recognised internationally, the perception of its disciplinary belonging is somewhat more complex. In a nutshell, for some historians political studies in the history of concepts may not seem historical enough, while for some political theorists and especially positivist political science these are not theoretical and political enough, as it is not always clear whether such studies offer solutions or theories to address political problems that our societies face. For Palonen history of concepts is, first and foremost, a type of political theorising (Palonen 2002). Its role in political theory consists in highlighting contestability, contingency and historicity in the use of concepts (Palonen 2002, 92), which indicates how faithful this approach is

to the linguistic and ‘rhetorical’ turn in political studies. In the following, I shall inquire into just what sort of theory this is and raise questions about its scope and avenues for further development.

While the old Austinian maxim—that things can be done with words—may seem trivial to many nowadays, it is worthwhile to remind ourselves that politics can indeed be done with words, which may also be trivial in the case of a campaigning politician, and, which is possibly less trivial, in the case of theories about politics. Political theory of the sort advocated by Palonen views both incidents as rhetorical moves that seek to legitimise and prioritise one course of action, or view of the world, over another. Thus, the main goal of the history of concepts in this context is to highlight the normative content of any political argument as well as to identify the political conditionality of any normative theory. As Palonen argues, ‘all values and norms can thus be viewed as “situational”, as judged according to the rhetorical and temporal criteria applied to the situation’ (Palonen 2002, 103). This argument then suggests that any new legislation (even made in authoritarian regimes) and any policy, including foreign policy, needs legitimation to ensure minimal endorsement by the public and to mitigate opposition. It necessarily means that no policy should be understood in substantial and universalistic terms; instead it will always be about situational claims made with a view to possible objections, and of changing or defending the status quo. Legitimation and rhetoric that help to achieve it are a type of political action that is difficult to account for with analytical tools developed in positivist theories; still this type of action is undeniably central to politics and could be rendered meaningful by means of a rhetorical approach to the history of concepts.

A further political-theoretical promise of the history of concepts is in situating the knowledge/theory of politics in the same range of political actions as those of politicians, thereby depriving theory of the privileged status of an objective observer. Formal explanatory models that pretend to perform this role (e.g. ‘prisoner’s dilemma’) in a sense ‘freeze’ social reality by isolating only those factors that could help to explain a particular action, while bracketing off the authors from political processes. Conversely, the history of concepts animates the fabric of political activity by assigning equal status to all reasoning and speaking agents (e.g. ‘a voter’, ‘a politician’, and ‘a theorist of voting’), although admitting that the impact they make might be very different. The difference between explanatory theories that earnestly aspire to objectivity and political theory of the history of concepts is simple: while a *proposed* theory—the main outcome of the former—tries to encircle

the relevant political process within itself, the act of *proposing* a theory—the main object of the latter—is not self-referential, and instead it situates a theory within a wider political and intellectual context and posits it as a political act, in the light of which the components of the theory must be viewed. This can be illustrated with the current state of debate on the history of republican freedom, which indirectly relates to Palonen’s work.

Philip Pettit’s stance in the debate seems to represent a former position of the proposed theory, which is deduced from the republican tradition and developed to apply to and reform the current situation (Martí and Pettit 2010). Thus, when engaging with the present from this perspective one is destined to make judgements about present-day problems as dictated by the proposed theory. Quentin Skinner’s stance within the debate, and consequently his attitude towards the present-day situation, is different as it suggests a focus on the ways theories were proposed in the past to show the contingency of our own beliefs. Thus, this approach leaves the republican research programme and directions it might take much more open-ended (I discuss this difference in republican theories in more detail elsewhere, see Roshchin 2014).

This begs the question of whether such a critical approach to a number of linguistic practices ranging from the political rhetoric of legitimation to theories-as-rhetorical-moves can offer a political theory of their own. For those who expect political theory to provide policy templates or to develop moral guidelines that underlie policies, Palonen’s political theory will be a disappointment because he strongly objects to the very possibility of formulating a type of political theory that could suggest ways to overcome problems our societies encounter. He stresses that it can only be an indirect style of theorising, which cannot afford patronising political agents in the present. However, this leaves the status and effects of the proposed political theory open to serious criticisms.

From the perspective of political theory the approach of the history of concepts is destined to be secondary to the objects it strives to subvert. As it rejects the normative and theoretical agenda of its own, it will need other strands of political theory and ideologies to exist, which it would be able to hold in check and prevent their closure. Palonen’s own study of the concept of politics seems to point in this direction when it aims at ‘dethroning historical “big names”.’ This study digs up texts and authors that are not widely known and thus attempts to write ‘a history of losers’ (Palonen 2006, 31). But to write a history of losers is to recognise, although indirectly, the status of a certain mainstream grand historical narrative against which some the-

ories/actors do appear as ‘losers’; it also means to say something to those who endorse the premises of this narrative. In a sense, this kind of approach plays the same role in political theory as the role played by the opposition in parliament and society. Although it is not obliged to offer alternative policies and projects for the future, it must treat all proposals laid in front of the public with an inherent suspicion and subject them to detailed scrutiny with the effect of showing their situational expediency and normative value.

While the role played by this political theory is similar to the role of the political opposition, these are still different political forces that make different impacts. Therefore, in its capacity as theory it should be as clear as possible about the effects it seeks to produce. From the perspective of mainstream political theories the effects of such political theorising are not always self-evident. While avoiding any patronising suggestions for future generations and current politicians, it seems to place much responsibility on the politician to listen to recovered and dissenting voices. This responsibility, or expectation, can be traced back to the formulation of a research task by an historian seeking to overcome the antiquarian image of critical or genealogical historical studies. As Skinner famously formulated, ‘intellectual historians can hope to provide their readers with information relevant to the making of judgements about their current values and beliefs, and then leave them to ruminate’ (Skinner 1998, 118–9).

In the world where the bridges between theory and practice are usually conceived in terms of policy advice, a genealogical critique of underlying normative assumptions may not easily reach receptive minds. In this sense, Pettit’s project of constructing more just regimes and policies to make up for the damage that structures of domination did to civic liberties seems more appealing to acting politicians, as his recruitment to evaluate the work of the Spanish government has demonstrated. Thus, apart from recognition of absolute necessity to have a critical say on political proposals and current situation as such, which gives the history of concepts a part of its legitimacy, it could also, possibly, take a more definite genealogical orientation towards current debates to become an independent strand of political theorising.

However, I do not tend to see the problems of status and effects as *problems*. Instead, they appear to me as indicating potential avenues to further shape critical political theorising that has long been advocated by Palonen. This is not intended to be a ritual end to the commentary on the work of a colleague and close collaborator, but rather an observation of an emerging body of empirical and theoretical work in anticipation of further publications spelling out methodological premises in relation to the proposed political

theorising. Thus, Kari Palonen's own work seeking to re-establish Parliament not as just a forum for making political speeches, but as an institution of a rhetorical theory of knowledge can be interpreted as one such way of building a political theory (Palonen 2013).

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An Intellectual Redescription: Revisiting Kari Palonen's *Quentin Skinner*

Martin J. Burke

Although published some eleven years ago, Kari Palonen's *Quentin Skinner: History, Politics, Rhetoric* still stands as a signal achievement within the extant scholarly literature. Unlike the collections edited by James Tully, *Meaning and Understanding: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, and Tully and Annabel Brett, *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, it is a monograph. Unlike the comparative studies produced by Sami Syrjämäki, *Sins of a Historian: Perspectives on the Problem of Anachronism*, Salvatore Muscalino, *Linguaggio, Storia e Politica: Ludwig Wittgenstein e Quentin Skinner*, and Ryan Walter, *Sovereignty and Governmentality: Skinner and Foucault on the History of Political Thought*, its focus is on a single figure. As one in the Polity Press's 'Key Contemporary Thinkers' series, it places Skinner alongside many of his important interlocutors—W.V. Quine, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Richard Rorty, Isaiah Berlin, Michel Foucault, Thomas Kuhn and Clifford Geertz among them—as well as in the company of Hannah Arendt, one of Palonen's long-standing conversationists. Absent from that series is a volume on Reinhart Koselleck, whose work Palonen sought to bring into dialogue with Skinner's in *Die Entzauberung der Begriffe*, also published in 2003. Yet the most significant figure in the book—save, of course, for its subject—is Palonen's own intellectual lodestar, Max Weber. Reading Skinner in terms of Weber, and incorporating him into his own, decades-long project of exploring politics as an activity, are the unique contributions of this text.

In doing so, Palonen provides a topical—or, more appropriately, topological—treatment of Skinner's work from his student days at Cambridge to his standing as one of the best known figures in international academic circles at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Yet while the organisation of the text is chronological, the analysis is not simply historical. Instead, it is primarily political. 'I am using Skinner's contributions to historiography and rhetoric as contributions to the understanding of politics' (Palonen 2003, 5). Skinner's 'moves' from history to philosophy to rhetoric are examined in terms of their consequences for the study of political thought, rather than

in terms of their particular professional circumstances. That Skinner, a leading exponent of contextualism, was not himself fully contextualized by Palonen, has troubled reviewers such as Brian Young (Young 2004, 361–62) and Amit Ron (Ron 2007, 152–53). Nor has Palonen's emphatic underscoring of the connections between Skinner and Weber completely convinced others, such as Brian Garsten (Garsten 2007, 568–69) and Nadia Urbinati (Urbinati 2005, 92–93). But the book is not an exercise in conventional intellectual biography, nor in the history of ideas. Though not an historian, Palonen does acknowledge that he is 'competent to detect debates on politics in which Skinner's contributions have not been sufficiently considered and from which I can also read a "surplus meaning"' (Palonen 2003, 5). By situating his subject within a 'wider European tradition of a perspectivist view of knowledge and scholarship' (Palonen 2003, 2), Palonen strives to provide his readers with an intellectual redescription of Quentin Skinner and his *oeuvre*, often in terms of a 'political theorizing which he himself has not accentuated' (Palonen 2003, 7).

Central to this redescription are the perceived affinities between Skinner and Max Weber. Even if Palonen never officially enrolls the former in the ranks of Weberians, at points he came quite close. In the course of an extended comparison of their approaches to legitimation as a political phenomenon, he argues that 'through the perspective of legitimation, Skinner continues Weber's work by the means of linguistic actions' (Palonen 2003, 57). The former's recasting of political thought as action is in keeping with the latter's position that competing for power is a necessary precondition for all politics. He finds a marked continuity as well between Skinner's and Weber's analyses of the formation of conceptions of the state. Indeed, when discussing Skinner at the close of the text, Palonen observes that 'he is both thematically and methodologically closer to Weber, a more consistent nominalist and perspectivist than anyone else today' (Palonen 2003, 179).

Palonen's reading of Skinner is not limited to welding him onto a self-forged canon of theorists that includes Weber, Sartre, Arendt and Koselleck. The text's strongest claim is that the shift from studying thought as applied to the realm of politics to examining 'thinking in a political mode' constitutes nothing less than a 'Skinnerian revolution' (Palonen 2003, 3). In the wake of this revolution, political thought is no longer commentary 'on the sphere of politics', but rather an 'aspect of the activity of politics itself' (Palonen 2003, 3). It is not an external, but an integral, dimension of political life. Skinner emancipates political agents by taking them seriously, and empowers both 'classical and contemporary' thinkers as 'politicians working with

theories and concepts' (Palonen 2003, 68). The manifesto for this revolution is the *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, in which Skinner is concerned less with the formal content or validity of political concepts and theories than with the roles these have played in political struggles, and their ability to be transposed as 'viable instruments' in the contexts of subsequent contests for power (Palonen 2003, 68). Despite Palonen's enthusiastic endorsement of Skinner's 'revisions of the genre' of studying political thought, he did express some disappointment that others had failed to 'detect the singularity' of *The Foundations*, and might be tempted to reduce it to a reference work on political reflections in medieval, Renaissance and Reformation Europe (Palonen 2003, 92-3). This concern could be partially allayed by some of the pieces in the Tully and Brett *Rethinking the Foundations* collection, as well as by subsequent work by Palonen and others on parliaments and parliamentarians as sites, and sources, for political theorising (Palonen and Rosales 2014). However, the term 'Skinnerian Revolution' has failed to gain much currency, at least among Anglophone scholars. If employed, it usually refers to the behavioral psychology of B.F. Skinner, rather than the intellectual history of Quentin Skinner (Platt 1973).

Of the respective intellectual 'turns' taken by Skinner, from historical, to philosophical, to linguistic, to rhetorical, Palonen is most interested, and invested, in the latter. Skinner's explorations of classical, Renaissance and early modern manuals of rhetoric, and his employment of such rhetorical tropes as *paradiastole* in explicating Machiavelli and Hobbes, are complementary to Palonen's own investigations of the rhetorical history of the *topoi* of politics (Palonen 2006). That Skinner advanced a rhetorical perspective for explaining conceptual change also resonated with Palonen. 'The advantage of Skinner's rhetorical perspective on conceptual changes is that...conceptual changes are not only analogous to political changes but rather intelligible as dimensions of political changes in themselves' (Palonen 2003, 169). While Skinner's engagement with the *ars rhetorica* has continued to play a significant part in his own work, as well as that of his students and in scholarship on early modern Europe in general, Palonen has, of late, sounded another note of disappointment. 'Anglophone historians of political thought seem not to have shown any detailed interest in Skinner's turn toward rhetoric' (Palonen 2013, 9). Once again, Palonen suggests that the more profound empirical and methodological implications of Skinner's work have not been sufficiently appreciated by some of his contemporaries. Yet he continues to maintain that there is still much that is relevant in Skinner's 'vision of the rhetorical culture of the Renaissance' for investigating the

‘deliberative rhetoric’ and the ‘dissensual style’ of parliaments, especially Westminster (Palonen 2013, 19).

Since *Quentin Skinner* appeared before its protagonist had taken a turn toward genealogy, the text discusses neither the context nor the consequences of that move. Skinner has, on occasion, described his approach to genealogy as informed by Nietzsche and Foucault (Lane 2012). Both figures are mentioned by Palonen, but neither in terms of a shift in interest from historical studies to political theory. He does consider Skinner’s interventions in the latter arena, in particular on conceptions of ‘liberty,’ ‘liberalism,’ and ‘republicanism,’ but in rhetorical terms. He admires Skinner’s critiques of the normative political theories of Rawls and Habermas, and endorses his anti-foundationalist alliance with Rorty. But how Palonen might account for, or approve of, Skinner’s most recent incarnation remains to be seen. Perhaps a revised edition—subtitled *History, Politics, Rhetoric and Genealogy*—is warranted.

At the close of the book, Palonen once again invokes the shade of Max Weber. Were Weber to return to the present, Palonen wonders, with whom might he be interested in conversing? Not with Weberians like himself, he demurs. But, most surely, with Quentin Skinner. Here Palonen’s modesty simply does not suffice. In the event of such an imaginary exchange, I’d expect that both would welcome him as an interlocutor. Kari Palonen would be an invaluable interpreter between the two figures, and the traditions they represent, as he has been in the pages of *Quentin Skinner*.

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